

Our year

in action 2024-25

NHS

North West
Ambulance Service
NHS Trust



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A message from our chief executive

It has been another eventful year for us at North West Ambulance Service, but let's take a moment to reflect on all of our accomplishments during 2024/25.

This booklet showcases some of the remarkable achievements we've made throughout the past year, celebrating the hard work and dedication of our staff and volunteers.



Salman Desai
Chief Executive

I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank the people of the North West for their ongoing support over the years, which has been invaluable in helping us navigate some particularly tough times.

I have thoroughly enjoyed looking back at our key moments from 2024/25 and I hope you do too.

Let's continue to improve and challenge ourselves, support each other, and build a service we can all be proud of.

Continuing to deliver our strategy

Our 2022-2025 strategy was shaped through wide range engagement with our staff, volunteers, patients, and partners, alongside performance data from our services. Using this as a guide, we set our strategic aims and objectives.

The strategy commits us to a workplace where physical and mental wellbeing are priorities. Alongside supporting staff, we focus on delivering safe, effective, and high-quality care for patients.

At its heart, the strategy defines our shared purpose: helping people when they need us most. Guided by this, our vision is simple - providing the right care, at the right time, in the right place, every time.

This year, we will continue working with stakeholders to keep our strategy relevant and up to date with the current context.

To achieve our vision of providing the right care, at the right time, in the right place, every time, we will focus on following aims:

- Provide high-quality, inclusive care
- Be a brilliant place to work for all
- Work together to shape a better future

Whatever our role, we all share a common purpose:

To help people when they need us most.



**Working together
Being at our best
Making a difference**

Our values are the behaviours that underpin all that we do. They describe how we should approach our work. They can be found in our systems and processes, from appraisal paperwork to planning tools for large-scale projects for change.

Putting our values into practice supports us to provide compassionate care and improve outcomes and experiences for our people, patients and communities.

A year in numbers

1.4m 
emergency
calls

1.1m
incidents
attended

15%
patients were
treated or
signposted over the
phone (hear and
treat)



1.4m
Patient Transport
Service (PTS) journeys

1.9m
 calls

Patient satisfaction

Paramedic Emergency Service
(PES) 90.6%
PTS 93.4%
111 86.9%



1000+ vehicles
  

1000+ 
staff recruited

Provide high-quality, inclusive care

Volunteering to improve patient care

This year, our Patient and Public Panel celebrated its fifth anniversary, welcoming 51 new members in 24/25. Throughout the year, members contributed to area learning forums, trust board sessions, our Quality Improvement Academy, and learning from deaths reviews. They were also shortlisted for three awards at the Patient Experience Network Awards (PENNA). PENNA is the first and only awards programme to recognise best practice in patient experience.

The panel also worked alongside various teams to support our new mental health and dementia strategic plans for 2024-2027. Actions to support dementia patients include making the experience of being in an ambulance more comfortable. This includes the use of digital communication tools to support clearer interaction, and a focus on using quality improvement methods to give staff better insight into patients' individual needs before arriving at their homes.

