Garrett Emmerson,

Chief Executive,

London Ambulance Service,

220 Waterloo Road,

London, SE1 8SD

June 24th 2019

Dear Garrett, you may recall that the Forum carried out a detailed investigation of race equality in the LAS in 2016, and was able to show that progress with enhancement of race equality in the LAS, with respect to paramedics had been painfully slow. Since that time significant progress has been made with implementation of the WRES and with the overall diversity of the LAS.

Nevertheless, progress with the diversity of paramedics has been very disappointing, and the situation with EACs is very similar, whereas for call-handlers there is a steady and positive growth in relation to both gender and ethnicity – although call-handlers are amongst the lowest paid group of staff in the LAS.

Our most recent review of the paramedic data shows the following:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| PERIOD | % BAME PARAMEDICS | % BAME PARAMEDICS WITH  PATIENT CONTACT |
| 2015-17 | 7.0% | 4.6% |
| 2016-17 | 7.0% | 4.2% |
| 2017-18 | 6.0% | 3.9% |
| 2018-19 | 7.5% | 4.8% |

The recruitment to the TEAC/EAC grades offered a huge opportunity to transform diversity in the LAS paramedic workforce, e.g. through the outstanding EAC – Paramedic programme at the Fulham Education Centre (Academy). Unfortunately, the opportunity offered by this gateway for greater diversity in the paramedic workforce has not been realised as we had hoped.

As you know we made a number of significant recommendations on this issue in our last two Annual Reports, which unfortunately have not been implemented. We would be very grateful if you could let us know why you were unable to implement our recommendations. We do believe that had our recommendations been implemented, that the workforce would have been become more representative of the population of London in the medium and long term.

A major problem is that whilst other professions like nursing, medicine and HCAs are well known to the public, that paramedic science is not so well known, and in addition that recruitment from Australia may not add to the diversity of LAS paramedics (although we have not seen data on this issue).

**We would like to make the following recommendations to you:**

1. To change the name of Emergency Ambulance Crew to Emergency Ambulance Practitioners. The word ‘crew’ has no positive connotations for this important profession.
2. Ensure resources are available to fully cover the costs C1 training and licenses, without the trainee paramedic having to take out a loan.
3. Publicise the very positive career trajectory for paramedics, compared to other professions, e.g. nursing. It is much easier for a paramedic to move from band 5 to 6, and there are now a wide range of job opportunities available for paramedics.
4. Provide resources to expand Avril Lynch’s recruitment team, so that they can actively and continuously promote the profession of paramedic science in Further Education Colleges, Sixth Form Colleges and school six forms across London. Boroughs like Newham, Tower Hamlets, Brent, Southwark, Lewisham, Lambeth and Hackney would be excellent places to start. A target should be to work with at least 20 schools and colleges each year. A highly specialised recruitment team would be needed for this development – but it is essential and will ensure that the diversity of the paramedic workforce will within a few years remove the need to recruit from Australia.
5. Develop recruitment campaigns in the boroughs highlighted above in churches, mosques and temples. Some of these places of religious worship have very diverse congregations of many hundreds of people who regularly attend services.

We look forward to your very positive response to these recommendations.

Best wishes



 Malcolm Alexander

 Chair

 Patients’ Forum for the LAS

 [www.patientsforumlas.net](http://www.patientsforumlas.net)

 **Copy to: Melissa Berry, Trisha Bain, Averil Lynch, Ali Layne-Smith.**

 [**RACE EQUALITY IN THE LONDON AMBULANCE SERVICE**](https://www.patientsforumlas.net/uploads/6/6/0/6/6606397/race_equality-las_report-updated_july_2018-final-ok-2016.docx)

[**www.patientsforumlas.net/equality--inclusion-and-diversity-in-the-las.html**](http://www.patientsforumlas.net/equality--inclusion-and-diversity-in-the-las.html)

**RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE LAS FROM FORUM ANNUAL REPORTS**

**2017-18**

1) A major professional recruitment campaign should be developed by the LAS, to recruit EAC and future paramedics from schools and colleges in inner London boroughs. It is unacceptable to spend vast resources recruiting from Australia instead of recruiting from London’s diverse and highly skilled communities.

2) The LAS should ensure that the LAS Academy plays a major role in developing a diverse workforce.

3) In line with the agreement between the LAS and EHRC the LAS should collect equality data from patients who make complaints and monitor the frequency of complaints from BME service users.

**2016-17**

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2) The LAS must ensure that the Academy plays a major role in developing a diverse workforce.

3) In line with the agreement between the LAS and EHRC the LAS must collect equality data from patients who make complaints and monitor the frequency of complaints from BME service users.