

# PATIENTS' FORUM

FOR THE LONDON AMBULANCE SERVICE

## BRIEFING FOR MAYOR, ASSEMBLY AND GLA

DECEMBER 8<sup>th</sup> 2017

### LONDON'S AMBULANCE QUEUING SCANDAL

In **August 2017** there were **2144** ambulance breaches of over 30 minutes outside London's A&Es. A breach, in this case, is the time in excess of 30 minutes from wheel-stop to handover of patients to A&E clinicians.

There were **1500 breaches of one hour** or more and almost **200 patients** who waited between **2 to 3 hours before handover in August 2017**.

**The Patients' Forum publicised these breaches** and the CCG responded by refusing to provide the Forum with data on breaches and refused to provide any performance data to the Forum.

Patients waiting for long periods in ambulances may already have waited several hours for an ambulance to arrive, clinically assess them and take them to hospital. They may remain in A&E for four hours or more and then be transferred to an acute admissions ward. Thus, **a patient with dementia and a chest infection who has fallen and is in a great deal of pain, may wait 10 hours or more before being admitted to a ward. In our view the patient has been failed and the NHS is practising bad medicine.**

Patients are being failed because highly trained clinical staff from the LAS are wasting time queuing in ambulance, instead of responding to emergencies. Patients are suffering because the NHS and local government does not have the resources to increase bed numbers and provide safe and secure care in people own homes.

The health of patients is being put at risk, because many are lying on trolleys waiting to get into A&E Departments instead of receiving treatment. Ambulance queuing substantially reduces the resources available to respond to patients waiting for emergency care on the street or in their homes and puts those patients' lives at risk.

Despite persistent criticisms of London's ambulance queues over past years, the problem persists and provides evidence of the failure of NHS England and London's CCG commissioners to adequately fund hospital services and to ensure there are sufficient beds and staff to meet patients' needs. Local authorities must share the

blame for failing to ensure that patients can be safely discharged from hospital to their home.

NHS England claims that the system is now being better managed, but we see no evidence that enhanced management is transforming a very bad situation. There are some superficial improvements, but the situation remains unacceptable and is likely to get worse because of the closure of A&E departments and winter pressures.

**In the week beginning June 26<sup>th</sup> 2017, Northwick Park Hospital recorded 103 hours of ambulance queuing, whilst King's College Hospital recorded 86 hours and the Royal Free Hospital 80 hours.**

## **OUR PROPOSALS**

The Mayor and the London Assembly have new powers over the NHS in London, in addition to their traditional remit of caring for the health and wellbeing of Londoners. The LAS Patients Forum has held many meetings over the years in City Hall with representatives of the Assembly and has also given evidence to the Health Committee, most recently on the LAS.

We are facing a very dangerous winter in London for vulnerable patients, with staff and hospitals already operating to capacity. There is also the prospect of a flu epidemic. The social care system in many boroughs is in a state of near collapse and this is resulting in delays in discharging patients from hospitals leading to bed blocking etc. The Mayor and the Assembly have a strategic role for health in London and should be looking at the situation over the 32 boroughs and taking action.

### **WE WOULD LIKE THE MAYOR TO:**

- 1. Set up an inquiry into the failure of the NHS and Local Authorities to deal with the ambulance queuing crisis over the past five years.*
- 2. Work with NHS London and local authorities to develop additional care pathways to alleviate the crisis facing the LAS in London over this winter.*
- 3. Take action to address the social care crisis in many London boroughs. Local authorities are desperately trying to cope with the rising numbers of elderly and other people needing social care packages after being discharged from hospital, or who are being admitted to hospital in the first place because of the absence of social care. It is time to call for an Older People's Summit in London in collaboration with local authorities social care and the NHS, to call for greater resources and effective health and social care collaboration to deal with issues such as dementia and early patient discharge, which are leading to many of the bottlenecks in London hospitals.*
- 4. Challenge STP plans, which are leading to the closure of some A&E departments and hospital services, placing further pressure on the LAS and the remaining hospitals.*

5. *Put in place measures together with the NHS, to address the possibility of a flu epidemic in London this winter and spring. An epidemic could have the potential to throw all of London's health services, including the LAS into chaos.*
6. *Call on NHS London, the Secretary of State to ensure that there is sufficient funding for London's health service, considering the increasing population of the city and the diversity of its demography.*
7. *Bring pressure to bear on the LAS to recruit paramedics and other staff from London, thus alleviating the unemployment levels particularly among Black and Minority ethnic communities and disabled people, rather than seeking out staff in Australia.*

Malcolm Alexander, Chair, Patients' Forum for the LAS  
 Joseph Healy, President, Patients' Forum for the LAS  
[www.PATIENTSFORUMLAS.NET](http://www.PATIENTSFORUMLAS.NET)

## DATA

### HOSPITALS WITH THE WORST QUEUES

JULY 3-9<sup>th</sup> 2017, patients suffered the longest waits at:

- King's College Hospital – 102hrs wasted
- Northwick Park – 77hrs
- Royal Free– 73hrs
- UCL – 61hrs

### WASTED HOURS SPENT QUEUING ACROSS LONDON IN 2017 INCLUDED

2017	Time spent by ambulance queuing outside A&E
Jan 2-8	2197 hours
Jan 9-15	1491 hours
Feb 13-19	933 hours
Mar 13-19	1138 hours
April 17-23	990 hours
May 1-7	1016 hours
June 12-18	828 hours
July 3-9	961 hours

## WAITS FOR ADMISSION BY **INDIVIDUAL** PATIENTS TO A&E FROM AMBULANCE

A FULL DATA SET IS ATTACHED

There were 818 one hour plus breaches in June 2017 – patients waiting over an hour for transfer from ambulance to A&E. These included:

2017	PATIENT WAITED	HOSPITAL
May 1	2 hrs, 9 minutes	Whipps Cross
May 2	2hrs, 20 minutes	Northwick Park
May 11	2hrs, 14 mins	Northwick Park
May 16	2hrs, 12 mins	Goodmayes - Psychiatric
May 23	1 hour, 57 mins	Princess Royal
June 1	1 hour	Hammersmith Hospital
June 2	1 hour	Homerton University Hospital
June 4	1 hour, 55 mins	Ealing Hospital
June 10	1 hour	Springfield Psychiatric Hospital
June 10	1 hour, 10 mins	St Thomas's Catheter Lab ( <b>Heart attack centre</b> )
June 18	2 hrs, 13 mins	Royal London Hospital
June 26	2 hrs	King's College Hospital
June 27	1 hour, 23mins	University College Hospital
June 29	1 hour, 32min	Newham General Hospital
June 29	2 hrs, 10 mins	Barts Hospital Catheter Lab ( <b>Heart attack centre</b> )
June 29	1 hr	Charing Cross Hospital
July 6	3hrs 10 mins	Maudsley – Mental Health
July 12	1hr 10 mins	St Helier
July 15	1hr 4 mins	Hammersmith Cath Lab
July 18	2hrs 15 mins	Royal Free Hospital
July 27	1 hr 9 mins	Barnet Maternity

