



Emergency Operations Centre Annual Report

Report Period: 2022-2023
Date of Report: June 2023

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1. Our Organisation | Trust Vision, Goals, Values and EOC Mission

Vision	Goals	Values	
Outstanding care, exceptional people, every hour of every day	Be an exceptional place to work, volunteer and learn	Respect We value individuals, including our patients, our staff and our partners in every interaction	
	Provide outstanding quality of care and performance	Teamwork Together as one, we work with pride and commitment to achieve our vision	
	Be excellent collaborators and innovators as system partners	Honesty We value a culture that has trust, integrity and transparency at the centre of everything we do	
	Be an environmentally and financially sustainable organisation	Quality We strive to consistently achieve high standards through continuous improvement	
		Care We value warmth, empathy and compassion in all our relationships	

Over the next three years, we will work together to make sure that the Emergency Operations Centre is:

“A regional centre of excellence for call handling, triage, clinical assessment, signposting and dispatch; with empowered leaders guiding engaged and high-performing teams to deliver high quality, sustainable services to our patients and partners.”

About this report

This EOC Annual Report is produced so that we can present information about our service and report on our performance. We do this in line with our commitment to openness and transparency and the published guidance set out by the Department for Health and Social Care. Some of the images used in this document were taken during various COVID-19 guidance and therefore do not always include the use of a face mask or social distancing. All images have been used with permission. This report is for our EOC staff, stakeholders, and partners.

2. Introduction from Rachael Edwards, Deputy Chief Operating Officer (EOC)

It has been quite a year for the Emergency Operations Centres (EOC) within East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust (EEAST). As the accountable officer for the EOC Business Unit, it is a privilege to share the EOC Annual Report for the period 2022/23.

The EOC Business Unit sits within the Service Delivery (Operations) Directorate within the Trust, which is led by Melissa Dowdeswell, the Director of Nursing and Quality and our interim Chief Operating Officer. Without the support of whom we would not have achieved as much as we did, so thank you Melissa and the Executive Team for supporting the EOC team on the journey of change.

The EOC have continued to demonstrate a shared and embedded commitment to delivering the highest quality of care, despite the challenges with incoming demand, and pressures across the regional healthcare system. This report will highlight the responsiveness of the service to manage the rise in demand, the refurbishment whilst delivering business as usual, the intelligent routing platform implementation, the Industrial Action, the changes to pathways, systems and the many other challenges including delivering an ambitious recruitment trajectory and staff health and wellbeing initiatives and improving every element of performance.

The last year delivered against some key elements of performance improvement, identifying changes in the vision as the year progressed, finishing the year with a complete review of the structure and future requirements to deliver the services as a fully integrated business unit.

The year was challenging, but also very rewarding. We could not have achieved what we did without the commitment from our very enthusiastic, resilient, and professional teams across the EOC. They offered additional time to the service, supported each other, and delivered above and beyond expectations every day throughout the year. Our tokens of appreciation shared with staff cannot thank them enough for their dedication to our patients, the service and each other.

As we launched into 2023/24, the EOC has progressed into an integrated business unit, with the view of a seamless service via a “one team” approach across the region. This means that call handling is delivered regionally, along with the clinical assessment service (CAS), delivering via a model of clinical navigation of incidents to ensure that the right response is delivered to our patients. Our auto dispatch will continue for C1 incidents, with our team-based dispatchers utilising their expertise to manage the capacity and demand of our resources (people and vehicles).

Our Senior Management Team has developed over the year to deliver greater focus on our quality approach to patient safety, quality, business continuity and resilience, change management and infrastructure modernisation and practice. Our transformational change workplans will continue to focus on the modernisation of EOC, and together with the wider EEAST teams, play an essential part of the Trusts overall strategic programs, risks, and strategies.

We have been working very closely on the quality agenda throughout the year and I can confirm that, the EOC Business Unit will continue to deliver on the change improvement plans focussing on People, Quality, Performance and Change. It has been a privilege to lead this team of compassionate, committed, caring experts and this report doesn't even capture all the amazing progress they have made in the last year. I cannot wait for this year as we invest in more staff, progress further with our partnership work, and deliver some amazing technological improvements with our digital colleagues.

To the best of my knowledge the information contained in this document is an accurate reflection of our outcomes and achievements over the last year, which I am delighted to share with you.