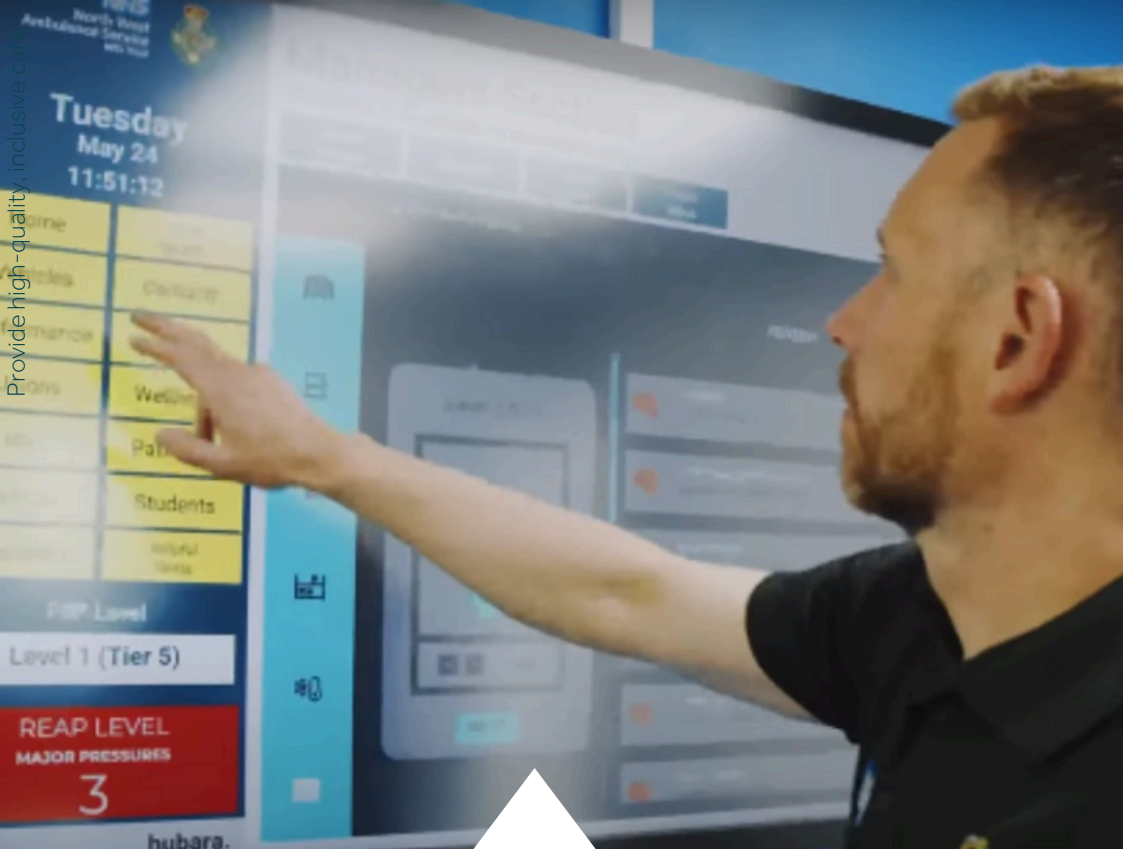
East Lancashire care home engagement project

Senior Paramedic Caroline Hargreaves, set up the collaborative 'East Lancashire Care Home Engagement' project as a way to find a solution to the long waits that vulnerable elderly patients can often experience when they have a fall or collapse.

Alongside external partners, such as the Intensive Home Support Service (IHSS), Intermediate Care Allocation Team (ICAT) and Age UK, Caroline visited various care homes, delivering information sessions.

These sessions covered what staff in care homes should do when someone has a fall, including safe management of the patient, who to contact in the first instance, further resources, and when to call an ambulance.





Smart Programme boosted by funding from NHS England

We successfully secured funding to trial innovative wireless technology aimed at improving patient care and enhancing connectivity across seven NHS trusts, and we were proud to be one of the selected recipients.

This funding enabled us to pilot several cutting-edge solutions as part of our wider Smart Programme, which currently includes ID access control, smart lockers, smart lighting, digital wallboards, and smart key cabinets. The programme, delivered in collaboration with our Programme Management Office, Digital team, and operational secondees, has now been successfully completed.

New fleet of vehicles for our Hazardous Area Response Team

In October 2024 we were the first ambulance trust in the country to introduce a new fleet of vehicles for our Hazardous Area Response Team (HART), who deal with complex and major incidents with added hazards, incidents in tight or small places and in water. These new vehicles will be adopted by all ambulance trusts.

The incident response vehicles, including the newly designed Incident Response Vehicles (IRV), and a four-wheel drive Toyota Hilux truck, allow for easier access to equipment from the outside with fire engine style shutters. The Toyota Hilux provides added off road capabilities.

