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Chair's Report – September 2012

This is the last of my Chair's reports, as after chairing the Forum for two years I am not standing for re-election. A new Chair will be elected at this month's meeting. It is appropriate time for a change at the head of the Forum as the London Ambulance Service itself is experiencing a great deal of change. Firstly, the Chief Executive, Peter Bradley, is leaving the service next week and I am hopeful that we will be able to say farewell to him this evening and thank him for his co-operation with the Forum since its inception. Secondly, the Chief Operating Officer, Martin Flaherty, is also leaving the LAS before Xmas, another leading manager of the Trust, who has been at its head for some time. So not only is the LAS facing the transition to foundation trust status over the next few months but is also facing major change in the structure of its senior management. This makes it even more relevant that we hear from the Chair of the LAS, Richard Hunt, at this month's meeting and AGM as to how he envisions the future of the service, with a new CEO about to begin and enormous changes in the NHS in London underway.

Malcolm Alexander and I met with Martin Flaherty and Katie Millard (LAS Manager for the Eastern area) to discuss problems of capacity in the LAS generally but more specifically issues connected with East London and the impact on services there. We will report back on this at the meeting on September 3rd. At that meeting we briefly discussed the Olympics and how the LAS had performed over the games period. It appears that all went very well and that demand for the service actually dropped over the period, contrary to all expectations, but we will see the figures for this period next month. Certainly it would appear that the LAS performed very well during the Olympics and all staff and managers deserve a vote of thanks for that, in what must have been a very demanding period. We still have to see how the Paralympics pan out.

Our Annual Report was recently issued and we hope to make copies of this widely available as well as being on our website. We have also had a response from the LAS on the issue of responses to the Quality Accounts, which I shall raise at the meeting. The issue of how the Forum responds to the LAS gaining Foundation Trust status and Forum members standing as governor candidates needs to be taken forward in the next few months and there is also a need for the Forum's officers to consider how this will impact on the Forum's role. Over the last year we have addressed a wide range of issues - mental health, sickle cell, older people, staff relations in the LAS, reports from the London Assembly to name just some. I would like to thank all Forum members for

their support and particularly the Vice Chairs, Malcolm Alexander, Lynn Strother and Sister Josephine Udine, as well as Margaret Vander (LAS Head of Patient/Public Involvement & Public Education) and other staff of the London Ambulance Service. It has been a real opportunity to chair the Forum and I wish my successor all the best for the coming year.

Dr Joseph Healy