



SOUTHEND ON SEA CITY COUNCIL
PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: 06 JULY 2022
REPORT OF EAST OF ENGLAND AMBULANCE SERVICE NHS TRUST
OVERVIEW AND PERFORMANCE





Purpose of report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with information regarding the performance of the East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust (EEAST) in Southend-on-Sea.

Summary

2. Response times for our most serious incidents have improved by 2.7 minutes for C1 in Mid and South Essex.
3. Response times for C2 category patients including chest pains and strokes have improved by 76.4 minutes in Mid and South Essex.
4. These improvements have been delivered through the introduction of c.11 more ambulances each day across mid and south Essex.
5. Demands on ambulance services nationally have been elevated since last summer and therefore further work is being undertaken to understand how response times can be improved further given that national target times are still not being met. As part of this work the Trust is recruiting and training over 500 more frontline clinicians this financial year.
6. The Care Quality Commission (CQC) carried out an inspection in May 2022 on the well-led domain and conducted interviews with employees. We are awaiting their feedback and report.
7. EEAST can confirm there are no plans to close Shoeburyness Ambulance Station in the current financial year (22/23).

Background

Improving patient care – Response times

8. Southend is part of the Mid and South Essex sector for EEAST and continues to be on track with improving response times. The most serious and urgent category known as C1 improved by 2.7 minutes from 10.6 minutes in March to 7.9 minutes in June (to 12 June). EEAST recognises that we still need to do more to achieve the national target of 7 minutes, but this is an improving trend and one that the service is looking to sustain.
9. The second most serious category known as C2 which includes chest pains and strokes improved by 76.4 minutes from 140.7 minutes in March to 64.3 minutes in June (to 12 June). Again, there is more to do to achieve the national target set for this category of between 18 and 40 minutes.
10. Since April, the service has been able to provide around 1,000 more ambulance hours each week, which equates to around 8 additional ambulances across the

sector. We continue to be on track to have all 11 ambulances routinely operational by the end of June.

11. Recruiting 111 more clinicians into the mid and south Essex over the course of this year to further increase the number of ambulances on the road.
12. EEAST continues to offer provide crews to Southend Hospital where they are unable to staff space within the A&E department to support the handover of patients and the release of ambulances to see patients within the local community.
13. Patients are routinely being diverted from Southend Hospital to neighbouring hospitals to help alleviate the pressure on Southend A&E. This has to be done with agreement between the hospital clinicians themselves, so is not directly within EEAST's control but the ambulance service has been actively facilitating and encouraging this at times of pressure and delay.
14. We continue to work with partners across the system to try to minimise the turnaround times at hospitals. This includes Hospital Admissions Liaison Officers (HALO) at each of the acute trusts to facilitate handovers and ensuring that patients receive care in the most appropriate setting for them without being taken to hospital unnecessarily. Southend Hospital has 3 ambulance service-staffed HALO officers that operate on a shift rota. These have been successful and will now become a permanent employee position shortly. The HALO role is a vitally important part of the patient care EEAST is able to provide but they are a key building block in terms of winter resilience, reducing handover delays and improving patient safety.

Hospital handovers

15. The Trust has been operating REAP 4 (Resource Escalation Action Plan 4) since late summer 2021. The national REAP framework is designed to maintain effective and safe operational and clinical response for patients. REAP 4 is the highest escalation alert for ambulance trusts and is currently the status of nearly all ambulance Trusts in England.
16. The latest figures on hospital handover delays are for week ending 26/06/2022. The average arrival to handover delay at Southend was 46 minutes, but this has come down from an average of 1 hour 30 minutes for the previous two weeks (12/06 and 19/06).
17. March to June 2022, 88% of our arrival to handover at Southend Hospital has been greater than 15 minutes (National target is 15 minutes).
18. This equates to lost hours of more than 5,000 and is equivalent to 456 ambulances being available to respond to patients within the community.



CQC inspection

19. EEAST is making good progress on moving out of special measures, at the time of writing this report, EEAST is awaiting the CQC's latest inspection report on the 'well-led' domain. The CQC visited Trust properties at the beginning of May and carried out interviews with employees. There will be a further update in a future report to this committee on the outcome of this inspection, once the results are provided.

Culture change

20. In the last year, we have taken a range of significant actions to address the deep-rooted cultural issues within our Trust, including:

- Strengthening our disciplinary processes
- Significant progress in resolving historic formal complaints from staff
- Encouraging people to speak up with a 900% increase in people coming forward due to our 'Speak Up, Speak Out' (Freedom to Speak Up) campaign
- Significant work with local teams to help address culture change issues
- More than half of staff have currently undertaken comprehensive new values and behaviours training

This work has resulted in:

- 5% reduction in bullying and harassment from managers
- 76% reduction of staff currently experiencing sexual harassment.
- 41% reduction in staff who have experienced sexual harassment in the past

Shoeburyness Ambulance Station

21. EEAST can confirm there are no plans to close Shoeburyness Ambulance Station in the current financial year (22/23). Ambulances will continue to operate and be staffed from the current site and any future plans will be developed through proactive stakeholder engagement including with this committee.

Community First Responders

22. Southend as a Community First Responder Group but needs more active volunteers as the group has a very small number of members.