We also have new crew carriers, one for working alongside the police, where more covert support is required.





111 improves urgent mental health crisis support

In April 2024 a new way for patients to access crisis mental health support via NHS 111 was introduced.

This means that when people call 111 and choose the mental health crisis option, they will be connected to their local NHS urgent mental health helpline, based on their current location.

We have seen a reduction in the number of mental health referrals made via a pathways assessment, due to patients selecting the mental health option at the point of call, which ensures patients are getting the right care more quickly.

A symbol of exemplary service

Our Director of People and Deputy Chief Executive, Lisa Ward, was presented with the King's Ambulance Medal (KAM).

The KAM was introduced, by Royal Warrant, to recognise those who have rendered distinguished service and devotion to duty as members of the NHS ambulance service in the UK Kingdom, the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands.

Lisa was recognised for her exemplary dedication to her role.

Congratulations Lisa.



Digital Governance and portfolio management

The implementation and ongoing development of our Digital Governance and Portfolio Management processes marks a major step forward in ensuring that we not only do things right, but we do the right things.

With a clear approval, prioritisation, and governance framework, we can better track, monitor, and deliver digital initiatives that align with our objectives and ultimately ensure that 'digital first' becomes a core part of everything we do.

We are fostering collaboration, preventing duplication of effort, and ensuring that technology delivers real value to our patients and staff.

ParaMEDic Residential

In August 2024, our Workforce team co-delivered an interactive and engaging ParaMEDic Residential Programme in partnership with the College of Paramedics and Edge Hill University.

Over 40 young people from diverse backgrounds from across the country participated in the three-day residential, gaining first hand insight into careers within the ambulance service.

The programme included practical exercises supported by Paramedic Practice students at Edge Hill, visits to NWS contact centres, and an immersive session with our Special Operations team.

Insight app - translation and British Sign Language at the patient's side

Following an extensive review of our translation services and a successful pilot of the 'Insight App' in East Lancashire and Merseyside Central, we worked with the Digital Design Forum to launch a new version of the app. It is now available to all staff via the company portal (Corporate App Store).

The Insight App supports both audio Language Line and BSL Video Interpretation at patient side for our PES and PTS operational crews.



Community first responders were finalists at the 2024 Community Volunteer Awards

At the 2024 Blackburn and Darwen Community Volunteer Awards our community first responders (CFRs) were recognised as finalists for the Health and Wellbeing Award.

Out of over 1,000 nominations across 12 categories, our CFRs were among just three finalists in the Health and Wellbeing category - a remarkable recognition of their commitment and impact.



Advanced Questionnaire Module receives award

In June 2024 colleagues from our Mental Health team and call centres were nominated for an award at the HSJ Patient Safety Awards and won the Mental Health and Safety Improvement award.

The advanced questionnaire module (AQM), which is a tool used by our emergency medical advisors (EMAs), allows for a timely upgrade and response to patients who have overdosed on high-risk drugs. The AQM was developed after a tragic death, and this collaborative project shows how working together can make a real difference and save lives.

Launch of the NWS Improvement Academy

Our Improvement Academy launched in September 2024, and brought together seven project teams over the course of nine months. Teams attended a total of nine days of classroom learning, with expert-led workshops and 1:1 coaching from our Improvement team.

Some of the early wins from this first cohort include:

- A reduction in the number of patients conveyed to both emergency and non-emergency departments.
- A 30% drop in reported physical assaults on staff within one team's service area.
- Noticeable improvement in payroll accuracy for 111 services, driven by standardised processes and targeted team training.

Elm Point construction and opening

Our new base in Cheshire and Merseyside for our Hazardous Area Response Team (HART), situated at Elm Point in Anfield, will open later this year.

This project, led by our Estates team and Programme Management Office (PMO) transformed the site of Elm House into a modern new facility.

