

Dudley Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Efficiency Review of The West Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Trust

28 January 2010

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West Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Trust**

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Specialised Commissioning Team NHS West Midlands**

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West Midlands Ambulance Service - Statistics



- Formed 1st July 2006 incorporating three former Ambulance Trusts'
- Merged with Staffordshire Oct 2007
- Population of 5.3 million
- Diverse region
 - Over 5000 square miles, 80% rural
- Over 2,500 Emergency calls per day
- Over 475,000 patient journeys annually
- £170 million budget
- Over 850 vehicles
- 3,500 Staff
- Four Air Ambulances (Charitable)
- 1500 Volunteers -
 - Community First Responders
 - Air Ambulance Volunteers
 - Voluntary Car Drivers

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Recent Achievements

- **Ambulance Service of the Year 2007, 2008 and 2009**
- **Achieved all Key National Targets for last three years**
- **Achieved financial breakeven for each of the last three years**
- **National IT Award in 2008**
- **One of the top 100 NHS Organisations**
- **Runner up in Business Awards – shortlisted again this year**
- **5 Ambulance Service Institute Awards 2008:**
 - Ambulance Paramedic of The Year
 - Ambulance Technician of The Year
 - First Responder Award
 - Air Ambulance Team Award
 - Special Incident Award



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Independent Review into WMAS

- Welcomed by WMAS
- Carried out by West Midlands NHS Specialised Commissioning on behalf of all PCTs
- Undertaken by Lightfoot Consulting
- Joint understanding of way forward for emergency ambulance services in West Midlands

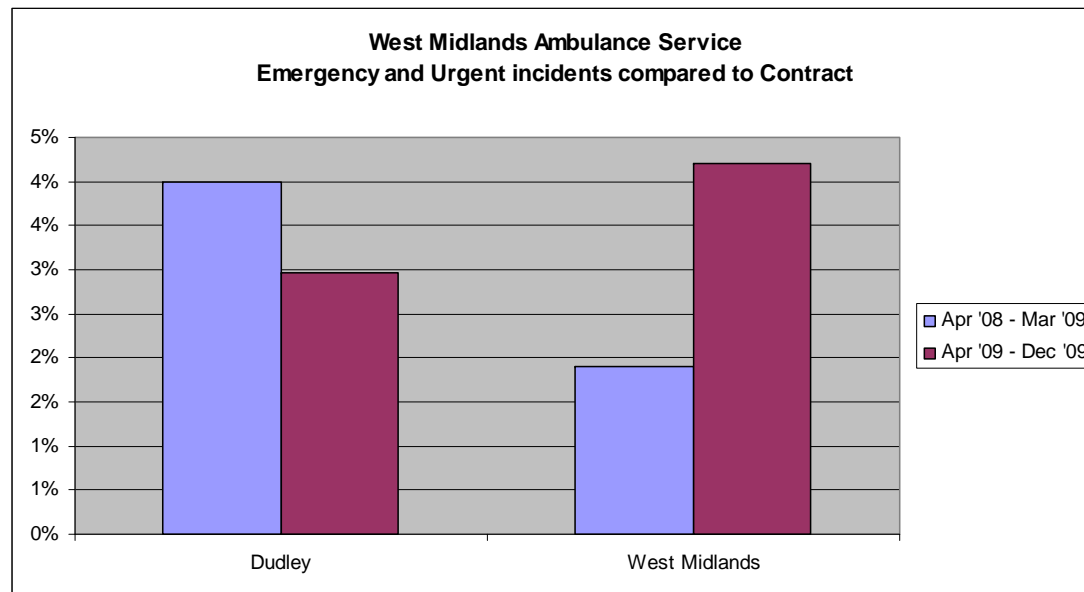


Main Issues Addressed by Independent Review into WMAS

- Demand
- Performance: Across region and by PCT
- Implications of urban/rural mix on performance
- Ambulance Resources
 - Capacity i.e. number of ambulances
 - Paramedic skill mix: currently only 52% of frontline staff are paramedics
- Status of urgent care provision
- Cost of the service

