



Ambulance Service Network

Working towards the future

The Government's NHS reforms will have a significant impact on the direction of ambulance services over the coming years. In light of these changes, the NHS Confederation has been consulting with members about how it can best support your trust within the newly formed NHS. Priority areas identified by you include both the need to bring members together on issues of shared concern and to continue to influence the shape of the health and social care system.

Below is information about how we plan to support you in 2011/12 and the specific areas of work we will be focusing on. We have also included a snapshot of our work over the past year.

How the ASN will support you

As part of the NHS Confederation, we believe it has never been more important for the Ambulance Service Network (ASN) to continue to be part of an organisation that brings together the full range of organisations that make up the modern NHS.

In 2011/12 we will continue to provide a strong and independent voice for UK ambulance services on urgent and emergency care and help ambulance services to work more closely with the rest of the NHS and other key stakeholders in health and social care.

Our work programme for 2011/12 is designed to:

- represent value for money for our members and ensure the network is as efficient and effective as possible
- ensure that ambulance service partners understand the changing role of ambulance trusts and that ASN members know how they are perceived by the rest of the new system
- make sure that members access a programme of events and communications that keep them well informed about issues of common interest and concern.

ASN key work areas – 2011/12

In response to what you have asked us to focus on, the key elements of our work programme over the coming year will be:

- **The NHS reforms and influencing their impact on NHS ambulance trusts:** The ASN is closely monitoring the Health and Social Care Bill's journey through Parliament. In 2010/11, we made sure that our members' concerns were highlighted in our consultation responses and we will continue to lobby on aspects of the reforms that impact on ambulance services and urgent and unscheduled care so that the position of ASN members remains strong.
- **Implementation issues:** Future arrangements for ambulance service commissioning are critical. We will continue our work alongside stakeholders such as the British Medical Association (BMA) to press for ambulance service commissioning to be organised at the most appropriate 'level' in the system.
- **Bringing the system together:** In 2011/12 we will continue to foster a greater understanding of the role of the ambulance service and to position the ambulance service as an integral partner in the urgent, unscheduled and emergency care system.

We will undertake work with GPs to develop early dialogue between emerging GP consortia leads and the ambulance service to support mutually beneficial working relationships.

- **Innovation:** The network will showcase models of good practice undertaken by its members to share across the health and social care sector, including international examples. We will also include good practice from other industries, for example, looking at issues of mobilising volunteers and the use of 'lean' techniques to improve services.

Our work in the last 12 months

- **Working with opinion-formers and decision-makers:** Our work programme in 2010/11 was developed in preparation for the change in government. We actively engaged with senior officials from the main political parties. We also produced a factsheet, *Seeing ambulance services in a different light: more than a patient transport service*, for members to use to better inform local MPs of the full range of services and support that ambulance services provide.

We had a series of meetings with health minister Simon Burns MP, to discuss the Government's plans for the reform of urgent and emergency care and the role of ambulance services. Mr Burns provided the keynote speech on the planned reforms at our annual conference.

Our work with organisations such as the BMA, British Heart Foundation and the Stroke Association has helped to inform our commissioning strategy on behalf of members.

- **Influencing NHS reforms:** We ensured our members' views formed a part of NHS Confederation responses to consultations on the health white paper and the new strategy for public health. We also provided opportunities for members to take part in consultations and surveys to help inform our messages.

- **The wider health and social care strategy:** The network met Keith Willets, national clinical director for trauma care and David Oliver, national clinical director for older people, regarding potential work on rehabilitation and trauma services. We recently published a report, *Critical care paramedics: Delivering enhanced pre-hospital trauma and resuscitation care – a cost-effective approach*, in collaboration with the NHS Confederation Service Delivery and Organisation Network, which outlines the key findings and lessons from an evaluation of South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust's 'critical care paramedics' programme.
- **Supporting the NHS 111 pilot:** The ASN met MPs whose constituencies are piloting the NHS 111 scheme. The ASN director contributes to the Department of Health's Urgent and Emergency Care Board and the 3 Digit Number Stakeholder Group.
- **Bringing members together:** Our events programme included a number of workshops and seminars with the ASN annual conference attracting more than 100 delegates.
- **Communication with board members:** The ASN repeated the well-received events for ambulance non-executive directors where the strategic issues and challenges facing ambulance services and the wider NHS were debated.
- **Commissioning of ambulance services:** The ASN has been working with the Primary Care Trust Network to bring together ambulance service providers, ambulance service commissioners and associate commissioners to help to identify shared objectives and solutions on the future models for ambulance commissioning and provision.
- **Work in the media:** In 2010/11 we provided statements, interviews and press releases on a range of issues relating to developments and concerns facing our members to give ambulance services a strong voice.

