



# North West Ambulance Service



NHS Trust

**REPORT TO:** Cheshire East Overview and Scrutiny Committee

**DATE:** 10 March 2010

**SUBJECT:** Update on progress with community and co-responder Scheme

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## Purpose of the Report

This report provides a brief overview on the progress by North West Ambulance Service on the issue of Community First responder (CFRs) and Co-responder schemes in Cheshire.

## Background

In February 2009, Nwas developed an action plan, signed off by its Trust Board, following the recommendations from the Cheshire Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Task & Review panel on the development of CFRs. This action plan has been progressed by the Trust and reported through to the OSC regularly.

## Update

A CFR regional forum was established in February 2009 to ensure full engagement was undertaken with CFR representatives on behalf of all the CFRs from across the region. A Memorandum of Understanding was developed in consultation with this group to ensure that all CFRs were working to consistent guidelines across the region. This was implemented by Summer 2009. Since the inception of the CFR Forum, the Trust has utilised the opportunity to further improve communication between Nwas and CFRs through the provision of support by the Trust's Communications Team. This includes the establishment of a dedicated CFR newsletter (The Responder), use of respective websites and

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ongoing assistance in supporting the work of individual teams through press releases, editorial and other forms of publicity to regional media. In addition to assisting with recruitment drives, a region wide advert and editorial promoting the work of the CFR teams and encouraging new members has been produced as part of a GP Health Care Guide distributed through surgeries across the North West.

A local group was established in Cheshire, chaired by the CEO of the PCT, Mike Pyrah, which continues to meet to make progress. A co-responder scheme was launched in conjunction with Cheshire Fire & Rescue and began operating in September 09. This continues to be monitored closely and there are monthly meetings with the co-responders to discuss concerns and resolve issues.

In addition NWS's Chief Executive Officer, Darren Hurrell and Mike Pyrah have met locally with MPs, Edward Timpson and Stephen O'Brien in December and January to progress matters and an additional ambulance resource is soon to be deployed to serve the Nantwich area. The impact of this vehicle will be monitored closely and NWS will continue to liaise with community representatives to obtain their feedback on this service. In terms of the individual CFR who had previously operated on blue lights in Nantwich, continued discussions with key local people in Nantwich, have resulted in restoring his ability to use blue lights, in recognition of the unique and special skills that he brings to his role as a Nantwich Community First Responder (CFR). Close working will continue between all parties in the area.

On a broader level, the Trust has developed a Chain of Survival strategy which has four strategic objectives to;

- Improve public awareness of how and when to **access emergency care**
- Increase the number of people in the North West able to provide **basic emergency life support**, including the use of an automated external defibrillator
- Increase the availability of emergency medical equipment, and in particular **automated external defibrillators**, for use in emergency situations
- Increase the availability of **advanced life support** trained responders able to provide support to emergency ambulance crews
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This work is extremely positive and will be overseen by a complementary resources steering group (established in 2009) which the Cheshire Association of Local Councils has been represented on, the last meeting was held in August. The Trust is defining the objectives for next year over the coming few weeks and these will integrate into the Trust's business plans.

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The Trust anticipates that Cheshire villages and small towns will develop Public Access Defibrillation and CFR schemes, and that this will be supported by a Cheshire steering group (one of five 'county' groups that will be tasked with implementing the strategy through multi-agency working). It is hoped that the first meeting of this Cheshire steering group will meet after 1 April 2010.

### **CFR schemes in Cheshire**

The number of individuals in the CFR schemes as a whole has increased by 25, bolstering existing schemes in Halton, Congleton, Knutsford and Holmes Chapel. NWS is now moving into new programmes in Frodsham, Crewe and Tarporley.

In Frodsham, NWS is working with the local council on a Public Access Defibrillation scheme and also one local resident has put themselves forward to be trained as a Community First Responder so a scheme will come on line there in a couple of months.

In Tarporley two residents have put themselves forward to be trained as Community First Responders so a scheme will come on line there in a couple of months. There will also be a Public Access Defibrillation scheme established there too.

A CFR scheme will soon be up and running in Crewe as four fully trained CFRs will be moving into this area.

### **Recommendations**

The committee is invited to receive this report, and make any further observations or enquiries at/after the meeting on 10 March.

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