The aim of this Current Awareness Update is to provide a digest of information supporting evidence based practice in pre-hospital, ambulance and emergency services. This will include recent research, news and policy items, and relevant reports. The Current Awareness Update will focus upon resources from the NHS National Library for Health which are freely available to Ambulance Trust staff.

The Update has been commissioned by the National Ambulance Research Steering Group which comprises research leads from ambulance trusts in England and Wales and other experts and groups supporting pre-hospital research. The aim of the group is to support the strategic development of ambulance and pre-hospital research whether leading, collaborating in or using research.

The Emergency Services Current Awareness Update is published bi-monthly, with each issue covering the following items:

- **National Library for Health**
  This section will focus upon a specific National Library for Health resource in each issue.

- **Web of Evidence**
  This section will introduce a different internet-based source of evidence for emergency and pre-hospital care.

- **Guidelines & Toolkits**
  New and updated guidelines and toolkits relevant to emergency and pre-hospital care will feature here.

- **Research & Best Practice**
  In each issue we will provide summaries of recent research relevant to pre-hospital and emergency care. The Update will focus upon articles which are freely available in full text, with internet links provided.

- **News, Policy & Reports**
  This section will feature items of news and policy issues which involve the emergency and pre-hospital services.

- **Continuing Professional Development**
  Here we will provide information on networks, courses, conferences and online resources which may be of interest.

We hope that you find the *Emergency Services Current Awareness Update* useful and welcome your feedback (see end for contact details).
Changes to the NHS Evidence Emergency & Urgent Care Specialist Collection

The NHS Evidence Emergency and Urgent Care Specialist Collection was discontinued in May 2011, following the launch of the revised NHS Evidence site.

Any links to items with addresses beginning http://www.library.nhs.uk/ in this Update will no longer direct you to the resource. To access these resources, either copy the title and paste it into Google, or contact me on the email address below and I will search for you. Many links, including all those to research papers, will be unaffected and should still direct you to the correct resource.

Alison Price, June 2011.

Feedback

The Emergency Services Current Awareness Update was produced by:

Alison Price, Librarian, Public Health Directorate, NHS Lincolnshire
Lincolnshire Knowledge and Resource Service
(on behalf of the National Ambulance Research Steering Group)
Email: alison.price@lpct.nhs.uk
National Library for Health

Have you discovered the NHS National Library for Health? ‘Bringing together the power of the internet, librarians and communities of patients and clinicians’ the National Library for Health (NLH) aims to be 'the best, most trusted health related knowledge service in the world'.

All of the National Library for Health resources are freely available to NHS staff from any computer, at work, at home or out-and-about. Access to full text journals and a collection of databases is available through a username and password system known as Athens. Registration is free for all NHS staff.

🔗 To create your own Athens username and password, simply visit the site below: https://register.athensams.net/nhs/

Introducing the National Library for Health Database Collection

A collection of eight databases covering a broad spectrum of healthcare research is available for you to search for evidence and literature by topic, by author, and by journal title. Each database contains thousands of references to articles, guidelines, book chapters, documents and dissertations. Most references are accompanied by an abstract summarising the key details. A broad selection of journal papers are available in full text – this will be indicated by a link from the database, which will allow you to download a paper or to read it online free of charge.

You can perform a quick search across all databases at once, or select one database at a time for a thorough advanced search. To explore the databases, go to the National Library for Health homepage www.library.nhs.uk Enter your NHS Athens username and password in the Log In box, then select Books, Journals and Healthcare Databases from the Resources section or go directly to: http://www.library.nhs.uk/booksandjournals/

- **Allied and Complementary Medicine** - occupational therapy, physiotherapy, rehabilitation, plus alternative medicine.
- **British Nursing Index** - UK focused database with details of articles from over 250 key English language nursing and midwifery journals.
- **Cumulative Index of Nursing & Allied Health** - all aspects of nursing & allied health.
- **EMBASE** - Particular emphasis on European sources, covers the whole field of medicine.
- **Health Business Elite** - All aspects of health care administration and other non-clinical aspects of health care management.
- **Health Management Information Consortium** - UK NHS health services management, policy & standards and social care.
- **MEDLINE** - large US database of medical research.
- **PsycINFO** - clinical, social and biological areas of psychology.

🔗 You can read a guide to searching the databases at: http://www.library.nhs.uk/nlhdocs/HCDguide2008_07_18.doc

The guide is being continually updated, as more functions are added to the databases.
Web of Evidence

In each issue, this section of the Update will introduce a different internet-based source of evidence for emergency and pre-hospital care.

Medical Care Research Unit – Emergency and Intermediate Care Research Programme

The Medical Care Research Unit, funded by the Department of Health, has undertaken research projects with the aim of influencing health care policy and practice and bringing benefits for NHS patients and the public. Based within the renowned School of Health and Related Research at Sheffield University, one of the major research areas for the MCRU is in emergency and immediate care.

