

#### Our services:

Emergency and urgent care  
Non-emergency patient transport  
NHS 111



#### Headquarters

Ladybridge Hall  
399 Chorley New Road  
Bolton  
BL1 5DD

3 April 2020

Dear colleague,

Tel: 01204 498400

[www.nwas.nhs.uk](http://www.nwas.nhs.uk)

### REVISED TRAGE PROTOCOL AND MANAGEMENT OF 999 CALLS

As you are all aware the current coronavirus outbreak is causing increasing strain on the National Health Service.

The North West Ambulance Service is no exception and we expect that in the coming weeks we will see an unprecedented demand on our resources. NWAS has been mandated by NHS England to introduce nationally approved systems that are designed to ensure that the ambulance service continues to provide its key functions.

In order that NWAS can continue to provide a response capability to life threatening emergency calls and try to ensure life-saving interventions are provided quickly and appropriately, we will be dynamically reviewing all incidents originating through the 999 system as well as calls made directly by partner agencies.

The BT call flow process will be changing to determine whether calls relate to coronavirus, whether callers consider the situation to be life threatening, or for advice only. Life threatening calls, patients under 5 and over 70 will also be connected but all other callers will be directed to use NHS 111 on-line.

Once connected to NWAS, callers will be made aware that NWAS will have a reduced ability to respond to 999 calls. Following triage, this may mean that NWAS service users will be advised to self-care or that an ambulance response will not be forthcoming. When deemed clinically appropriate, patients will be asked to consider using alternative forms of transport and/or to seek alternative options for clinical advice. i.e. self-care, primary care, urgent treatment centres etc.

Calls where there is no likelihood of the patient prognosis being improved by an emergency ambulance response or where the presentation is not compatible with life, will not receive an ambulance response and alternative advice will be provided. Our priority throughout this crisis must be to provide an emergency response that will contribute to saving lives or reversing life-threatening conditions wherever possible.

The revised triage system and management of calls will be effective immediately so we would be grateful if you can inform all relevant staff so they understand wherever possible to avoid calling NWAS via 999 unless absolutely necessary.

We are grateful for your support both in the past, now and in the future and with your assistance we can ensure that we prioritise those most in need of our service.

Yours sincerely

**DR CHRIS GRANT**  
Medical Director

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Delivering the right care, at the right time, in the right place; every time