Heart Attack Centers used to perform lifesaving angioplasty for patients suffering cardiac arrest and other serious heart conditions. The overall survival rate for patients taken to any Heart Attack Centre in London was 63.3%

### WE HAVE RAISED THIS APPALLING SITUATION WITH:

Mayor of London on June 10<sup>th</sup> 2016 and August 21<sup>st</sup> 2017 the Medical Director for the NHS in London, NHS England, Professor Keith Willett, Director for Acute Care to NHS England, NHS Improvement and Pauline Cranmer, Assistant Director for the NHS - NW London. We have consistently complained about the totally inappropriate and potentially harmful state of emergency services caused by ambulance queuing - but little has changed.

## OUR DEMAND TO NHS ENGLAND

NHS England must ensure that all ambulance queues are stopped completely during 2017. Resources must be provided to ensure there are adequate numbers of beds and staff to care for patients who require admission to hospital. Discharge arrangements must be radically improved to ensure that no patient is put at risk by delayed discharges.

### WORST AMBULANCE QUEUES AT LONDON'S A&Es – WASTED HOURS - 2016

MONTH 2016	DATE	TOTAL HOURS WASTED	A&E - 1	A&E - 2	A&E - 3	Northwick Park
February	15-21	1086 hrs	Queen Eliz 127	North Middx 103	Princes Royal 102	Northwick Park 53
March	14-20	1265 hrs	Northwick 121	North Middx 113	Queen Eliz 107	Northwick Park 121
April	4-10	1035 hrs	Barnet 120	North Middx 96	Princess Roy 81	Northwick Park 73
May	9-15	1157 hrs	Northw Park 102	Princess Royal 93	North Middx 86	Northwick Park 102
June	6-12	1085 hrs	North Middx 113	Queen Eliz 109	Barnet 109	Northwick Park 34
July	18-24	949 hrs	Northwick 99	Princess Royal 89	Hillingdon 63	Northwick Park 99
August-Sept	29 - 4/9	795 hrs	North Middx 71	Royal Free 70	King's 69	Northwick Park 40
September	19-25	817 hrs	Princ Royal 81	UCH 63	Royal Free 62	Northwick Park 45
Sept-October	26 – 2/10	909 hrs	Princ Roy 107	UCH 77	Royal Free 74	Northwick Park 37
October	10-16	1178 hrs	Princ Royal 118	Barnet 98	UCH 80	Northwick Park 50
October	24-30	1050 hrs	Barnet 120	Royal Free 98	Princess Roy 94	Northwick Park 51
November	14-20	1381 hrs	Barnet 178	Northwick Park 142	Royal Free 104	Northwick Park 142
December	5-12	1727 hrs	Northw Park 279	Queen Eliz 141	Princess Roy 134	Northwick Park 279

Handover Waits 2016 – Data from Brent CCG – LAS Commissioners

# Hospital Breach Analysis Incident List

Date: 01/08/2017 to 31/08/2017  
 Measure: Arrived at Hospital to Patient Handover times over 45 minutes  
 Including blue calls

<span style="color: green;">■</span>	Target met
<span style="color: yellow;">■</span>	Target missed
<span style="color: red;">■</span>	30 minute breach
<span style="color: black;">■</span>	60 minute breach

Total: 2144 records

Show Chart

Date	CAD	Callsign	Hospital	Arrived at Hospital to Patient Handover	Patient Handover to Green	Arrived at Hospital to Green	Blue Call
13/08/17	2766	PD25	Whipps Cross	00:48:13	00:24:27	01:12:40	0
21/08/17	1788	C305	Northwick Park	01:25:24	00:15:17	01:40:41	0
02/08/17	1263	C803	Northwick Park	01:47:21	00:05:18	01:52:39	0
16/08/17	1228	M402	Princess Royal, Farnborough	01:05:28	00:13:05	01:18:33	0
04/08/17	2050	M401	Princess Royal, Farnborough	01:00:46	00:02:02	01:02:48	0
07/08/17	4160	B231	Northwick Park	00:57:40	00:13:08	01:10:48	0
15/08/17	1840	J303	Whipps Cross	01:20:32	00:13:37	01:34:09	0
26/08/17	3690	C353	Northwick Park	02:15:00	00:14:00	02:29:00	0
21/08/17	1344	C803	St Marys, W2 - Maternity	00:51:27	00:13:06	01:04:33	1
16/08/17	1582	M401	Princess Royal, Farnborough	01:34:20	00:14:53	01:49:13	0
23/08/17	4028	B231	Northwick Park	00:48:36	00:13:47	01:02:23	0
29/08/17	4193	B730	Northwick Park	00:51:14	00:13:14	01:04:28	0
07/08/17	1964	H503	Whipps Cross	01:10:56	00:18:08	01:29:04	0
06/08/17	1210	M401	Princess Royal, Farnborough	00:58:55	00:16:58	01:15:53	0
25/08/17	2044	C320	Northwick Park	02:36:30	00:19:11	02:55:41	0
04/08/17	3190	C320	Northwick Park	00:57:57	00:02:31	01:00:28	1
16/08/17	2773	H201	National, Queen Square	00:46:37	00:10:36	00:57:13	1
07/08/17	2118	J303	Whipps Cross	01:17:09	01:16:16	02:33:25	0
23/08/17	2548	C305	Northwick Park	00:56:59	00:07:37	01:04:36	0
23/08/17	3596	PD25	Northwick Park	00:57:01	00:12:59	01:10:00	0
05/08/17	3034	M123	Princess Royal, Farnborough	00:57:57	00:16:23	01:14:20	0
24/08/17	3775	J430	Whipps Cross	01:07:56	00:21:55	01:29:51	0
14/08/17	3683	M123	Princess Royal, Farnborough	01:14:17	00:11:02	01:25:19	0
29/08/17	4000	J332	Whipps Cross	01:03:02	00:13:04	01:16:06	1
03/08/17	1861	N602	Princess Royal, Farnborough	01:11:12	00:14:10	01:25:22	0
08/08/17	3727	B730	Northwick Park	00:46:14	00:10:00	00:56:14	0
02/08/17	2744	C130	Northwick Park	00:46:55	00:12:55	00:59:50	0
15/08/17	3167	J332	Whipps Cross	00:50:49	00:19:51	01:10:40	0
01/08/17	2855	PD23	Whipps Cross	00:45:32	00:13:55	00:59:27	0
28/08/17	1906	H203	Northwick Park	02:16:34	00:18:55	02:35:29	0
14/08/17	3659	B730	Watford General	00:47:52	00:08:39	00:56:31	0
29/08/17	3173	C320	Northwick Park	01:27:50	00:52:00	02:19:50	0
10/08/17	3063	PD25	Watford General	02:00:00	00:14:12	02:14:12	0
08/08/17	3681	J430	Whipps Cross	00:50:08	00:12:10	01:02:18	0
16/08/17	2863	J120	Whipps Cross	00:50:41	00:01:54	00:52:35	0
11/08/17	3099	M123	Princess Royal, Farnborough	01:04:46	00:14:45	01:19:31	0
26/08/17	4503	C130	Northwick Park	01:00:51	00:11:35	01:12:26	0
08/08/17	1947	SC89	Whipps Cross	01:11:00	00:14:34	01:25:34	0
10/08/17	2300	PD25	Northwick Park	01:12:00	00:15:09	01:27:09	0
30/08/17	3523	A130	Northwick Park	00:52:32	00:13:14	01:05:46	0

