

## Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee 10 February 2015

Agenda Item	Page No
10 COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME AND INQUIRY PROPOSALS	3 - 8

The Chairman had received a response from the CCGs regarding committee concerns at ambulance response time.

**Action: Committee Members to comment on the CCG response to Mr J Povey**



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE





  
**Chiltern**  
**Clinical Commissioning Group**

NHS Chiltern Clinical Commissioning Group  
Chiltern District Council Offices  
Ground Floor  
King George V Road  
Amersham  
Buckinghamshire  
HP6 5AW

3<sup>rd</sup> February 2014

Angela Macpherson  
County Councillor  
Chairman  
Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee  
Buckinghamshire County Council  
County Hall  
Walton Street  
Aylesbury  
HP20 1UA

Phone: 01494 586600  
Fax: 01494 732035  
Email: [chilternccg@nhs.net](mailto:chilternccg@nhs.net)  
Web: [www.chilternccg.nhs.uk](http://www.chilternccg.nhs.uk)

Dear Angela

Thank you for your letter of 20 January regarding the response time performance of South Central Ambulance Service (SCAS) in Buckinghamshire. I understand you have also written to Aylesbury Vale CCG; this response is on behalf of both CCGs.

As you know, December saw unprecedented demand for 999 and this, along with wider pressures in the urgent care system, affected performance. There was an increase in hospital handover delays at both Wexham and Stoke Mandeville, and there were also periods where diverss were in place due to systems declaring “Black” escalation.

Regarding your specific questions:

- Do you receive data on the number of red category calls each month that do not receive a response time within the target?

*Yes. This data is published each month in the Operational Performance Report and included in the Governing Body papers available to the public.*

- For these cases do you then receive data on how long the patient had to wait, and whether this wait had a detrimental impact on their outcome?

*We do not receive analysis of individual cases. SCAS review all breaches and impact of those delays, and cases of harm are escalated as Serious Incidents. The reasons for*

*the delay are reviewed to determine and implement improvement action. We receive this review data on a quarterly basis*

- Are you able to share the latest data you have, and provide some reassurance that patients are not being harmed by ambulance response times?

*The long wait data for December is as follows (average times; long wait is >30 minutes):*

<b>CCG</b>	<b>Red 1 (75%) in 8 minutes</b>	<b>Long waits</b>	<b>Red 2 (75%) in 8 minutes</b>	<b>Long waits</b>	<b>Red 19 (95% in 19 minutes)</b>	<b>Long waits</b>
Aylesbury	8 mins 41 sec	0	9mins 28 sec	30	23 minutes 14 sec	39
Chiltern	9 mins 50 sec	1	10 mins 1 sec	21	23 minutes 8 sec	69

For context the November data is in the table below, please note we only receive Red 19 data quarterly.

<b>CCG</b>	<b>Red 1 (75%) in 8 minutes</b>	<b>Long waits</b>	<b>Red 2 (75%) in 8 minutes</b>	<b>Long waits</b>	<b>Red 19 (95% in 19 minutes)</b>	<b>Long waits</b>
Aylesbury	7 minutes 30 sec	0	8mins 23 sec	3	Data only received qtrly	Data only received qtrly
Chiltern	9 mins 58 sec	0	9 mins 35 sec	9	Data only received qtrly	Data only received qtrly

As you can see, the December performance showed more long waits – as suggested by the performance challenges outlined. The audits on long waits have shown minimal harm but poor patient experience (for example, waiting in pain).

Nationally SCAS are monitored at an organisation-wide level (Thames Valley, Milton Keynes, Southampton, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Hampshire). We have agreed for the first time this year that they will report county-level performance on all national indicators, not just Thames Valley wide as formerly, although they continue to be performance monitored under our contract at the Thames Valley level. If performance on any parameter falls below standard for 3 consecutive months, SCAS is required to submit a rectification plan.

