

## Shared Learning in Suffolk



## Type of Event:

Ambulance Delay

### Event:

The East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust received a 999 call to a Patient complaining of chest pain. The Trust had been operating at an increased level of demand, known as Surge Amber, equal to 40 unassigned calls regionally. Initially a Double Staffed Ambulance (DSA) is assigned to this incident; however, the DSA was re-allocated to a more urgent call. A Clinical Coordinator contacted the Patient and established that the patient had chest pains for the last two days. Following further dialogue, he informed the Patient that help was on its way and to call back if the chest pains get any worse. A second DSA was allocated to the incident, which was crewed with a senior Paramedic and a senior Emergency Medical Technician. They arrived on scene at one hour and 14 minutes after the initial call; this is one hour and six minutes outside the time frame required for this category of Emergency response.



### Notable Practice:

- Timely calls made to the patient to ensure their condition was not deteriorating
- Evidence of planning to ensure that the patient was kept safe
- Rapid transportation to the nearest A&E Department
- Patient kept informed of the progress of the investigation



### Improvement:

- To ensure capacity and demand is forecast well in advance
- To ensure early escalation of Hospital handover delays through the appropriate chain
- Continue with focused recruitment of clinicians to increase the number of qualified paramedics available to staff ambulances



### Learning:

As a result of this incident the following improvements have been made:

- A structured Programme of Forecasting Capacity and Demand with Winter Plans approved by NHSE in advance
- A safer handover protocol for A&E departments to reduce delays
- Enhanced advertisement to recruit new staff
- Board awareness of Operational High Risks via the Board Assurance Framework
- Increased Scrutiny of Serious Incidents via a Specialist Panel of Clinical Commissioning Groups