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 Including blue calls

<span style="background-color: #d9ead3; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px;"></span> Target met
<span style="background-color: #fff2cc; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px;"></span> Target missed
<span style="background-color: #f4cccc; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px;"></span> 30 minute breach
<span style="background-color: #e6b89c; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px;"></span> 60 minute breach

01/08/17	3159	J421	Whipps Cross	00:53:22	00:16:11	01:09:33	0
31/08/17	1765	N602	Princess Royal, Farnborough	00:45:19	00:22:20	01:07:39	0
10/08/17	2106	M401	Princess Royal, Farnborough	00:46:30	00:14:12	01:00:42	0
18/08/17	1577	N602	Princess Royal, Farnborough	01:54:40	00:13:46	02:08:26	0
31/08/17	148	A130	Northwick Park	01:26:11	00:14:16	01:40:27	0
31/08/17	2152	C305	Northwick Park	01:55:07	00:07:30	02:02:37	0
01/08/17	4213	J430	Whipps Cross	01:19:20	No PH time		0
05/08/17	1846	M402	Princess Royal, Farnborough	00:45:27	00:45:14	01:30:41	0
05/08/17	1964	C305	Watford General	03:27:56	00:06:30	03:34:26	0
05/08/17	1988	M401	Princess Royal, Farnborough	00:56:50	00:16:02	01:12:52	0
30/08/17	3660	C130	Northwick Park	00:58:34	00:17:40	01:16:14	0
16/08/17	1318	H201	Royal Brompton - Arrhythmia Centre	00:47:00	00:10:45	00:57:45	1
24/08/17	390	J430	Whipps Cross	00:51:34	00:25:50	01:17:24	0
07/08/17	3615	B730	Northwick Park	01:02:51	00:04:38	01:07:29	0
07/08/17	3617	J430	Whipps Cross	00:57:20	00:23:38	01:20:58	0
26/08/17	4061	C130	Northwick Park	02:09:29	00:09:57	02:19:26	0
23/08/17	2672	PD25	Northwick Park	02:20:00	00:02:46	02:22:46	1
27/08/17	2133	C105	Northwick Park	01:43:54	00:14:41	01:58:35	0
31/08/17	1992	M402	Princess Royal, Farnborough	00:53:30	00:13:31	01:07:01	1
28/08/17	3341	C122	Northwick Park	01:42:14	00:05:08	01:47:22	0
17/08/17	3449	B530	Northwick Park	00:52:33	00:10:19	01:02:52	0
25/08/17	3173	C332	Northwick Park	00:57:27	00:08:09	01:05:36	0
07/08/17	2643	C309	Northwick Park	00:54:37	00:23:41	01:18:18	0
07/08/17	3738	J222	Whipps Cross	00:58:48	00:17:30	01:16:18	0
15/08/17	2132	C804	Northwick Park	00:46:55	00:23:38	01:10:33	0
14/08/17	4402	T184	Whipps Cross	00:57:44	00:15:37	01:13:21	0
03/08/17	1933	TB83	Princess Royal, Farnborough	01:21:13	00:15:19	01:36:32	0
06/08/17	2130	TB83	Princess Royal, Farnborough	02:09:58	00:17:42	02:27:40	0
25/08/17	1853	B701	Northwick Park	02:27:40	00:15:54	02:43:34	0
29/08/17	1359	B685	Northwick Park	00:53:33	00:10:24	01:03:57	0
29/08/17	1788	B685	Northwick Park	03:32:29	00:28:58	04:01:27	0
27/08/17	4032	C331	Watford General	01:13:20	00:20:55	01:34:15	0
07/08/17	2076	J420	Whipps Cross	01:28:39	00:12:24	01:41:03	0
15/08/17	2907	K322	Whipps Cross	01:01:21	00:06:27	01:07:48	0
27/08/17	605	B332	Northwick Park	01:42:51	00:14:04	01:56:55	0
27/08/17	1536	C309	Homerton University - Maternity	00:49:27	00:18:08	01:07:35	0
03/08/17	3870	B330	Northwick Park	01:28:29	00:19:44	01:48:13	0
02/08/17	1142	B685	Northwick Park	01:01:49	00:01:53	01:03:42	0
08/08/17	3174	C122	Northwick Park	00:49:55	00:12:15	01:02:10	0
07/08/17	2398	C101	Northwick Park	01:15:01	00:35:36	01:50:37	0
07/08/17	3063	C122	Northwick Park	03:05:22	00:23:31	03:28:53	0
15/08/17	2006	B685	Northwick Park	01:05:29	00:02:57	01:08:26	0
15/08/17	2776	C122	Northwick Park	01:11:15	00:05:48	01:17:03	0
27/08/17	86	C332	Northwick Park	01:56:54	00:08:32	02:05:26	0
08/08/17	1847	C103	Northwick Park	01:40:05	00:11:42	01:51:47	0
19/08/17	3269	C331	Northwick Park	00:55:07	00:14:37	01:09:44	0
30/08/17	1478	L204	Princess Royal, Farnborough	00:53:19	00:13:44	01:07:03	0

