



WORKING TOGETHER

A newsletter for South Central Ambulance Service NHS Trust staff

Issue 42 • March 2009

Contents

Oxford Ambulance
Heads for Mongolia 2

SCAS Crew helps
keep kids out of
prison 3

National Health
Service retirement
Fellowship 4

Associate practitioner
update 5

Ambulance nurses
hit the road 6



Left to right: Del Meadham; Douglas Blowes; William Inkpen; Christopher Keels; Marie McSweeney; Wendy Wheeler; Kenneth Wilcox (trainer) and Emma Johnson.

Great opportunities open to NEPTS

The first round of a new eight-day NEPTS training course began on Monday 9 March.

NEPTS staff attending the course will study for a 'First Person On Scene' first aid qualification for four days and then spend four days updating core skills, including communication, manual handling, and managing violence and aggression.

Staff from all regions in SCAS have been released for the training, and as well as the clinical skills they are gaining are enjoying meeting and working with colleagues from across SCAS. All NEPTS staff will have the opportunity to attend this course. This will be organised by regional NEPTS managers who will inform staff when they have a place on a course.

Two staff from each county will be released at a time, to attend a course in either our Wexham or Newbury training centre.

Kenneth Wilcox, who is running the course said, "SCAS is pleased to be able to provide all NEPTS staff with the opportunity to attain a nationally recognised qualification and prepare them to work with new equipment such as automatic external defibrillators (AEDs).

This course will allow NEPTS to standardise equipment used and working practice across SCAS. Staff will also gain from the experiences of their colleagues from all divisions in SCAS, as they share stories and discuss best practice during their training.

A great deal of work has gone into setting up this course. We would like to thank all those involved and hope all who will attend enjoy the training."

Oxford Ambulance Heads for Mongolia



Ruth Harrison of Helen and Douglas House; Matt Davis and Nick Hawkins, two of the team members; and Paul Cooke, Lead Operational Manager for SCAS Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire handing over the keys.

Most calls to the ambulance service are to answer emergencies in the local area. On 18 July this year, however, an ambulance that has seen more than ten years of service around Oxford will set off on an overland journey to Mongolia.

The ambulance has been donated by South Central Ambulance Service NHS Trust (SCAS) to a group of friends - Dave Andrews, George Crowther, Matt Davis and Nick Hawkins - who are taking part in the 2009 Mongol Rally.

This annual event, organised by The Adventurists, raises money for charity and this year will see 500 vehicles, each at least 10 years old, attempt to reach Ulaanbaatar in Mongolia in about a month.

Last year the Mongol Rally raised over £200,000. As well as the charities nominated by The Adventurists, the team will also be raising money for Helen and Douglas House, a hospice for young adults aged 16-35 based in Oxford.

Explaining the reason for SCAS's involvement in this event, Chief Executive Will Hancock said: 'When our vehicles reach the end of their useful life, they are usually disposed of through the used vehicle trade as scrap.

'Their value is very little and certainly does not reflect potential continuing use. We are delighted to be able to make this vehicle available for the Mongol rally, especially, since it is also a way of supporting a very worthy local Oxford charity'.

The team, who is based in the Oxford area, contacted SCAS's Oxford ambulance station because they wanted the vehicle to stay in Mongolia to serve the local community there. The ambulance we have donated has been stripped of its blue light and sirens, but much of the basic emergency equipment remains, such as stretchers.

On behalf of the team, Nick Hawkins said: 'My team mates and I, who all met when students at Durham University, are excited by the prospect of this adventure.

'We will be driving across some of the most hostile terrain imaginable

to reach Ulaanbaatar, travelling more than 10,000 miles across 15 countries.

'The ambulance is not only an unusual vehicle for such a trip, but it will also meet a local need for ambulances. In the 2008 rally, there were three ambulances participating and these are still being used locally.

'We are grateful to SCAS for donating the vehicle and hope we get the support of the public to raise funds for Helen and Douglas House'.

■ For more information, to read the boys blogs along their way, or to find out how to donate please visit <http://www.thedouglascar.com/Home.html>

■ To see a full list of the charities that will benefit from the Mongol Rally and to find out more about the event please visit <http://mongolrally.theadventurists.com/index.php>





SCAS CREW HELPS KEEP KIDS OUT OF PRISON

It's a sad fact that a huge amount of crime, including serious violent offences are committed by young people under the age of 18, so anything that helps to keep people out of the criminal justice system must be a good idea.