Completed research reports are available to download from the Unit’s website. Reports from the past three years include:

- The costs and benefits of managing low priority 999 ambulance calls by NHS Direct nurse advisors
- A preliminary study of emergency and urgent care networks. A report to the Department of Health
- Patient views of the emergency and urgent care system. A preliminary report to the Department of Health
- The costs and benefits of changing ambulance service response time performance standards
- The costs and benefits of managing some low priority 999 ambulance calls by NHS Direct nurse advisers. Report for the National Co-ordinating Centre for NHS Service Delivery and Organisation
- A national evaluation of the clinical and cost effectiveness of Emergency Care Practitioners (Phase one) Final report
- A national evaluation of the clinical and cost effectiveness of Emergency Care Practitioners (Phase two) Final report
- Evaluation of the clinical and Ambulance Service operational impact of the Lincolnshire Integrated Voluntary Emergency Service (LIVES)
- A review of the costs and benefits of helicopter emergency ambulance services in England and Wales. Final Report to the Department of Health

To explore these publications further, go to: http://www.shef.ac.uk/mcru/reports.html

Guidelines & Toolkits

New and updated guidelines and toolkits relevant to emergency and pre-hospital care are featured below.

Changing times: Sustaining long-term performance against ‘Call Connect’ for NHS ambulance services

This document from the Department of Health aims to provide ambulance services with performance improvement tools and best practice examples, providing trusts with working solutions to aid sustainable performance improvement against the clock start measurement of ‘Call Connect’.
Emergency Services - Current Awareness Update: Issue 2

Research & Best Practice

The following research reports have been published in the last month weeks. This is not a comprehensive overview, but represents papers with a UK focus which are freely available in full text, with current internet links provided. Some of the papers require you to log in with an NHS Athens username and password – details of how to register with NHS Athens are provided on page 2 of this Update.

Collaborative Decision-Making Between Paramedics & CCU Nurses

This paper reports on a successful programme in Scotland which saw autonomous administering of thrombolysis by paramedics using pre-hospital 12-lead ECG recordings transmitted by telemetry, backed up by decision support from coronary care nurses.


📚 The full paper can be viewed from the link below with an NHS Athens username and password: http://emj.bmj.com/cgi/content/abstract/25/6/370

Debriefing Following Failed Paediatric Resuscitation

The authors of this study aimed to develop best practice guidance for the UK based on the effectiveness of debriefing, as ‘psychological first aid’ for paediatric and emergency care practitioners involved in the failed resuscitation of a child.


📚 The full paper can be viewed from the link below with an NHS Athens username and password: http://emj.bmj.com/cgi/content/abstract/25/6/328

Dispatch Mechanism for Out of Hospital Cardiac Arrest

This study aimed to determine the sensitivity of an advanced medical priority dispatch system process for out-of-hospital cardiac arrest. Based upon records from a single ambulance control centre in Northern Ireland, the authors assessed the diagnostic accuracy of the system.


📚 The full paper can be viewed from the link below with an NHS Athens username and password: http://heart.bmj.com/cgi/content/abstract/94/3/349
**Research & Best Practice**

**Duration of Pre-hospital Interventions**

Do on-scene, pre-hospital interventions mean that too much of the ‘golden hour’ time is taken up before hospital care can be initiated? This study aimed to investigate the duration of pre-hospital interventions and the effect upon hospital resuscitation time.


The full paper can be viewed from the link below with an NHS Athens username and password: [http://emj.bmj.com/cgi/content/abstract/25/7/444](http://emj.bmj.com/cgi/content/abstract/25/7/444)

**GP Experience of Prehospital Emergency Care**

There is little information on the extent to which General Practitioners are involved in pre-hospital emergency care. This study in Ireland investigates both the frequency and the type of emergency managed by GPs who had undertaken Immediate Care courses.


The full paper can be viewed from the link below with an NHS Athens username and password: [http://emj.bmj.com/cgi/content/abstract/25/7/450](http://emj.bmj.com/cgi/content/abstract/25/7/450)

**Litigation Claims Against Ambulance Services**

This paper reviewed all claims registered with the NHS Litigation Authority against English ambulance trusts over ten year period. The authors describe and discuss the cases, which collectively provide pointers to the main clinical areas which need to be addressed in relation to litigation, namely obstetric care, recognition of spinal injuries and non-conveyance decisions.


The full paper can be viewed from the link below with an NHS Athens username and password: [http://emj.bmj.com/cgi/content/abstract/25/7/455](http://emj.bmj.com/cgi/content/abstract/25/7/455)

**Patients’ Memories of Being Injured and of their Care**

How does the experience of care following a serious injury assist a patient in dealing with their memories of being injured? This study examines the effect of ‘good memories’ of care and support upon patient’s progress following an injury.