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 Including blue calls

	Target met
	Target missed
	30 minute breach
	60 minute breach

02/08/17	1170	C103	Northwick Park	01:13:40	00:01:02	01:14:42	0
29/08/17	2134	F185	Northwick Park	01:24:57	00:22:03	01:47:00	0
29/08/17	3653	J131	Whipps Cross	01:06:53	00:11:04	01:17:57	0
29/08/17	4065	C331	Northwick Park	01:52:45	00:15:00	02:07:45	0
07/08/17	2131	C103	Northwick Park	00:57:39	00:08:06	01:05:45	0
05/08/17	3095	NT43	Princess Royal, Farnborough	01:23:00	00:10:00	01:33:00	0
06/08/17	2152	N403	Princess Royal, Farnborough	01:00:27	00:08:04	01:08:31	0
17/08/17	3266	C332	Northwick Park	01:38:17	00:13:06	01:51:23	0
21/08/17	2050	B701	Northwick Park	01:11:24	00:19:14	01:30:38	0
25/08/17	1722	C103	Northwick Park	00:49:43	00:03:46	00:53:29	0
23/08/17	4011	C331	Northwick Park	01:19:05	00:12:03	01:31:08	0
30/08/17	3767	B530	Northwick Park	01:44:15	00:07:53	01:52:08	0
14/08/17	2935	TB83	Princess Royal, Farnborough	01:09:39	00:01:53	01:11:32	0
05/08/17	2623	TB83	Princess Royal, Farnborough	00:54:20	00:07:18	01:01:38	0
24/08/17	4391	EX21	Northwick Park	02:16:05	PH after green	00:30:57	0
02/08/17	2012	TB83	Princess Royal, Farnborough	00:50:55	00:03:52	00:54:47	0
17/08/17	3112	K322	Whipps Cross	01:37:59	00:10:27	01:48:26	0
23/08/17	141	C332	Northwick Park	00:57:55	00:24:55	01:22:50	0
26/08/17	3908	C332	Northwick Park	03:14:25	00:01:45	03:16:10	0
26/08/17	5055	C331	Northwick Park	00:57:04	00:05:35	01:02:39	0
02/08/17	900038	C332	Northwick Park	00:50:00	00:05:00	00:55:00	0
23/08/17	2021	SC80	Northwick Park	00:54:07	00:14:03	01:08:10	0
01/08/17	3980	C332	Northwick Park	01:05:02	00:16:18	01:21:20	0
01/08/17	4221	C831	Northwick Park	01:02:00	00:05:00	01:07:00	0
24/08/17	2257	C103	Northwick Park	00:45:54	00:01:01	00:46:55	0
28/08/17	2369	C101	Northwick Park	03:44:35	00:43:53	04:28:28	0
05/08/17	1744	B701	Watford General	03:09:18	00:02:43	03:12:01	0
10/08/17	1442	N402	Princess Royal, Farnborough	00:46:37	00:01:30	00:48:07	0
03/08/17	3848	C122	Northwick Park	00:50:34	00:01:55	00:52:29	0
07/08/17	1782	K304	Whipps Cross	00:47:01	00:01:07	00:48:08	0
29/08/17	3431	K322	Whipps Cross	00:57:19	00:03:43	01:01:02	0
22/08/17	2061	M202	Princess Royal, Farnborough	00:59:39	00:05:12	01:04:51	0
22/08/17	3619	B621	Northwick Park	00:54:52	00:48:18	01:43:10	0
21/08/17	3158	D420	Northwick Park	02:31:42	00:02:21	02:34:03	1
07/08/17	2168	M106	Princess Royal, Farnborough	00:45:12	00:16:16	01:01:28	0
23/08/17	153	C334	Northwick Park	00:57:19	00:11:41	01:09:00	0
27/08/17	541	C334	Northwick Park	01:54:41	00:28:40	02:23:21	0
30/08/17	1148	M201	Princess Royal, Farnborough	01:35:21	00:22:38	01:57:59	0
15/08/17	3076	B621	Northwick Park	00:50:27	00:12:11	01:02:38	0
19/08/17	2911	B623	Watford General	00:48:16	00:00:19	00:48:35	1
24/08/17	4245	B621	Northwick Park	00:58:25	00:03:48	01:02:13	0
10/08/17	4410	PD27	Northwick Park	00:57:49	00:12:58	01:10:47	0
13/08/17	4796	M430	Princess Royal, Farnborough	00:52:37	00:21:20	01:13:57	0
07/08/17	2017	E320	Northwick Park	01:23:20	00:22:19	01:45:39	0
15/08/17	1201	M107	Princess Royal, Farnborough	01:00:21	00:15:28	01:15:49	0
15/08/17	2354	B605	Northwick Park	00:46:46	00:02:39	00:49:25	0
02/08/17	3157	C334	Northwick Park	01:01:08	00:20:42	01:21:50	0



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 Measure: Arrived at Hospital to Patient Handover times over 45 minutes  
 Including blue calls

<span style="background-color: #d9ead3; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px;"></span> Target met
<span style="background-color: #fff2cc; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px;"></span> Target missed
<span style="background-color: #f4cccc; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px;"></span> 30 minute breach
<span style="background-color: #e6b89c; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px;"></span> 60 minute breach