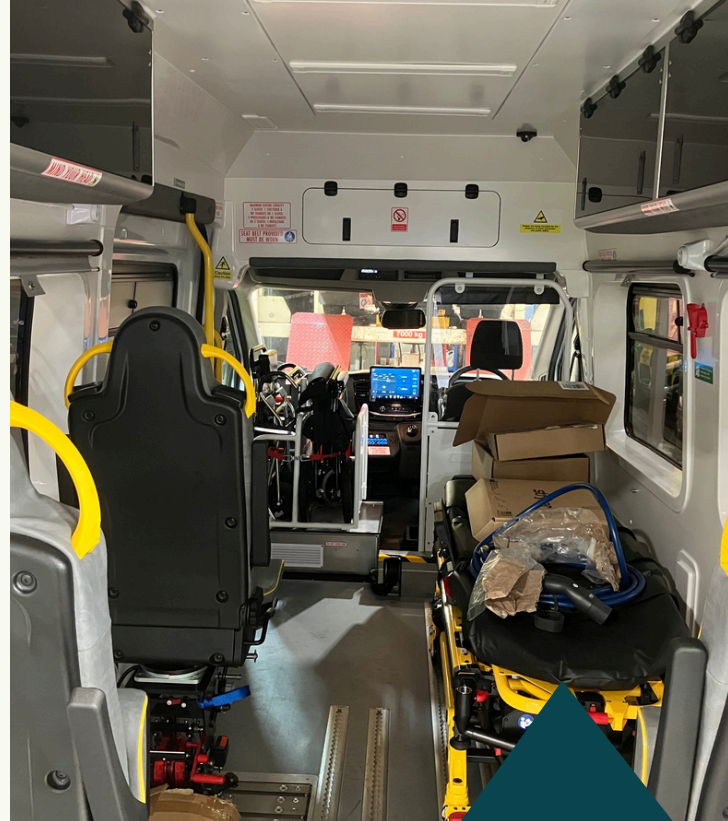
From the full demolition of the old building to the completion of the new development, every stage was carefully managed to ensure success. We are proud to report that the project was delivered on time, within budget, and to the highest standards.



Blood pressure data pilot project

Our Public Health team along with support from our Patient and Public Panel led a blood pressure data pilot project. It explored how our blood pressure data could help GPs in Cheshire and Merseyside with undiagnosed or poorly managed hypertension. Feedback helped to ensure the pilot remained patient-focused with an emphasis on using data in a way that supports earlier diagnosis and better outcomes.

In March 2025, our Patient and Public Panel members were invited back to hear how their input had shaped progress and the next steps. This pilot has shown that our data has a real potential to help GPs identify cases of hypertension that might otherwise go unnoticed.



National ambulance service patient experience group hospital handover project

The Patient Engagement team supported the National ambulance service patient experience group (NASPEG) hospital handover project by conducting patient experience surveys in selected North West hospitals.

There was a focus on those who waited over an hour to be handed over. Despite long waits most patients were happy with the care from our crews and felt their needs were met. Key insights included patient preferences for comfort and entertainment during waits, and the majority of patients waiting longer than 30 minutes were low-acuity frail patients.

Our Patient Transport Service trialled a fully electric vehicle

Our Patient Transport Service trialled their first fully electric vehicle across Cumbria and Lancashire in January 2025.

This vehicle was loaned to us by Yorkshire Ambulance Service for a period of time, and is part of a wider pilot of fully electric vehicle trialling.



Be a brilliant place to work for all



Hate crime awareness events

During Race Equality Week in February, our Race Equality Network and our Violence Prevention and Reduction team organised two hate crime awareness days, in collaboration with Greater Manchester Police (GMP) and Greater Manchester Victim Services.

The sessions raised awareness of hate crime, encouraged reporting and reassurance that incidents will be taken seriously.



Our LGBT+ Network celebrate LGBT+ History Month

Our LGBT+ Network members celebrated LGBT History Month in February 2025 by highlighting their chosen activist for the theme of 'Activism and Social Change.'