Ringdal M, Plos K, Bergbom I. Memories of being injured and patients’ care trajectory after physical trauma. BMC Nursing 2008, 7:8

The full paper can be viewed from the link below with an NHS Athens username and password: [http://www.biomedcentral.com/1472-6955/7/8/abstract](http://www.biomedcentral.com/1472-6955/7/8/abstract)
Pre-Hospital Care of Clubbers

Can guidelines developed specifically for nightclubs lead to improved pre-hospital management of club-goers who become unwell following recreational drug use? Working with local community stakeholders, guidelines were developed in the London area, covering advice on when to call an ambulance, which were found to improve the pre-hospital care of club-goers with recreational drug toxicity.


The full paper can be viewed from the link below with an NHS Athens username and password: http://www.substanceabusepolicy.com/content/3/1/14/abstract

Sudden patient deterioration in the presence of paramedics

As part of a review of trauma and emergency services in Victoria, Australia an audit was undertaken of patients that suddenly deteriorated in the presence of paramedics, their care and their outcomes, with a set of physiological criteria used to define sudden deterioration.

Boyle M, Smith E, Archer F. A review of patients who suddenly deteriorate in the presence of paramedics. BMC Emergency Medicine, 2008 8:9

The full paper can be viewed from the link below with an NHS Athens username and password: http://www.biomedcentral.com/1471-227X/8/9/abstract

Why do Patients go to A&E?

With attendance at hospital emergency departments increasing in the UK the authors of this paper seek to understand the motivation of patients attending, and whether the increase if related to changes in primary care.


The full paper can be viewed from the link below with an NHS Athens username and password: http://emj.bmj.com/cgi/content/abstract/25/7/424

Conference Papers

Joint Royal Colleges Ambulance Liaison Committee Annual Conference 2007

Peer-reviewed abstracts from oral presentations and posters at the 2007 conference have been published in the Emergency Medical Journal, and are described below.

These papers are not available in full text, but the abstracts are provided online, giving you an insight into the research which is ongoing within pre-hospital services.
Conference Papers

Prize winners

These three prize-winning papers look at the impact of prehospital thrombolytic treatment on reinfarction rates, the accuracy of ambulance staff in making a diagnosis of pulmonary oedema and the non-conveyance of 999 callers attended by ambulance crew.

✈️ The full list of papers can be viewed from the link below with an NHS Athens username and password: http://emj.bmj.com/cgi/content/full/25/8/535

Oral and Poster Presentations

Thirteen abstracts of oral and poster presentations to the conference are described. They encompass a wide range of topics in prehospital care, ranging from service delivery to specific interventions.

The role of Emergency Care Practitioners, the diagnostic accuracy of helicopter winchmen and the impact of specialised tasking in a rural helicopter ambulance service are examined. The appropriateness of cannulation, and the choice of laryngoscope for difficult intubation are assessed. Two papers look at issues surrounding the relationship between NHS Direct and emergency services, while ongoing research into risk-adjustment in emergency medical care, and a network to build research capacity in emergency and unscheduled care are described.

✈️ The full list of papers can be viewed from the link below with an NHS Athens username and password: http://emj.bmj.com/cgi/content/full/25/8/e1

News, Policy & Reports

This section will feature items of news and policy issues which involve the emergency and pre-hospital services.

The Ambulance Service Network of the NHS Confederation has published two reports on ambulance services:

NHS ambulance services... more than just patient transport

This report looks at the reconfiguration of ambulance services and improvements to patient care.

✈️ https://www.nhsconfed.org/membersarea/downloads/download.asp?ref=1137&hash=e1aae8903e0bc389e46702166634d146&itemtemplate=c_ambulance_container_index

A vision for emergency and urgent care: the role of ambulance services

This report sets out how the Ambulance Service Network envisages ambulance services transforming experiences and outcomes for patients while delivering cost effectiveness and value for money.

Continuing Professional Development

Here we will provide information on networks, courses, conferences and online resources which may be of interest.

Australian Emergency Care Blog

In 2003, the Australian National Institute of Clinical Studies established an Emergency Care Community of Practice to help bring together emergency care clinicians and managers, to share knowledge and to promote evidence based practice. A blog has now been launched to provide a forum to share experiences and to share ideas. Although written on the other side of the world, you might find the content of interest.

🔗 www.emergencycare.nhmrc.gov.au/blog

Pre-registration education and funding for paramedics: guidance for SHAs, PCTs and ambulance services

This guidance from the Department of Health provides guidance to Trusts on making the transition to higher education for paramedics, as part of modernising the ambulance service workforce.


Feedback

This Emergency Services Current Awareness Update was produced by:

Alison Price

Librarian

Lincolnshire Knowledge and Resource Service

(on behalf of the National Ambulance Research Steering Group)

Email: alison.price@lincolnshire.gov.uk