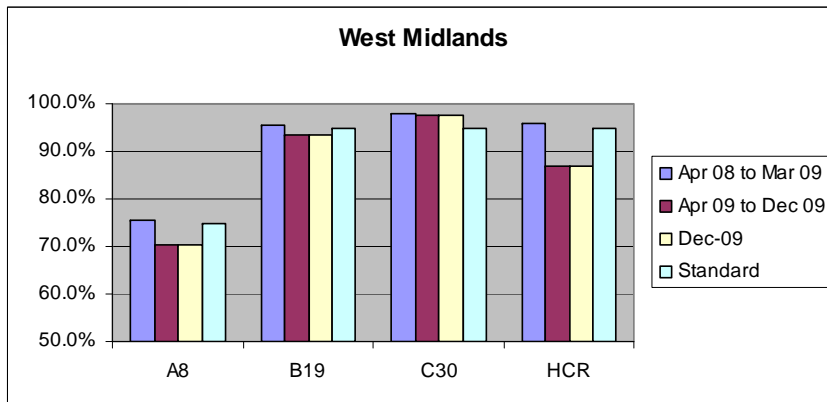
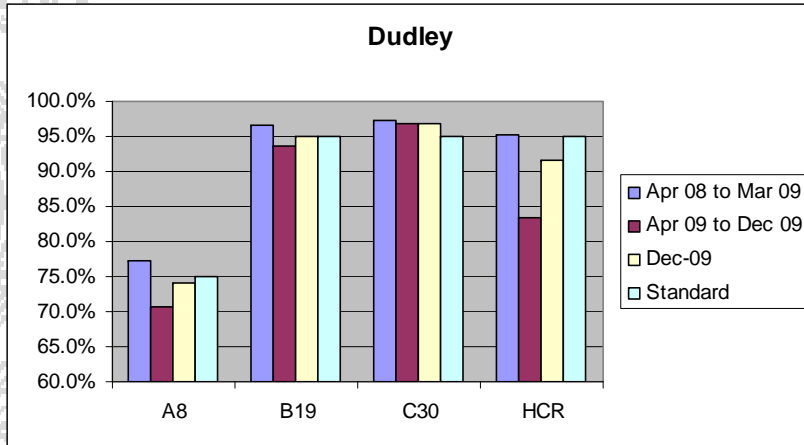
Demand exceeds Capacity

- Demand on WMAS is consistently above both the contracted level:



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Performance – not Sustainable



- **Despite achieving national targets for last three years WMAS performance**
 - **Not SUSTAINABLE** due to high demand exceeding operational capacity
 - **Not CONSISTENT** across the region

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Ambulance Resources

- Demand above contract means
 - not enough front line ambulance staff
 - WMAS unable to complete mandatory training updates
- Paramedic skill mix = 52%
 - Unable to put paramedic on every ambulance
 - Take too many patients to hospital
 - Insufficient use of alternative care pathways

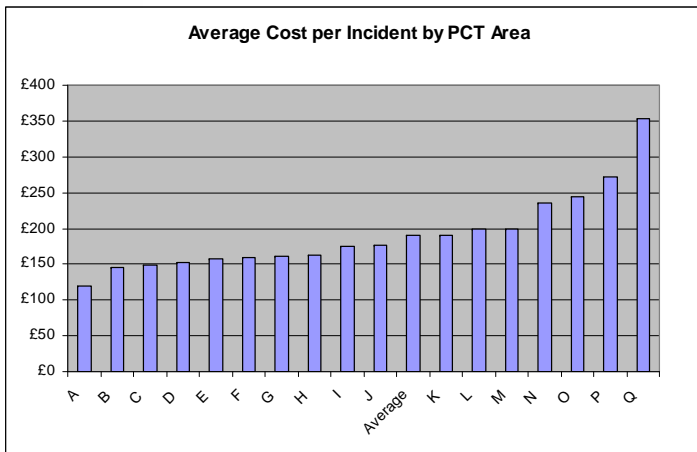
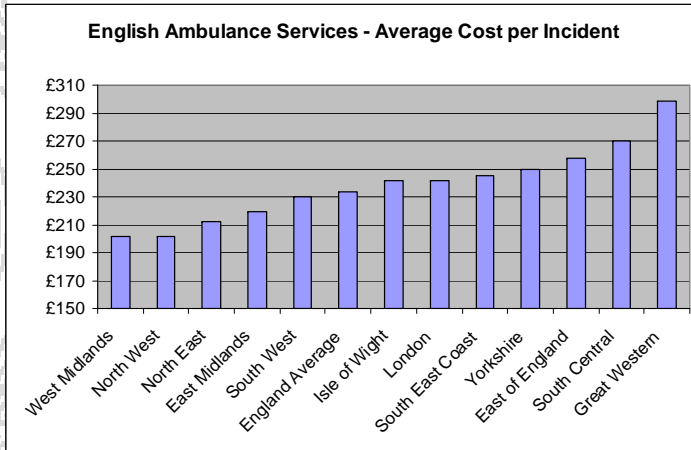