This was the purpose of a recent 'Prison Avoidance Day' held at the Leon School in Milton Keynes. A very dramatic reconstruction set the scene for the pupils to consider the consequences of criminals' actions and, in particular, the way that the emergency services have to deal with them if they are involved in an accident.

Three pupils volunteered to act as casualties for a staged car crash and were made up with appropriately gory 'injuries'.

The story was that they had been drinking, even though under-age, and had taken the car without permission. They had hit a lamp post very hard and one of their group had run off without bothering to call 999, leaving the other two in the front seats.

First on the scene was a police car that appeared from the side of the school with lights and sirens blaring, closely followed by a SCAS ambulance. Soon after, a fire engine arrived and, to complete the picture, the air ambulance put in an appearance. Unfortunately it could not stay as the crew received a real call.

All this was happening in the school playground in front of an audience of about 150 pupils. They watched agog as the paramedics, police and fire officers assessed the scene.

Very quickly the front seat passenger was pronounced dead, so all attention transferred to the driver who had a spinal injury. To gain access, the fire service decided to saw through the vehicle windscreen and then remove the roof.

Eventually the casualty was removed from the car and taken off by ambulance. This was a very dramatic demonstration and conveyed several messages about drinking, driving and helping others. An additional touch was added when two of the 'bystanders' sneaked into the parked ambulance and stole some kit from inside, highlighting the consequences of this selfish prank.

Continues page 4...

After the demonstration, the pupils returned to their classes and were given an introduction to CPR by the paramedics and a lecture about what really happens to people sent to prison.

The ambulance crew involved in this demonstration were from Bletchley Resource Centre. Nigel Mason and Paul Butler were supported by Acting Operations Manager: Diane Clifford. She said: "This was a very realistic exercise and could not be faulted technically. Interestingly, even though the injuries were serious and the car partially dismantled, it was a relatively fast, text-book extrication. We were very glad to support the event. If our efforts mean that at least some of these children think twice before drinking and driving off in a stolen car, then it will have been time well spent".

■ The event was covered by the media with Anglia TV in attendance, so the messages also reached a wider audience.



National Health Service Retirement Fellowship

Thinking of your retirement? Dreaming of enjoying a well earned change of pace and scene?

Then you may be interested in the NHS Retirement Fellowship.

In England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales retired health workers are enjoying their new found freedom, new choices and new interests, while enjoying the social mix and support that the Fellowship offers to all its members.

The Fellowship has nearly 200 branches throughout the United Kingdom to help and encourage members to pursue an exciting kaleidoscope of interests and activities and many social events at which existing friendships are maintained and new ones formed. The Fellowship branches located in the SCAS region are:

- Aylesbury
- Basingstoke
- Cosham
- Fareham
- High Wycombe
- Milton Keynes
- New Forest
- Oxford
- Reading
- Ringwood
- Winchester.

When you become a member of the Fellowship, you not only unlock the door to a new life of choice for you and your partner, but you also share the active involvement of a caring association – a relationship that allows you to continue your vocation to care for those in need.

In recognising that from time to time members may find themselves in financial difficulty the Fellowship has a special benevolent fund, which is there to provide help when it is most needed.

If you would like to know more about the Fellowship, visit www.nhsrf.org.uk or email John Sheehan, Development Officer, at england.south@nhsrf.org.uk

Associate practitioner update

This year will see the introduction of a new role in the ambulance service: the associate practitioner (AP). This role has been developed to meet the changing needs of the ambulance service. It is hoped and anticipated that the AP role will benefit both patients and staff alike.

Purpose of the AP role

The introduction of the role of associate practitioner will allow for greater flexibility in the care we provide our patients, and to the career pathways we are able to offer our staff. Keeping the intermediary qualification level in our operational model – AP being clinically situated between ECAs and paramedics – means we will be able to train people into this role, and therefore attend more patients. The role of the AP will be similar to that of an ambulance technician. The role of the AP also offers continued career development and progression.

Associate practitioner and ambulance technician – what's the difference?

Ambulance technicians and associate practitioners will be able to work clinically in a very similar way; APs will follow much of the clinical training programme which technicians followed. The difference is that the qualified AP has a recognised academic qualification, and has demonstrated that they can study at the Higher Education Level which will help staff who are wanting to become paramedics.