Members shared testimonials on inspiring figures in LGBT+ healthcare, like Dr. Michael Farquhar who created the NHS rainbow badge for LGBT+ service users.

The Network organised a visit to Manchester's People's History Museum, where attendees explored the newly opened LGBT+ archives in celebration of LGBT+ History Month.

Disability Confident Leader

We were awarded re-accreditation as a level 3 disability confident leader for a second term of 3 years in November 2024.



This recognises the commitment and work that our Disability Network and Equality Diversity and Inclusion Advisor have completed on getting the right people into the organisation and improving representation of diverse groups.

Striking EDI gold for the third year running

For the third year in a row, we have been awarded the Gold Standard in the Employers Network for Equality & Inclusion's (ENEI) Talent Inclusion and Diversity Evaluation (TIDE) accreditation.

Out of 185 global submissions spanning 26 sectors, we were one of just 25 organisations to receive this prestigious recognition — and with an outstanding overall score of 94%, we ranked third highest amongst all entrants.

Supporting our colleagues with our digital portal

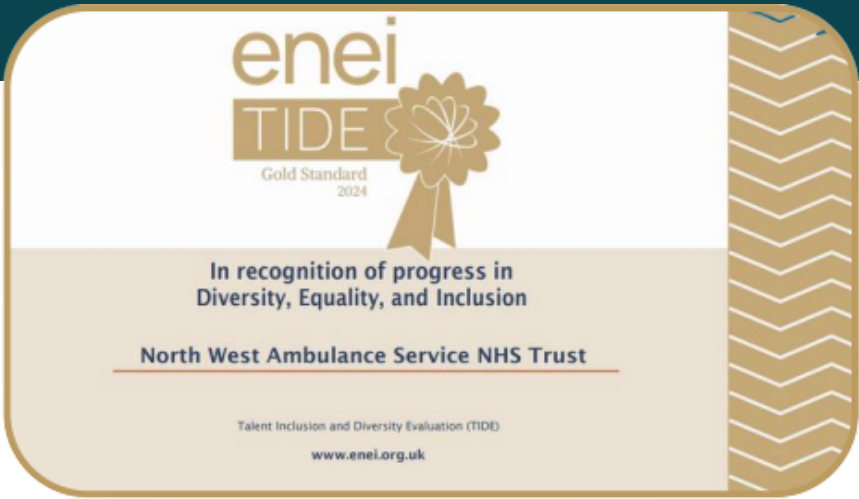


Health and wellbeing of our staff is a top priority so that we can continue help our staff be at their best.

Last year we developed a digital system called 'Aspirer' which allows our Paramedic Emergency Service (PES) teams to record their shifts electronically, ensuring precise and timely payroll processing each month.

This year we developed it further by adding an online portal called 'Supporting our Colleagues'. It has significantly improved the way in which managers are informed when it has been identified that one of their staff may need support.

An example of this is when a senior clinician requests a welfare check on a crew following a difficult or traumatic incident.



Wellbeing festivals and roadshow

Our Wellbeing team travelled across the North West to visit staff and talk all things health and wellbeing.

They also put on wellbeing festivals at various locations. These featured some fantastic activities and support, including therapy dogs and rabbits, holistic therapy and art therapy sessions, and rage rooms!

There were also opportunities to get health checks, ECG and blood pressure readings.



Positive Action team collaborate with the Kashmir Youth Project

Our Positive Action team held an event in Rochdale with the Kashmir Youth Project to raise awareness of careers across the trust. Over 50 members of the public attended from local communities.

The team organises several events every year to raise awareness of career opportunities with the trust, focusing on engaging with black and minority ethnic communities.

Improved inductions for all new starters

Our Learning and Organisational Development team have been working on improving how we induct new starters to their role.

As part of this work, all new starters will receive an induction with each department to give them an overview of what they do.

