



**CQC INSPECTION (JUNE/JULY 2018)
RATINGS SUMMARY**

	Safe	Effective	Caring	Responsive	Well - Led	Overall
E&UC	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
PTS	Good	Good	Good	Good	Requires Improvement	Good
EOC	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
Resilience	Good	Good	Not Rated	Good	Good	Good
NHS 111	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
Overall	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good

What the CQC had to say:

Overall trust rating:

- The trust had an up to date duty of candour policy and procedure. Records we reviewed confirmed that duty of candour was reflected in the trust’s duty of candour guidance, policies were cross referenced and the description of incidents that required duty of candour consideration had been updated following our inspection in 2016.
- The service provided safe care and treatment. There were processes and staff followed them to lessen risks to patients, staff and the public.
- Since the inspection in 2016, the trust had undertaken a review of how it responded to risk and how it prepared crews. Paramedic team leads had been introduced to support and advise ambulance crews to recognise a deteriorating patient.
- The trust met the fit and proper persons requirement Regulation 5 of the Health and Social Care Act. This regulation ensures that directors of NHS providers are fit and proper to carry out this important role.
- The trust ensured that there was sufficient staff on duty at all times. Including sufficient numbers of clinical supervisors at the individual sites to ensure patient safety.
- Innovation was encouraged and staff were supported to join national improvement groups to influence changes in protocols, processes, equipment and training. There were examples of innovative practice, that were being incorporated into national practices.
- Service provision, locations and vehicles, were planned to meet the needs of the local population. This was based on the need to respond to major incidents at government defined sites of strategic importance, major incidents in other areas of the NWS geographical region and provide mutual aid to neighbouring ambulance trusts in a timely manner.
- We were informed by senior management that staff were debriefed following a serious incident. For example, a serious road traffic collision with multiple victims. This usually took place at a hospital and was known as a ‘Hot debrief’. The discussion centre around what went well and what improvements could be made. This was confirmed by operational staff we spoke with across the trust.



Emergency and Urgent Care Service

- All staff we spoke with told us they were proud of their profession and felt that this was reflected in them providing good quality care.
- We observed ambulance staff with patients acting with compassion and respect towards the patient. We observed staff talking to patients continually about what was happening and providing reassurance. Staff were very polite, caring and respectful when dealing with patients.
- Staff supported patients with mental health problems and treated them with dignity and respect. For example, staff in Cumbria worked with local social service mental health team to identify people in the community who were vulnerable due to mental health and produced together holistic care plans.
- The service had a good network of staff who were adequately trained in safeguarding processes.
- We found good levels of cleanliness, hygiene and infection prevention and control (IPC) in NWAS ambulance stations and ambulances.
- The service had undertaken a full review of how it responded to risk and how it prepared crews. As well as using up to date clinical guidelines it has also developed new staffing structures in ambulance teams which provide support in responding to risk.
- The trust had reviewed its staffing structure after our last inspection in 2016. In that inspection we found concerns about staffing mix as well as staffing capacity. We found significant steps had been taken to address shortfalls.
- The trust had introduced new line management structures which had added Specialist Paramedic Team Leaders (SPTLs) to support and advise ambulance crews
- Governance staff including a Clinical Quality Officer, and a Corporate Consultant Paramedic ensure best practice is incorporated into staff and service guidelines.
- Paramedics and emergency medical technicians had their driving licences checked annually by the trust. They also attended a blue light refresher course.



Emergency Operations Centre

- All emergency operations centre staff we met and observed consistently demonstrated compassion, kindness and respect towards callers and patients, including those in mental health crisis.
- The service had a culture of reporting incidents, with staff knowing how to report an incident and having knowledge of the trust's incident reporting processes. There was sharing of learning from incidents. This meant the service had improved opportunities to learn from incidents and improve patient safety.
- The service ensured that there was sufficient staff on duty at all times. Including sufficient numbers of clinical supervisors at the individual sites to ensure patient safety.
- The service ensured that the clinicians in the operations centres held an appropriate level of safeguarding children training in line with national guidance.
- The emergency operations centres had appropriate measures and systems in place to ensure service continuity in the event of a business continuity incident.
- We observed positive examples of local leadership from the operating unit managers at all three operations centres. We saw that the leads of the service listened to staff and working to address concerns staff raised.
- The trust has a working group designing a reporting mechanism, which will identify callers who have accessed the 999 systems at a set frequency. The trust leadership and operations centre managers are also currently working to produce a policy and procedure that will guide local managers through a consistent, safe and robust system of managing frequent callers.
- We saw improvements since our last inspection. The trust has raised awareness among staff relating to the trust's vision and strategy and how they can contribute to it.



Resilience

- The service provided safe care and treatment. There were processes and staff followed them to lessen risks to patients, staff and the public posed by the challenging environments staff had to operate in.
- Staff followed national guidelines for the delivery of services and care and treatment.
- The leadership of the service promoted a positive culture within the resilience service.
- Innovation was encouraged and staff were encouraged were to join national improvement groups to influence changes in protocols, processes, equipment and training. There were examples of innovative practice that were being incorporated into national practices.
- There was effective collaborative working between trust staff and partner agencies to manage local, regional and national risks. This ensured paramedic care and treatment was available in a timely manner, to patients in challenging circumstances, such as major incidents and mass casualty incidents.
- Training provision met the national guidelines. Staff were highly skilled in delivery paramedic care in a safe manner to patients in challenging and dangerous environments.

Well-Led

- The leadership, governance and culture supported the delivery of high quality person-centred care across the trust services inspected.
- The trust was prepared to meet the fit and proper persons requirement of the Health and Social Care. This regulation ensures that directors of NHS providers are fit and proper to carry out this important role.
- The trust had a vision for what it wanted to achieve and there was evidence of a strategy and workable plans to make improvements.
- The board assurance framework was a live document, holding eight risks which were aligned to the quality committee. They had been reviewed as part of a governance review. This meant that board members reviewed the board assurance framework on a regular basis to ensure they monitored risks.
- The board assurance framework was reviewed by executive leads and non-executive directors through governance meetings, on a regular basis
- There was an effective approach to monitoring or providing evidence of progress against delivery of the strategy or plans on a regular basis.
- Risks were dealt with appropriately across trust services and the risk management approach was consistently applied at management level.
- There was a strong culture of leadership which was apparent throughout the executive group.
- There was a focus on continuous learning and improvement at all management levels within the trust, including the innovative and effective use of pilot schemes to improve the service.
- The risk registers across the trust showed that risks had been identified and controls put in place to mitigate the level of risk.
- Assurance systems were in place, we found that these were applied across the trust services we inspected.
- Senior management had recognised that culture within some areas of the trust required improvement and had plans in place to ensure improvement.
- We found a positive overall culture which centred on the needs of people who used the service.

Areas of outstanding practice

- We observed community paramedics were involved work which was outstanding. They worked as members of a multidisciplinary team with community nurses, mental health nurses, teachers and in care homes, with the needs of the community at the forefront. The initiatives staff were involved in ranged from helping mental health patients combat fears of medical procedures and medical assistance, to preventative measures aimed at reducing the number of admittances to emergency departments by care home residents, by assessing their needs prior to deterioration.
- We reviewed copies of 'Clear Vision' which is a quarterly paper covering clear leadership, education, accountability and responsibility (Clear), produced by the trust for staff, which was distributed by email.
- The trust had introduced the health and wellbeing microsites, through the health and wellbeing programme "Invest in Yourself".
- There was an inspiring, supporting and caring culture within the HART service that was led by the HART managers, with all members of the team feeling highly valued.