02/08/17	1282	C301	Northwick Park	01:08:41	00:12:01	01:20:42	0
14/08/17	3862	D420	Northwick Park	00:54:29	00:22:12	01:16:41	0
06/08/17	2113	L402	Princess Royal, Farnborough	01:08:15	00:03:47	01:12:02	0
17/08/17	3249	B621	Northwick Park	03:02:04	00:15:32	03:17:36	0
17/08/17	3660	C334	Northwick Park	01:48:26	00:23:56	02:12:22	0
15/08/17	1385	M106	Princess Royal, Farnborough	01:37:06	00:05:52	01:42:58	0
15/08/17	1790	M107	Princess Royal, Farnborough	01:58:50	00:16:40	02:15:30	0
30/08/17	1021	L401	Princess Royal, Farnborough	01:34:48	00:19:43	01:54:31	0
03/08/17	3241	M122	Princess Royal, Farnborough	00:48:10	00:17:45	01:05:55	0
17/08/17	1983	M106	Princess Royal, Farnborough	00:56:32	00:12:03	01:08:35	0
03/08/17	2036	NT47	Princess Royal, Farnborough	00:53:00	00:03:00	00:56:00	0
17/08/17	3288	B620	Northwick Park	00:46:47	00:09:54	00:56:41	0
25/08/17	1564	C301	Northwick Park	01:56:27	00:30:12	02:26:39	0
25/08/17	2665	K302	Whipps Cross	01:03:09	00:14:15	01:17:24	0
31/08/17	4005	K430	Whipps Cross	00:50:53	00:08:25	00:59:18	0
16/08/17	1449	L403	Princess Royal, Farnborough	01:10:40	00:21:15	01:31:55	0
04/08/17	2779	TK83	Northwick Park	00:49:53	00:10:20	01:00:13	0
07/08/17	2639	C334	Northwick Park	01:20:25	00:55:04	02:15:29	0
15/08/17	1227	L102	Princess Royal, Farnborough	00:47:20	00:12:49	01:00:09	0
23/08/17	1282	L403	Princess Royal, Farnborough	00:47:46	00:30:45	01:18:31	0
08/08/17	1214	B605	Northwick Park	00:52:37	00:14:26	01:07:03	0
19/08/17	2486	B250	Watford General	02:29:25	00:02:13	02:31:38	0
24/08/17	2744	M201	Princess Royal, Farnborough	00:45:13	00:01:23	00:46:36	0
14/08/17	3846	L430	Princess Royal, Farnborough	01:47:30	00:00:49	01:48:19	1
22/08/17	3760	C334	Northwick Park	00:54:51	00:11:23	01:06:14	1
29/08/17	3231	NT25	Whipps Cross	00:51:00	00:14:00	01:05:00	0
03/08/17	2558	NT47	Princess Royal, Farnborough	01:14:00	00:07:00	01:21:00	0
10/08/17	3313	PD27	Northwick Park	00:45:30	00:12:45	00:58:15	0
17/08/17	3775	K321	Whipps Cross	00:51:56	00:04:50	00:56:46	1
08/08/17	3324	C334	Northwick Park	01:27:59	00:03:37	01:31:36	0
04/08/17	2548	L202	Princess Royal, Farnborough	01:06:47	00:14:15	01:21:02	0
23/08/17	3360	B621	Northwick Park	00:55:13	00:14:08	01:09:21	0
05/08/17	2186	M107	Princess Royal, Farnborough	00:51:24	00:06:15	00:57:39	1
20/08/17	3980	B621	Watford General	00:57:13	00:06:03	01:03:16	0
24/08/17	3032	B621	Northwick Park	02:28:24	00:13:45	02:42:09	0
01/08/17	1117	J304	Whipps Cross	00:47:00	00:29:09	01:16:09	0
18/08/17	1301	M106	Princess Royal, Farnborough	01:50:29	01:47:50	03:38:19	0
06/08/17	3308	N420	Princess Royal, Farnborough	01:37:22	00:13:29	01:50:51	0
24/08/17	3015	K107	Whipps Cross	00:50:14	00:04:33	00:54:47	0
17/08/17	2810	B621	Northwick Park	00:47:18	00:14:18	01:01:36	0
06/08/17	2111	M107	Princess Royal, Farnborough	01:08:58	00:12:36	01:21:34	0
07/08/17	2820	E320	Northwick Park	01:15:52	00:21:21	01:37:13	0
04/08/17	363	B631	Northwick Park	00:55:18	00:10:54	01:06:12	1
02/08/17	1068	D484	Northwick Park	01:57:49	00:19:23	02:17:12	0
14/08/17	3865	M120	Princess Royal, Farnborough	00:56:51	00:20:59	01:17:50	0
25/08/17	3155	C321	Northwick Park	00:50:45	00:11:38	01:02:23	0
11/08/17	3096	C322	Northwick Park	00:48:02	00:09:55	00:57:57	0

# Thousands of ambulance patients suffer A&E delays due to 'staff and beds shortage'

• ROSS LYDALL



Delays are experienced by about six in 10 patients brought to A&E by ambulance *AFP/Getty Images*

**Thousands of patients brought to hospital by ambulance are suffering delays getting into A&E because of a shortage of staff and beds.**

Some are spending in excess of two hours on trolleys in corridors or waiting areas, despite a 15-minute [NHS](#) target for them to be handed over.

It also means [London Ambulance Service](#) crews, who wait alongside the patient, cannot respond to the next 999 call.

LAS Patients' Forum, which obtained the figures, called the delays "totally appalling" and warned the health of patients was being put at risk.

In the first week of July, 5,394 people waited more than 15 minutes for the clinical handover between LAS and A&E staff.

The delays, experienced by about six in 10 patients brought by ambulance, added up to 927 "lost" hours.

Problems are caused by the increasing number of priority calls and pressure on A&Es. They were worst at Northwick Park Hospital in Harrow, King's College in Denmark Hill and The Royal Free in Hampstead.



Northwick Park Hospital in Harrow is one of the worst for delays (Jeremy Selwyn)

Patients' Forum chairman Malcolm Alexander said: "There are between 800 to 1,000 hours a week spent queuing to get into A&E departments". Delays had halved since winter but "still weren't good enough". He said many patients who had waited for an ambulance could then expect to wait another four hours or more in A&E to be treated or discharged.

He blamed the failure to “adequately fund hospital services” and has raised the issue with NHS England and Mayor Sadiq Khan.

A total of 818 patients waited more than an hour in June. Two-hour delays were recorded at The Royal London in Whitechapel, King’s College and Barts Heart Centre. The LAS insists patients are not left to “lie in ambulances” but are taken into the hospital.

An LAS spokeswoman said: “The whole of the NHS is facing increasing demand. We are working closely with hospitals across London to find solutions to reduce delays to patient handovers.” Northwick Park said it received more ambulances than any other London hospital, about 160 a day.

Lee Martin, chief operating officer at London North West Healthcare NHS trust, which runs the hospital, said: “Staff work hard to triage and treat patients with the highest need first. This means some patients may experience longer waits.”

King’s said: “We recently had our highest number of emergency department attendances with over 500 people in a 24-hour period. Dedicated offloading areas, where patients can be rapidly assessed, are being created.”

The Royal Free said: “Unfortunately during very busy periods patients arriving by ambulance can wait longer than we would like. Our patients are always seen in order of clinical priority.”

Barts Health said: “Most transfers take place promptly but we apologise to patients who have occasionally had to wait a long time, and are continually trying to learn from delays.”

NHS England (London) regional director Anne Rainsberry said: “Some hospitals have ensured additional nursing staff are available to receive and care for arriving ambulance patients at peak times.”