23. EEAST does note that there is a significant variation between communities with long-standing active Community First Responder groups and other parts of Essex. For example, Community First Responder volunteers from Danbury and Bicknacre recorded 1200 hours versus 93 hours for Southend during April 2022.

24. If members of this committee know of anyone interested in becoming a Community First Responder please point them towards our website, where anyone can sign-up



to volunteer and undertake the necessary training. The website address:
<https://www.eastamb.nhs.uk/join-the-team/community-first-responders>

Conclusion

25. On performance, the picture remains complex as many of the challenges we face are at the system-level nationally and not being faced by EEAST alone.
26. Hospital handover delays are one such system-issue and we have resourced this with HALO officers to work closely with the new integrated Care Systems and colleagues in acute hospitals to identify and resolve these issues collaboratively.
27. To get the latest information about EEAST, including an update from the Chief Executive, please subscribe to our newsletter for stakeholders: InTouch EEAST
www.eastamb.nhs.uk/intoucheeast.htm

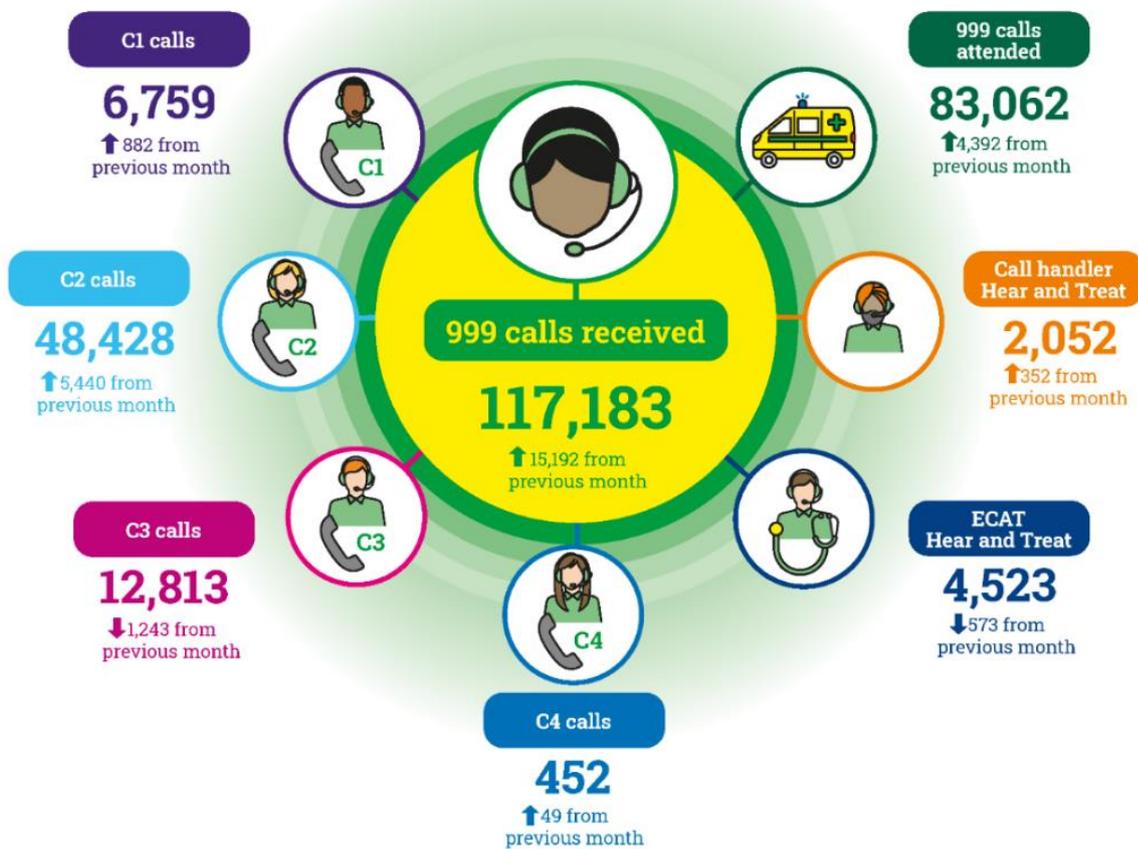


Region-wide performance for EEAST

**Monthly
Performance Dashboard**



June 2021 Data for 1-31 May 2021



KEY:

- 999 calls received:** Total number of 999 calls received in our three control rooms (AOCs) in Bedford, Chelmsford and Norwich.
- C1 calls:** Total number of calls requiring an immediate response to a potentially life-threatening illness or injury.
- C2 calls:** Total number of calls classed as an emergency for a potentially serious condition.
- C3 calls:** Total number of calls classed as urgent where some patients may be treated in their own home.
- C4 calls:** Total number of calls classed as less urgent where some patients may receive advice over the phone or be referred to another service such as a GP or pharmacist.
- 999 calls attended:** Total number of 999 calls that received a response from a clinician either by phone or face to face.
- Call handler Hear and Treat:** Total number of calls triaged by call handlers as not requiring an ambulance response.
- ECAT Hear and Treat:** Total number of calls managed by emergency clinical advice and triage (ECAT) clinicians not requiring an ambulance response face to face.