There are also four modules which provide our staff with a clear and consistent set of information and resources to support inductions for new team members.

A good induction sets the tone for success by helping new starters feel welcomed, informed, and confident in their role. It provides clarity on expectations, builds connections, and equips them with the tools and knowledge to thrive.



Service Delivery Model review

Over the last 12 months a new frontline operational and clinical leadership structure has been implemented. This involved a review of our urgent and emergency care teams.

Roles and responsibilities were reviewed through listening events, surveys, and working with staff and trade unions. A consultation was created and we now have staff in new roles.

We now have advanced paramedic practitioners, with skills in managing critically unwell and complex patients, across the region 24/7. We also have duty officers available 24/7. They provide support at multi-patient incidents, major incidents, and welfare and wellbeing support for crews who attend difficult incidents.

Our new Integrated Contact Centres (ICC)

We invested in integrating our 999, NHS 111, and patient transport services (PTS) into a single, more efficient contact centre this year.

Phases 1 and 2 were completed in 2024, and Phase 3 was approved in January 2025 and is ongoing.

This work has had a positive impact on our 111 service, with a 33 per cent improvement in calls answered within 60 seconds compared to the previous year. Faster response times are key for caller satisfaction and also help to improve the call abandonment rate which has reduced by 10 per cent.



Training for managers on reasonable adjustments

This year, over 80 managers from across the trust took part in dedicated online training sessions designed to enhance understanding around effectively supporting staff requiring reasonable adjustments, due to disability or health condition. This bite-sized training was introduced following the launch of the new Procedure for Requesting and Managing Reasonable Adjustments in early 2024.



The training has been exceptionally well received — with all participants rating it as good or excellent — and is already making a meaningful impact.

This progress is reflected in the 2024 NHS Staff Survey, where 71% of NWS respondents who identified as disabled or having a long-term condition reported that the trust had made reasonable adjustments for them, up from 65% the previous year.

This marks our highest-ever response to this question and highlights the positive effect of both the policy and the accompanying training.



Leadership inductions and supporting future applicants

In July 2024 we held the first of a series of Paramedic Emergency Service (PES) leadership inductions, welcoming the area support managers and clinical support managers into their new roles.



The two-day event focused on leadership and learning, bringing together subject matter experts from across NWS to share insights on topics such as debriefs, finance, wellbeing, performance support, and quality improvement. The induction sessions have been delivered to more than 400 staff.

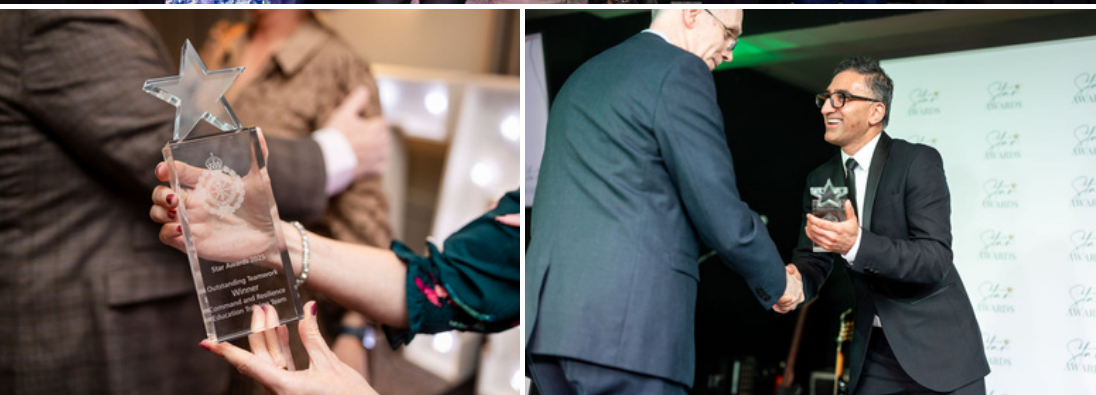


20 30 35 40

Marking milestones

NWAS colleagues from across the region were honoured for their career milestones of 20 through to 40 years, along with the King's Medal for service and good conduct.

