Malcolm Alexander

Chair

Healthwatch Hackney

April 9th, 2022

Dear Malcolm,

I hope you and yours are all well and escaped the virus. I have a very traumatic story about myself regarding LAS.

I am 78 years old and have multiple health problems including severe problems with my hip, despite having surgery on that hip several times.

I had an acute onset of pain on my bad hip which started at 1700hrs on April 1st, 2022. The pain got worse and more acute, I tried to sort it out by sitting, standing in every way possible but to no avail. Pain killers were of no use.

My first call to 111 was about 2000hrs but there was no answer. I held on for over 15 minutes but got no answer, and then phoned 999 only to be told that there was a 6 hr wait for an ambulance. They told me to redial 111 as they can get ambulances earlier. I rang 111 again and after a very long wait they answered and told me to ring 999 again.

I rang 999 again and they told they were very busy and that I was not considered to be an emergency. They told me to ring back if things changed for the worse. Later that night I rang back and said that the chest pain was increasing, that I have a serious heart condition and that the pain in my groin increasing. The pain was severe and crippling.

My wife Barbara who is very unwell at the moment stayed up all night with me to enable the ambulance crew to get into the house. I am bitterly unhappy that she was put though so much stress.

The time frame is as follows: I rang 111 at approx. 2000hrs on Friday 1st April, and the ambulance arrived approx. 07.00 Saturday morning.

I was in extreme pain for 11 hrs, despite telling 111 and the LAS that I also had severe chest pain.

I remember talking to the LAS asking how long the ambulance was going to take as my condition was worsening. They said sorry we are having very busy night and then said to me: “DONT CALL AGAIN”. What a way to treat 78yr old pensioner. The pain increased, I had nowhere to go. I did not make a further as I had been told not to.

The ambulance crew arrived at 700hrs and when they heard my story, they could not believe the situation I was in and had been left without any help for 11 hours.

The paramedics were brilliant. When they asked how bad the pain was on a scale of one to ten, I said: “one hundred and counting”. They gave me a paracetamol drip, morphine and entonox for about an hour. They were unable to move me to hospital until the entonox had started to work.

They could not move me until the pain was controlled which took some time. I was in hospital for the next 3 days

I could not walk, and I could not go to the toilet all night. To illustrate the severity of the toilet situation, when I got to the Princess Royal Hospital I had a bladder scan, and they found the reading on the bladder scan was 1,000 and I had to have a catheter fitted immediately. The actual urine measurement in my bladder was over 2,000mls. The Drs were horrified. They put me in a chair surrounded by cushions it was a horrific night.

The whole experience made me and my wife feel worthless. It was the first time I had called an ambulance for myself in years and I was shocked at how slow the service was despite the serious pain and other health problems that I suffered.

Joe Kerr

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**Malcolm, I give you permission and consent to share with the LAS, Healthwatch and other parties the contents of this letter. I  would also like this investigated by the LAS as a formal complaint.**

**Joe Kerr**