# PATIENTS' FORUM

FOR THE LONDON AMBULANCE SERVICE

Malcolm Alexander  
Chair  
Patients' Forum for the London Ambulance Service  
30 Portland Rise, N4 2PP

Sadiq Khan  
Mayor of London  
City Hall,  
The Queen's Walk,  
London SE1 2AA

August 21<sup>st</sup> 2017

Dear Mr Khan,

## **Continuing Problem of Ambulance Queuing at London's Hospitals**

I wrote to you on June 10<sup>th</sup> 2016, concerning major problems with London's acute hospitals, resulting in the queuing of ambulances outside many of London's A&E departments, which is seriously affecting emergency services and potentially causing serious harm to patients. You replied on July 1<sup>st</sup> (MGLA 150616-5269)

The situation continues to be extremely serious, despite claims by NHS England that the situation is improving. It is devastating for many patients to wait hours for an ambulance and then to queue on trolleys to get into A&E and then spend several hours in A&E. That could amount to 8 hours from the 999 call until discharge or admission - patients should not have to suffer as a result of the congested state of some of London's A&E services. I attach a full set of data showing the huge number of breaches (30 plus minutes handover) for July 2017, and below you can see a few examples of the time taken from the arrival of ambulances at A&E to handover of patients to A&E clinical staff:

June 26	2 hrs	King's College Hospital
June 27	1 hour, 23mins	University College Hospital
June 29	1 hour, 32min	Newham General Hospital
June 29	2 hrs, 10 mins	Barts Hospital Cath Lab (Heart attack centre)
June 29	1 hr	Charing Cross Hospital
July 6	3hrs, 10 mins	Maudsley - Mental Health
July 12	1hr, 10 mins	St Helier
July 15	1hr, 4 mins	Hammersmith Cath Lab
July 18	2hrs,15 mins	Royal Free Hospital
July 27	1 hr, 9 mins	Barnet Maternity

I also attach our newsletter: **LONDON'S AMBULANCE QUEUING SCANDAL CONTINUES.**

Patients' Forum Ambulance Services (London) Ltd. Registered in England.  
Registered office: 6 Garden Court, Holden Road, Woodside Park, London, N12 7DG Company limited by guarantee. Company number: 6013086

Thousands of hours of ambulance time are being wasted due to queuing outside A&Es. Not only are patients in those queues suffering, but in addition, ambulances cannot attend to the needs of other patients laying on the road or their floor at home after a fall or accident. Some patients in a mental health crisis or those suffering suicidal ideation can't get the level of service they need, and some patients in terrible pain, e.g. those in a sickle cell crisis, can't get the pain relief they desperately need within a reasonable time.

Ambulance queuing is caused by a shortage of beds, staff and discharge facilities. NHSE has, despite numerous assurances, failed to resolve this crisis and there is no sign that NHS England, NHS Improvement or STPs have the ability or the resources to resolve this appalling problem.

We have sent our attached Newsletter to all CCGs, urgent and emergency care lead and written to every Borough Councillor in London to advise them of the situation. An article on the problem appeared in the Evening Standard on August 16<sup>th</sup> 2017 and is attached.

This problem won't go away without concerted action from yourself, London Boroughs and Assembly Members working in collaboration with the NHS.

Patients are entitled to urgent and emergency care of the very highest standard. We can no longer tolerate the poor standards which many London hospitals are currently providing to people needing immediate care and treatment.

Will you please prioritise the reform of our A&E departments and the safety of people in London who require urgent and emergency care? Without your leadership on this critical issue, NHS leaders will continue to accept the queuing of sick people outside A&E department as a normal and insoluble feature of London's NHS.

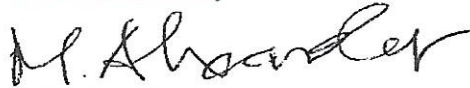
The highest priorities are:

- A) Demanding that NHS England accepts responsibility for this major failure and takes action for immediate resolution of ambulance queuing.
- B) Stopping the closure of A&E departments.
- C) Demanding that NHSE/NHSI-London and CCGs ensure hospitals have adequate numbers of beds and casualty staff.
- D) Demanding more effective collaboration between hospitals and their local authorities to enable effective and successful discharge.
- E) Supporting the development of effective community healthcare teams to support patients who fall, those with dementia and mental

health problems, so that they do not end up in A&E or suffering long inappropriate stays in hospital wards.

We believe it would also be very constructive for a public meeting to be held at City Hall jointly between you, your team and the Forum, to discuss the impact of ambulance queuing on patient care and treatment, and to propose solutions to this unacceptable situation. Would you be supportive of this proposal?

Yours sincerely



Malcolm Alexander  
Chair, Patients' Forum for the LAS  
[WWW.Patientsforumlas.net](http://WWW.Patientsforumlas.net)  
07817505193

Copy to Dr Onkar Sahota, Chair of the Health Committee and all Assembly Members

# MAYOR OF LONDON

Malcolm Alexander  
Chair  
Patients' Forum for the London Ambulance Service  
30c Portland Rise  
London N4 2PP

Our ref: **MGLA210817-5046**

Date: 31 AUG 2017

Dear Mr Alexander,

## **Continuing Problem of Ambulance Queuing at London's Hospitals**

Thank you for your letter of 21 August following up your letter of 10 June 2016 and highlighting the problems of ambulances queueing outside hospital A&E departments. The large number of letters received means it's not always possible for the Mayor to reply directly and I have therefore been asked to reply on his behalf.

The GLA recognises the issues you raise. As I'm sure you know, the Mayor regularly meets with London Ambulance Service leadership where he discusses this among other performance related issues.

As you rightly say in your letter, the reason for these delays are caused by a range of factors including capacity and staffing etc. and that these are properly for the health system to address.

In his manifesto for becoming Mayor (and indeed in his reply to your previous letter) he committed to championing the NHS and arguing for the resources it needs. Your letter explicitly mentions STPs and you may be interested to know that last year the Mayor commissioned the King's Fund to write a report for him on the five STPs in London.

The King's Fund has partnered with the Nuffield Trust on this and expect to publish their report very soon. What they say will guide how the Mayor engages with the NHS on these important issues.

I hope the above information is helpful - thank you for taking the time to write.

Yours sincerely

Ethan Wheatley  
GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY



# PATIENTS' FORUM

FOR THE LONDON AMBULANCE SERVICE

Malcolm Alexander  
Chair  
Patients' Forum for the London Ambulance Service  
30 Portland Rise, N4 2PP

Sadiq Khan  
City Hall,  
The Queen's Walk,  
London SE1 2AA

June 10<sup>th</sup> 2016

Dear Mr Khan,

I am writing on behalf of the Patients' Forum for the London Ambulance Service (LAS), a voluntary sector body that has monitored the LAS and emergency services in London for 10 years.