Status of Urgent Care Provision

- Urgent care provision varies across the West Midlands region
- Emergency ambulance demand increases when patients cannot access urgent care

WMAS Costs are Low

Wide Cost Variation between PCT



- WMAS costs are amongst the lowest in England
- Rural costs will always be higher than urban costs but
- Wide variation in costs between PCTs



Lightfoot Recommendations to WMAAS

- WMAAS was short of capacity
- Increase number of paramedics up to 70% of workforce to enable a paramedic on every ambulance
- Establish a common approach across the region

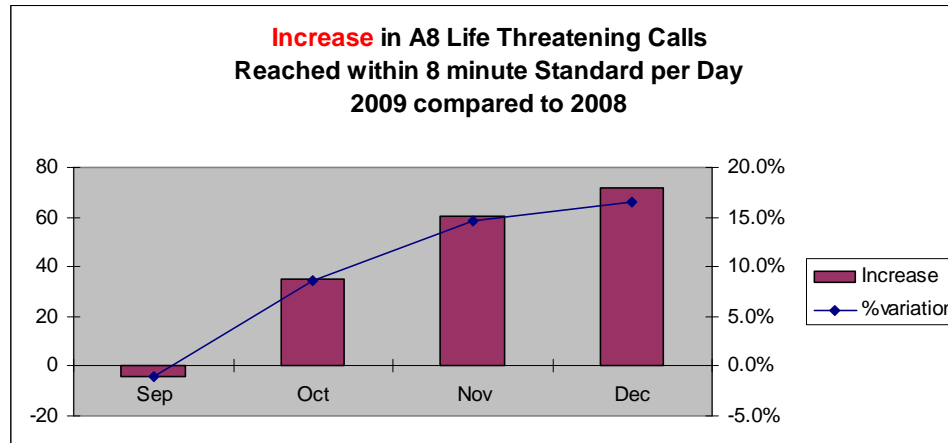


Lightfoot Main Recommendations to PCTs and WMAS

- Agree strategic direction
- Review the delivery of urgent care,
 - increase use of alternative care pathways and treatment in community
 - WMAS can play a greater role in delivery of urgent care
- Review funding arrangements

Lightfoot: Immediate Action

- PCT/WMAS Task & Finish Groups set up to implement recommendations
- Immediate action: PCTs invest c£11m for 2009/10
 - Recover performance by deploying additional ambulances
 - Performance improving despite high demand
 - Reaching more life threatening calls within 8 mins than last year



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Lightfoot: Immediate Action

- Regional Clinical Support Desk in Emergency Operations Centres to manage non-life threatening category C calls
 - Increase use of alternative pathways
- Healthcare Referral Ambulance tier for Urgent Referrals introduced
 - 25 additional ambulances / 100 staff trained



Paramedic Recruitment and Training

- By March 2013
 - Increase the number of paramedics by 300
 - Improve paramedic skill mix to 69% from 52%
- How:-
 - Major increase in training and development of existing workforce
 - Direct entry from university
 - Direct recruitment of qualified people



WMAS & PCT COMMISSIONERS ONGOING ACTION

- Agree commissioning PCT intentions and WMAS response
- Agree ongoing funding arrangements
 - Replace “block” contract with tariff
- Agree response model and performance management arrangements



Lightfoot Recommendations will Improve Patient Care

- Lightfoot will lead to even better patient care through:-
 - Improved commissioning arrangements
 - Establishment of sustainable ambulance high performance
 - Increased ambulance capacity
 - More effective capability – paramedic skill mix
 - Improvements to delivery of urgent care



Independent Review into West Midlands Ambulance Service

Any Questions?

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