The three regional events were hosted by the respective head of operations and Chief Executive Salman Desai, with Chair Peter White and Salman presenting awards. Lord Lieutenants for each respective area presented the medals.



Our 2025 Star Awards

In March 2025 we held our annual Star Awards event at Ribby Hall Village in Lancashire.

The event, organised by the communications team and sponsored by our NWAS charity and external suppliers, provides staff with an opportunity to come together and celebrate outstanding talent, compassion and perseverance that exists within NWAS.

240 nominations were entered for the nine award categories and one special commendation, and the celebration included an awards ceremony, music and entertainment, followed by a three-course meal.

Free sanitary products launch

The Women's Network, working in partnership with the Staff Experience Team, NWSA Charity, Facilities Management, and Infection Prevention Control team successfully scaled up the availability of free sanitary products trust-wide, to fight against 'period poverty'.

The initiative was initially piloted at 40 sites, with funding secured for coverage across the whole trust. Products are now available at over 120 sites in women's and disabled toilets.



Armed Forces 'Lest we forget' wrapped ambulances

To commemorate Remembrance Day and to honour the men and women who have served in our Armed Forces, we launched three permanently wrapped ambulances.



These special ambulances are adorned with remembrance artwork and the phrase 'Lest we forget.' They are based in Preston, Rochdale, and Fazakerley, and respond to patient calls on a daily basis.

Freedom to speak up

This year we recruited two new Freedom to Speak Up guardians to provide increased support and guidance to staff in raising concerns.

An individual can raise a concern to our Freedom to Speak Up guardians about risk, malpractice or wrongdoing that they think is harming the service we deliver.

Working together to shape a better future



Listening to the community

Our Patient Engagement team successfully delivered 5 engagement events across the region in 2024/25.

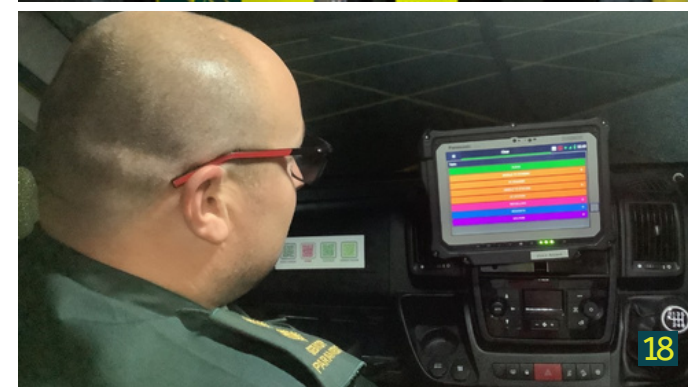
The events welcomed members of the public, patients, and neighbouring organisations, offering the chance to engage with our three main service lines through interactive activities, discussions, Q&A sessions, and information stalls.

A total of 604 people attended, who learned more about our services, and shared valuable feedback on how we can improve.

Completion of Mobile Data Vehicle Solution (MDVS) installation and improvements

Over 40 weeks, 554 ambulances and 114 rapid response vehicles were successfully upgraded to the new Mobile Data Vehicle Solution (MDVS) - and not a single planned installation slot was missed. This included installing the Incident Viewer Application on 3,599 iOS devices and 978 Android devices.

Each vehicle was out of service for a full day to travel to the fitting site, receive the installation and testing, and return to station. Even with the challenge of fitting two vehicles per day, per site, the team delivered a perfect rollout, keeping operations on track every step of the way.



New process for transmitting defibrillator data

We have worked with the national Ambulance Radio Programme (ARP) technical team to configure the national infrastructure to enable transmission of defibrillator data from the device to the NWS Azure infrastructure, via the MDVS vehicle communications hub and the national ARP data centres.