We would like to alert you to a major problem regarding queuing of ambulances outside many of London's A&E departments, which is seriously affecting London's emergency services and potentially causing serious harm to patients. Amongst the most seriously affected hospitals are: Kings' College Hospital, North Middlesex, Northwick Park and Queen's Romford.

In 2015 we analysed all data regarding ambulance queues outside London hospitals, where an ambulance had waited for more than 30 minutes. We found that ambulances had been forced to waste 19,000 hours queuing outside A&E departments.

Ambulance queuing is caused by the closure of A&E departments and inadequate capacity in relation to medical staff and hospital beds. The failure to appropriately and adequately discharge patients, e.g. those with dementia, is another major contributor to the problem of ambulance queuing.

This is not the fault of the LAS. While ambulances are queuing up to and over one hour outside A&Es, patients requiring emergency care are laying in the ambulance instead of being treated in A&E. Meanwhile other patients suffering strokes, cardiac arrest, mental health crises and other major conditions are laying in streets, roads, in their homes or care homes waiting for an emergency care.

A major consequence of ambulance queuing is low performance. Currently, LAS Cat A calls (highest emergencies) are only operating at 65% arrival within 8 minutes, against a national target of 75%.

Can you please support our campaign to abolish ambulance queuing in 2016 and by prioritising this issue in your work with the NHS and Department of Health?

We regard the highest priorities to be:

- A) Demanding that NHS England accepts responsibility for this major problem and produces plan for immediate resolution.
- B) Stopping the closure of A&E departments.
- C) Pressing NHSE-London and CCGs, the commissioners, to ensure hospitals have adequate numbers of beds and casualty staff.
- D) Arguing for more effective collaboration between hospitals and their local authorities to enable effective and successful discharge.
- E) Supporting the development of effective community healthcare teams to support patients who fall, those with dementia and mental health problems, so that they do not end up in A&E or long inappropriate stays in hospital wards.

I do hope we can collaborate to resolve this very serious problem potentially affecting the health and safety of all Londoners and we would be pleased to meet you to discuss this matter.

I also attach a letter we have sent to all CCG Chief Officers in London regarding the funding of the LAS and the importance of ensuring that front line ambulance can be recruited in London and staff can afford to live in London, so that direct recruitment from Australia becomes a thing of the past.

Best wishes



Malcolm Alexander  
Chair, Patients' Forum for the LAS  
[WWW.Patientsforumlas.net](http://WWW.Patientsforumlas.net)  
07817505193

Copy to Dr Onkar Sahota, Chair of the Health Committee

# MAYOR OF LONDON

**Malcolm Alexander**

Chair  
Patients' Forum for the London Ambulance Service  
30 Portland Rise  
London N4 2PP

Our ref: MGLA150616-5269

Date:  
01 JUL 2016

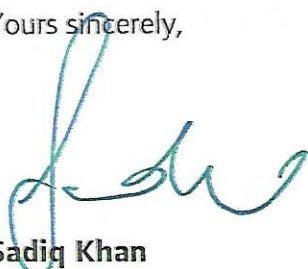


Thank you very much for your letter of 10 June raising the problem of ambulances queuing outside accident and emergency departments which, I agree, is a serious issue for all the reasons you set out.

I have committed to championing the NHS in London and arguing for the resources it needs. I shall be meeting with senior leaders from both NHS England and the London Ambulance Service to discuss the particular challenges they are facing and how I can best support them. I shall also be considering the role and remit of the London Health Board in this regard, including the Board's role in overseeing politically the devolution of health and care in London.

Thank you again for your helpful letter. I look forward to working with you and other health leaders in London to make sure that Londoners get the high quality care they need, when and where they need it.

Yours sincerely,



**Sadiq Khan**  
Mayor of London

# PATIENTS' FORUM

FOR THE LONDON AMBULANCE SERVICE

Malcolm Alexander  
Chair  
Patients' Forum for the London Ambulance Service  
30c Portland Rise  
N4 2PP

Anne Rainsberry,  
Regional Director for London  
NHS England  
Southside,  
105 Victoria Street,  
SW1E 6QT

February 8<sup>th</sup> 2016

## **Ambulance Queuing Outside A&Es in London**

Dear Anne, we are very concerned about the appalling problem of ambulance queuing outside London's A&E departments. This problem has continued for several years and we consider it intolerable that sick patients are queuing to get into A&E, and ambulance crews are queuing instead of responding to emergencies.

The pressures on London's acute services caused for example by the closure of A&E department in west London, and the underfunding of acute hospitals and A&E services are major contributory factors. Closure of A&E departments over the past few years has had the inevitable effect of ensuring that sick people wait appalling lengths of time for treatment.

Imagine an elderly person falling in their home and being unable to get up, and then waiting hours for an ambulance, and then queuing outside an A&E department for up to an hour, and then laying in a cubicle in A&E for 4 hours before discharge or admission - 8 hours of queuing to get a bed or get home.

Surely, NHS England and the TDA must accept responsibility for these grave problems because your organisations are supposed to ensure that acute services in London are meeting the needs of patients. NHSE and the TDA have failed to deal with the ambulance queuing outside some of our major hospital which has now gone on for years.

Commissioners have failed deal adequately with the crisis as the following figures for October 2015 and 2014 show:

**Patients waiting in an ambulance for up to an hour outside casualty in October 2015 - compared to November 2014:**

Hillingdon Hospital 210 (222 in 2014)  
Northwick Park 342 (326 in 2014)  
Queens 244 (355 in 2014)  
North Middlesex 213 (205 in 2014)  
Ealing 180 (221 in 2014)

Not only are patients who are seriously ill waiting in ambulances for admission to A&E, but the ambulances and their highly trained crews are stuck in queues and can't get away to attend to the next patient suffering from stroke or cardiac arrest. Delays can cause serious harm to seriously ill patients.

We believe that NHS England and the TDA must accept responsibility for a failure in the provision and organisation of emergency and urgent care in London.

We are very pleased that Dr Mitchell has accepted our invitation to address the Patients' Forum on this issue on June 13<sup>th</sup>.

Can you tell me what immediate action NHS England and the TDA will take to ensure that the services, staff and resources that London needs to get rid of ambulance queues and inappropriate patient waits are made available?

Yours sincerely



Malcolm Alexander  
Chair  
Patients' Forum for the London Ambulance Services  
[WWW.PATIENTFORUMLAS.NET](http://WWW.PATIENTFORUMLAS.NET)

Malcolm Alexander  
 Chair  
 Patients' Forum for the London Ambulance Service  
 30c Portland Rise  
 N4 2PP

12 February 2016

Dear Mr Alexander,

Thank you for your letter of 8 February 2016 regarding Ambulance queuing outside A&Es in London and your concerns about the impact these delays have on patients. As the letter mentions the role of NHS England in relation to this issue, we felt a joint response would be appropriate.