SCAS are continuing to expand their initiatives to improve performance, through work with the fire brigade to include Wycombe, Chesham and Amersham and at a later stage Aylesbury and Buckingham.

Yours sincerely



Dr Annet Gamell  
**Chief Clinical Officer**

Cc: Steve West, SCAS Local Area Director  
James Povey, Heath & Social Care Select Committee  
Lou Patten, Chief Officer, Aylesbury Vale CCG



**Buckinghamshire County Council**  
County Hall, Walton Street  
Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire HP20 1UA

angmacpherson@buckscc.gov.uk  
[www.buckscc.gov.uk](http://www.buckscc.gov.uk)  
Tel: 01296 382690

Dr Annet Gamell  
Chiltern CCG  
Ground Floor  
Chiltern District Council Offices  
King George V Rd  
Amersham  
Bucks  
HP6 5AW

Cc: Steve West, SCAS Local Area Director

20 January 2015

Dear Annet,

### Ambulance Response Times in Buckinghamshire

You will be aware that at the Buckinghamshire Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee meeting of 25<sup>th</sup> November 2014 (<https://democracy.buckscc.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=137&MId=5747>), the committee received a paper for their item on South Central Ambulance Service. I am writing to highlight concerns the committee had with the ambulance response times in Buckinghamshire, and the paramedic vacancy rate in the county which appears to be connected with the response time performance.

The table below was included in the report provided to the committee, and shows ambulance response times in the year to date in each of the Buckinghamshire districts.

Performance – By Area: April – October 2014						
Performance to October 2014	Thames Valley	Bucks	Aylesbury Vale	Chiltern	Wycombe	South Bucks
Red 1, 8 Minutes	76.24%	72.05%	77.65%	56.86%	75.67%	65.71%
Red 2, 8 Minutes	74.42%	69.16%	73.79%	51.70%	73.88%	64.59%
Red 19 Minutes	95.68%	94.24%	94.08%	90.13%	95.23%	97.85%

In the report it was explained that performance measures are commissioned and reviewed at Thames Valley contract level, which up to October 2014 SCAS had been achieving. I understand from the latest SCAS Council of Governors Board Papers that in November they



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



fell short of their targets for all 3 key national response time standards (71.9% on red 1 against a target of 75%, 73% on red 2 against a 75% target, and 94.7% on red 19 against a 95% target) across the Thames Valley.

I can appreciate that by analysing performance at lower levels there is inevitably going to be a degree of variance given the mix of urban and rural areas in the Thames Valley. However, the table above would suggest that given the performance in Chiltern, South Bucks and Wycombe, SCAS is not delivering its target response times for the entire southern half of Buckinghamshire.

When we questioned SCAS on this at our committee meeting it seemed staffing levels were a key factor in response times. In Buckinghamshire we were informed that SCAS had 120 (WTE) staff in post against a planned level of 152 (which will increase to 201 with the proposed new rota increasing the number of non-clinical posts).

SCAS explained at our meeting and in their papers that they are attempting to mitigate the staff vacancy rates through their first responder scheme, and are also on a recruitment drive overseas and are working with Oxford Brookes University to increase student paramedics.

I have concerns that over the winter period where the whole health service is under great strain, that inadequate ambulance response times in the south of the county could be resulting in avoidable harm to patients. I have been made aware of some anecdotal evidence of recent events where patients locally in need of urgent attention experienced very long ambulance waits. As the service commissioner are you able to confirm the following:

- Do you receive data on the number of red category calls each month that do not receive a response time within the target?
- For these cases do you then receive data on how long they had to wait, and whether this wait had a detrimental impact on their outcome?
- Are you able to share the latest data you have, and provide some reassurance that patients are not being harmed by ambulance response times?

I look forward to receiving your response to these questions, as well as your views on the current level of SCAS performance and the measures being taken to improve this. Please can I request a response by 20<sup>th</sup> February.

Yours sincerely



Angela Macpherson, County Councillor  
Chairman, Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