The successful data transmission in February 2025 marks the first step towards a full pilot with defibrillators in NWS vehicles and opens the door to enabling connectivity of frontline solutions in the future.

Network upgrades across the region

The Digital team successfully managed the replacement of all ambulance station network circuits in the region, to bring them up to date with the latest networking technology (SDWAN).

They also upgraded existing circuits to account for the growing needs of the organisation. This was a huge piece of work for the team, visiting 105 stations and working with our business partners Virgin Media.

Also, the Infrastructure team replaced the core network and switches at our Broughton site. We now have a reliable network infrastructure, which is compliant with the gold standard Cisco IOS release. The replacement was a 12-hour window.

Project 365

Project 365 is a trust-wide service improvement project migrating the trust from an on-premise storage server (called the Shared Drive) to cloud-based Microsoft 365.

By the end of 2024/25 the project team had migrated around 30% of the organisation's files into SharePoint and all personal accounts have been migrated to OneDrive.

Over a million redundant, duplicate, and obsolete records have been removed as part of a review of the trust's files. Over 250 staff have been trained by the team to use OneDrive, SharePoint, and Teams and a Super User Network has been set up to support staff who wish to learn even more about SharePoint.

Finance and Procurement teams recognised

The One NHS Finance Towards Excellence Accreditation recognises organisations with outstanding finance skills, culture, and practices.

We are proud that our Finance team achieved Level 3, the highest level, making them a leading-edge function influencing NHS finance beyond organisational boundaries, and the first ambulance trust in England to do so.

The Procurement team also excelled, scoring 91% and "Best" in the Commercial Continuous Improvement Assessment Framework. Director of Finance Carolyn Wood praised both teams for their exceptional service and highest-level achievements.

Staff survey success

It was another record-breaking year for our NHS Staff Survey as we received our highest-ever number of responses. The survey was completed by 48% of the workforce, which beats last year's response total.

The feedback from the survey will be used to make improvements for both our staff and patients. This has already been actioned in various areas, such as quiet rooms and flexible working pilots.



Creating a safe environment for staff

As part of our commitment to signing the NHS England Sexual Safety Charter and the Association of Ambulance Chief Executives (AACE) Consensus Statement on reducing misogyny and improving sexual safety, we launched our new sexual safety campaign. Our approach – Stop, Speak, Support – reminds us to pause and look at our own behaviour, speak out to challenge the behaviours of others, and support anyone we know has been affected.

We want to create a safe working environment free from sexual harm. Staff welfare is one of our main priorities and as part of the campaign our Sexual Safety Steering Group organised a Sexual Safety Roadshow for summer 2024, where they visited staff all across the North West to speak about the campaign.

We have also worked alongside police and other emergency services to launch a Work Without Fear campaign to make a stand against violence and aggression towards ambulance staff.



**Stop.
Speak.
Support.**

PTS improvement programme

This year, we commissioned a PTS improvement programme of work and builds on the work delivered in the PTS financial improvement plan (2023- 2025).

The improvement programme is designed to deliver better outcomes and experience for patients and staff, alongside our contractual obligations and financial efficiencies. The work streams will deliver a modern-day logistics operation, set against the backdrop of a combination of increasing activity, increasing places of care and more stringent performance standards.



NHS Apprenticeship awards

The NHS Apprentice Awards took place on 28 June 2024, and we won 'Employer of the Year.' We were nominated by the University of Cumbria, and marks the second time in three years we have received this award.

Our apprentices were also celebrated with 10 being shortlisted. Additionally, three of our cadets were shortlisted, with one winning the Rising Star T-Level Award.

This success builds on the achievements of our 2023/24 apprentices, who were celebrated for their exceptional skills, knowledge, and commitment at an event held at Bolton Stadium last month. The event recognised those who completed their apprenticeships over the past year. It was the first in-person celebration since the pandemic, and the Widening Access and the Learning, Education and Training teams look forward to this becoming an annual event.





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