We recognise and share the concerns that you have raised. LAS performance data illustrates that 60% of all ambulance handovers since November 2015 have taken longer than 15 minutes and clearly this position needs to improve. We would however draw your attention to the general decline in the number of 'black breaches' (ambulances waiting over 60 minute for handover) year to date compared to last year as illustrated below to assure you that action is being taken across the system to improve performance:

2014/15	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	YTD
Total	157	154	63	96	88	181	314	321	860	501	342	221	3298
2015/16	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	YTD
Total	200	146	80	108	196	264	140	365	481				1980

As part of our actions we are working closely with all stakeholders including Monitor, LAS, CCGs, the Emergency Care Improvement Programme and Providers to hold Acute Trusts and LAS to improve ambulance handover times. There is now daily information shared with the system as to handover delays more than 15 minutes and the impact this is having on LAS. This ensures targeted actions can be taken in a timely manner. Performance is then monitored via weekly calls with LAS and at a monthly Regional Oversight Group as well as via Performance Contract meetings with Acute Trusts. We are also working with LAS Commissioners and LAS via the contracting round for 2016/17 to drive improvements in job cycle time and other areas within the gift of the Trust.

One of the outcomes of the LAS Quality Summit held in December 2015, following the publication of the CQC Report, was a commitment to work with the trusts with the most significant handover delays. The NHS England (London) Emergency Care Task Force established a programme to address handover delays with the most

challenged trusts and these trusts submitted plans to make improvements to the process in January. Furthermore, bespoke support will be offered to several sites to identify areas where improvements can be made and offering guidance as to possible actions to implement.

The first week of January was challenging for London acute trusts and for LAS with a spike in over 60 minute handover delays and crew hours lost. This has led to the preparation of a workshop to be held in late February to further raise the profile of handover delays and to strengthen the actions that can be taken to safely manage the handover process. In advance of the workshop, site visits have been undertaken to learn from those at varying stages of their handover plans.

These pieces of work are progressing in tandem with outputs to be shared across London for all Providers to utilise. LAS are working closely with us on this project whilst also reviewing actions they can take in order to reduce handover times.

In relation to your reference to the changes to the A&E configuration in NWL and the impact this has had, we would refer you to the independent review of the implementation of North West London A&E changes from July 2015 which can be found [here](#). The review found that:

*“There was deterioration in A&E performance in NW London A&E sites during and after the A&E transition. However, this deterioration was in line with deterioration across London and England and the review found it was not related to the A&E changes.”*

We will be happy to keep you updated on progress in reducing handover delays.

Yours sincerely,



**Jo Ohlson**  
Acting Director of  
Commissioning  
Operations  
NHS England, NWL



**Anne Gibbs**  
National Programme Director -  
Transactions  
North West London Portfolio Director  
NHS TDA, London

Cc Andrew Hines, Associate Director of Delivery and Development  
Simon Wheldon, Chief Operating Officer – London  
Dr Fionna Moore, Chief Executive LAS

Malcolm Alexander  
Chair  
Patients' Forum  
30c Portland Rise  
N4 2PP

Professor Keith Willett,  
Medical Directorate  
NHS England  
Skipton House,  
80 London Road,  
London, SE1 6LH  
[Keith.Willett@nhs.net](mailto:Keith.Willett@nhs.net)

December 13<sup>th</sup> 2015

### **A&E Patients and the Winter Crisis**

Dear Keith, we are very concerned about the pressures on London's acute services caused by the closure of A&E department in west London, and the underfunding of acute hospitals and A&E services. Closure of A&E departments over the past few years appears to have had the inevitable effect of ensuring that sick people wait appalling lengths of time for treatment.

Imagine an elderly person falling in their home and being unable to get up, and then waiting hours for an ambulance, and then queuing outside an A&E department for up to an hour, and then laying in a cubicle in A&E for 4 hours before discharge or admission - 8 hours of queuing to get a bed or get home.

Surely, NHS England is responsible and accountable for these delays because they have closed services and have failed to deal with the ambulance queuing outside some of our major hospital which has gone on for years.

Commissioners have failed deal adequately with the crisis as the following figures for October 2015 and 2014 show:

### **Patients waiting in an ambulance for up to an hour outside casualty in October 2015 - compared to November 2014:**

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North Middlesex 213 (205)



Ealing 180 (221)

Not only are patients who are seriously ill waiting in ambulances for admission to A&E, but the ambulances and their highly trained crews are stuck in queues and can't get away to attend to the next patient suffering from stroke or cardiac arrest. Delays can cause serious harm to seriously ill patients.

We believe that NHS England must accept responsibility for a failure in the provision and organisation of emergency and urgent care.

What action will NHS England now take to ensure that the resources that London needs to get rid of ambulance queues and inappropriate patient waits are made available immediately?

Malcolm Alexander

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Alexander', written in a cursive style.

Chair

Patients' Forum – Ambulance Services - London

---

23/12/2016 -

REPLY from: Keith Willett, NHS England Director of Acute Episodes of Care

Dear Mr Alexander,

Firstly can I thank you for your recent contact and I note the issues you raise.

Secondly, can I apologise for not being able to make the follow-up call you had kindly accepted planned for today. I was called away on a national priority issue. However I am happy to cover in this email what I was going to cover in that call, be it less personal.

The intention of my call was to explain that my role in NHS England is to lead the design and development of Urgent and Emergency Care services as part of the Keogh Review. As you are aware all A&E and Ambulance Services are commissioned by CCGs and they also hold the statutory authority for service design. Something I know has been to the fore in NW London. The oversight of operational and clinical performance by NHS England is through our Regional Offices and so I have spoken to and brought to their attention the concerns you and you Forum members have raised. Your correspondence has been forwarded to Dr Andrew Mitchell to respond.

We are all acutely aware of the service provision and demand placed across the whole urgent and emergency care community from general practice and the community, through 111 and 999 to hospital admissions and delayed discharges. That in the medium to longer term is what the UEC Review is attempting with colleagues in the NHS to address through redesign. Perhaps you would however clarify in any further correspondence with Dr Mitchell the data you put in your letter about increased handover delays. Clearly delayed handovers are a real issue for patients care and ambulance operational performance. As I read the numbers though, comparing the months of November 2014 and October 2015, there has been a reduction from 1329 to 1189 in total delayed handovers, which adjusted for days in the month, looks like a 13% improvement.

Yours sincerely

Keith Willett  
NHS England director of acute episodes of care