Who can be an AP?

ECAs and ambulance technicians will be welcomed to apply for the AP role. If you are accepted, your level of academic and clinical qualifications will determine the length of the course you have to study.

Training process

ECAs who are successful in being selected for training will spend 6-8 weeks at the divisional education centres undertaking clinical training to meet the needs of the role; this will include several written and practical examinations.

Student associate practitioners (SAPs) – your title while you are training - will then undertake a one week course as an introduction to academic study to prepare for the university element of the course.

SAPs will then be enrolled onto an Open University (OU) course - details will be circulated in due course. It should take between 9 and 12 months to become a qualified AP; this will depend on experience, pre-entry qualifications and the enrolment date with OU.

The probationary period will run concurrently with the academic study period.

SAPs who have ambulance technician or academic qualifications may be able to fast track some aspects of the AP course. To find out how your qualifications could affect AP training please contact Christina Fowler.

What the AP role can offer you

The AP role will provide ECAs with more skills to help our patients without having to take on a three year degree course. If your career plan is to become an HPC paramedic, however, then you should seriously consider becoming an AP first. The reason for this is that SCAS is negotiating with the current university providers to recognise the AP role as having academic status, which will allow APs to fast track on the Foundation Degree. This means that when this is agreed APs will be able to apply for places on a shortened FD course to become HPC registered.

How to apply

The training process for the associate practitioner role has not yet been finalised, so at present we cannot provide you with these details. You can, however, expect to receive a further update in May and for recruitment to begin this summer.

For more information please speak to your Clinical Supervisor/Operational Manager or visit the 'staff room' group on the new SCAS intranet <http://scasha-mcweb.scas.local/>

Ambulance nurses hit the road

On Friday 6 March SCAS's first ambulance nurses finished their training in the traditional manner at Bracknell, with Mike Stephenson serenading them off to their new posts across the trust on his bagpipes.

Seven ambulance nurses, from A&E and community nursing backgrounds, will be joining crews across SCAS and we would like to welcome them to the team.

Ian Teague, head of training, said: "The ambulance nurse is a new and exciting role within SCAS. All Students have been thoroughly prepared in the

classroom, undertaken the IHCD driving course and had clinical placements. I am looking forward to the contribution ambulance nurses will make to our front line services".

Though ambulance nurses have been introduced in some trusts in the UK, this course broke new ground in its adaptable approach to training. Ian Teague recognised the contribution of the first group of trainee ambulance nurses, who gave supportive and constructive feedback throughout the course. This allowed his team to adapt the structure of the course to benefit future trainee ambulance nurses.

Ambulance nurses will bring with them a wealth of experience and a range of skills that will increase the treatment options we can provide to our patients. Sarah Baker, one of our new ambulance nurses, who previously worked as an A&E nurse, said: "I am looking forward to going out into the community, treating patients in their own environments, working with experienced ambulance colleagues and learning from them to become better at caring for patients within the pre-hospital environment."



From left to right

Back row: Dave Readings, Mike Stephenson (trainer), Mike Ambrose, Mike Wright

Front row: Louise Roberts, Adrian Doyle, Sarah Daniel, Helen Pocock (trainer), Sarah Baker.

Main trainer Phil Turton, not pictured.

**Items for the next issue should be sent to your communications manager, details below
by 6 April 2009**

Alison Brumfitt
Head of Communications & PR
Churchill Drive, Headington
Oxford, OX3 7LH
Alison.brumfitt@scas.nhs.uk
Tel: 01865 740100
Mob: 0796 7012189

Michelle Ullett
Communications Manager Hampshire
North Wing, Southern House
Sparrowgrove, Otterbourne
Hampshire SO21 2RU
Michelle.ullett@scas.nhs.uk
Tel: 01962 898 045
Mob: 07787 522923

Ngozi Fakeye
Communications Manager Berkshire
44 Finchampstead Road
Wokingham, Berkshire RG40 2NN
Ngozi.fakeye@scas.nhs.uk
Tel: 0118 936 5511
Mob: 0750 0818345

Neville Wade
Interim Communications Manager
Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire
Churchill Drive, Headington
Oxford, OX3 7LH
neville.wade@scas.nhs.uk
Tel: 01442- 866 656