



Right Care² Autonomous Clinicians Accessing Alternative Pathways

Over the past decade, SWASFT has been improving the pathways and care options available to our clinicians. Ambulance services are now a key provider of urgent as well as emergency care, and our workforce, pathways and clinical support have adapted to this challenge. Many of the patients that call 999 for an ambulance can be managed safely effectively over the phone, without sending an emergency ambulance. Where we do need to send an ambulance, over half of our patients can be managed by ambulance clinicians in their own home. In 2010, the Trust developed the Right Care, Right Place, Right Time initiative, a five year commissioner funded agreement that committed to us reducing unnecessary admissions to EDs by 10%.

Thanks to the enthusiasm of our clinicians, the programme exceeded expectations, with the proportion of 999 calls managed without ED attendance increasing from 50.84% in 2010/11 to 57.45% in 2013/14. SWASFT has consistently achieved the highest non-conveyance rate of any UK ambulance Trust, conveying 83,517 fewer patients to EDs than the average UK services. We also have the highest rate of admission for patients we do convey to EDs.

The Right Care² programme has built on this initial success to ensure that even more patients are able to be safely managed within in the community. During 2014-15 the initiative successfully reduced the number of patients conveyed to an Emergency Department across the South West by 15,523, despite a 9.75% increase in 999 demand. SWASFT clinicians have access to a wide range of referral pathways, including MIUs, ambulatory care units and MAUs; admission to an ED is for patients who really do require emergency assessment.

Our clinicians are at the heart of the Right Care² programme, and have the greatest level of clinical autonomy of any UK ambulance service. In contrast to other services, JRCALC guidelines form just a small part of the guidance provided, with Trust specific guidelines supporting a wide range of additional skills. No one understands what the blocks are in practice to accessing alternative pathways better than our clinicians. We offer six ways for staff to feedback to the Right Care team on barriers which prevent them from providing the right care, including text, email, Twitter and Facebook. Over 1,300 items of feedback have been captured, with the Trust working closely with CCGs and providers to resolve the issues. Time and time again, the feedback has proved vital in improving access to existing pathways and creating further opportunities.