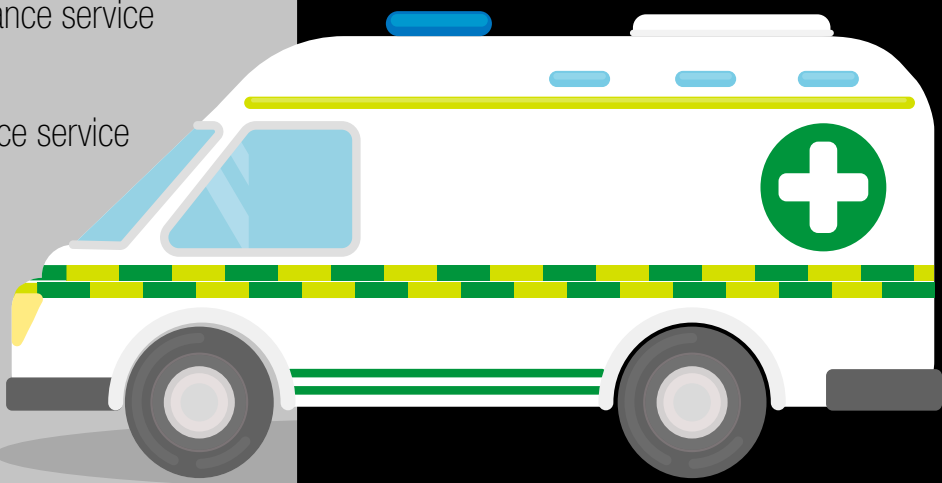


# NHSAmbulanceService

Our report provides an update on our 2011 report, Transforming NHS ambulance services. In particular, it examines:

- the challenges facing the ambulance service in England;
- the performance of the ambulance service since we last reported; and
- the extent to which the ambulance service is maximising its impact and supporting the challenges facing the wider health system.



## NHS AMBULANCE SERVICE – KEY FACTS



**10** ambulance trusts provide urgent and emergency care in England (with separate arrangements for the Isle of Wight)

Trusts spent **£1.78bn** on urgent and emergency services in 2015-16

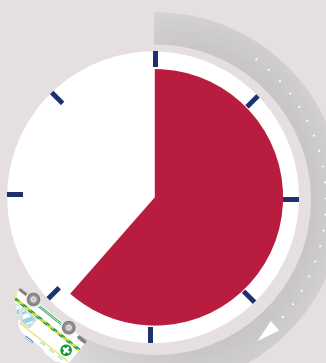
The ambulance service received **10.7m** calls or NHS 111 transfers in 2015-16

Ambulance staff attended **6.6m** incidents in 2015-16

## THE AMBULANCE SERVICE FACES A NUMBER OF CHALLENGES

Calls and NHS 111 transfers to the ambulance service increased by **30%** between 2011-12 and 2015-16

while funding for urgent and emergency services increased by **16%** over the same period



Ambulance trusts **lost almost 500,000 hours** due to turnaround time at hospitals taking longer than the **30 min** standard



Ambulance trusts struggle to recruit and retain staff. In 2015 ambulance trusts had a paramedic vacancy rate of **10%**

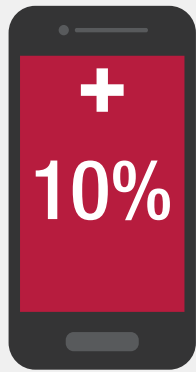
Ambulance trusts are working within an **increasingly complex health system**



This means they are **now working with more stakeholders**

## RESPONSE-TIME PERFORMANCE IS GETTING WORSE, AND PERFORMANCE AGAINST OTHER MEASURES IS VARIABLE

Nationally, ambulance trusts are **treating patients over the phone, treating them at the scene or taking them to a destination other than an A&E department**, in order to help manage demand



**10%** of calls were resolved over the telephone in 2015-16

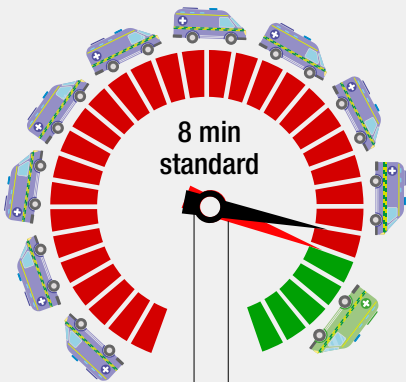


**38%** of patients were treated at the scene/taken to a non-A&E destination in 2015-16



**5 out of 8** patient outcome indicators improved between 2011-12 and 2015-16 nationally

**9 out of 10** ambulance trusts **did not meet** the three response time targets in 2015-16

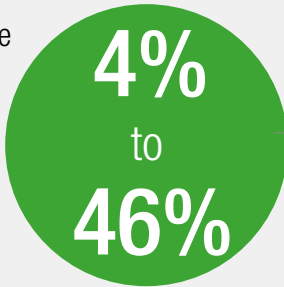


**72.5%** of the most serious calls were responded to within the 8-minute standard

**75%** is the target

## THERE IS A GENERAL CONSENSUS THAT TOO MUCH FOCUS ON RESPONSE TIMES HAS LED TO BEHAVIOURS WHICH UNDERMINE EFFICIENCY

Ambulance trusts use different operating frameworks which **contribute to variations in performance**



this is the **variation between ambulance trusts** in how frequently an ambulance was mobilised, then stood down before reaching the scene in 2015-16

During 2015-16 the proportion of **calls resolved over the phone** varied from



## OUR RECOMMENDATIONS INCLUDED:

- NHS England, NHS Improvement and ambulance trusts in England should work together to define the optimal operating framework for an ambulance trust, and ambulance commissioners should take a consistent approach to commissioning ambulance services, based on the framework.
- In order to tackle rising delays in transfers of patient care at hospital:
  - NHS Improvement should publish transfer times for all ambulance trusts and hospitals.
  - NHS England and clinical commissioning groups should work together to adopt a nationally consistent approach to incentivising acute hospital trusts to reduce turnaround delays at hospitals.