Rachael Edwards, Deputy Chief Operating Officer (EOC)

3. The Emergency Operations Centre | What do EOCs do?

We provide urgent and emergency care (UEC) ambulance services 24 hours a day, every day of the year for patients with illnesses and conditions that are immediately life threatening through to minor injuries. We work across the six counties of Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, Essex, Norfolk, Suffolk, and Cambridgeshire. EEAST also forms part of the NHS response to Major Incidents, ensuring that plans are in place to provide a comprehensive response to major incidents, risks, or hazards.

Our three Emergency Operations Centres are in Bedford, Chelmsford, and Norwich and are the first point of contact for all 999 calls and requests for emergency and urgent care. Our teams work across the three core areas of Call Handling, Dispatch and Clinical Advice to provide the best possible care to our patients. These functions relate to 3 of the organisations 5 critical functions.

We also work closely with Fire, Police, Coastguard and British Transport Police under the Civil Contingencies Act to keep our population safe and respond to civil emergencies as required.

Our telephone clinical advice service support patients who do not need an ambulance and our team of clinicians undertake our 'hear and treat' process, or make referrals to a GP, pharmacist, or walk-in centre.

Our area is made up of:

- around **6.3 million** people
- **7,500** square miles
- **Major Airports** including London Stansted, London Luton, Southend, and Norwich
- Busy **transport networks** and **major road routes**
- **Increased population** due to many **tourists visiting** our area daily

In 2022/23 we:

- received **1,393,675** emergency contacts
- answered **1,036,924** emergency **999** calls
- supported **58,584** patients through our **Clinical Assessment Service**



We have over **800 staff and volunteers** working across various roles

Our teams work across **three Emergency Operations Centres**

Our Clinicians helped **58,584** patients through our 'Hear and Treat' service

We work with **17 Acute Trusts (A&Es)** and **6 Integrated Care Systems**

We collaborate with and support **6 Police Forces** and **6 Fire Services**

Across 2022/2023 on average our **Call Handlers** answered over **3000 999** calls a day. That's an **emergency call every 30 seconds**

4. Our Year | A snapshot of our highlights



In **December 2022** we had the pleasure of **Rt Hon Steve Barclay MP**, Secretary of State for Health, visit the newly refurbished Chelmsford EOC.

Rt Hon Priti Patel MP visited Chelmsford EOC and spent time members of the EOC team. Priti then **spoke about her visit in Parliament.**



We hosted many visits from the **Executive Team**, to share learning about the different roles within EOC and how each role plays a **vital part in saving lives, effective service delivery and patient care.**

“I met the current Chief Executive of the Trust, Tom Abell, and visited the call-handling centre in Broomfield. They are changing things. The call handlers are first class and I pay tribute to them; they are dynamic and so engaged. They are also smart, agile, and triaging calls, which makes a tremendous difference. We want to support that and the right kind of patient outcomes, and they really care about patient outcomes.”

The Rt Hon Priti Patel MP for Witham speaking in Parliament after visiting Chelmsford EOC in December 2022.

Chelmsford EOC Duty Manager **Natalie Gregory** won **Leader of the Year** at the **2022 Control Room Awards**.



During the heatwave some of the **Executive Team and Senior EOC Leaders** helped keep staff cool by providing **ice lollies and ice creams**.

We **celebrated** our teams **outstanding achievements** at **staff celebration** events across all three EOCs.

EOC Clinician **Jeremy** was presented with his **35 year service coin**.

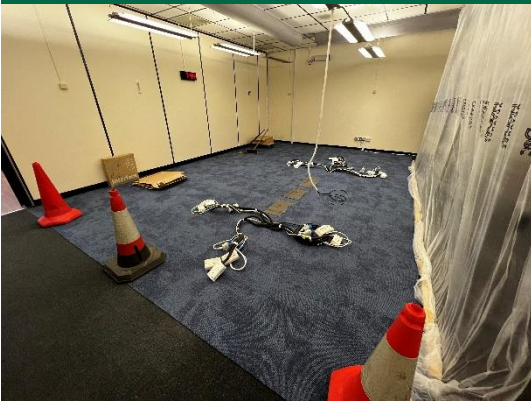


We **celebrated** another year of the **International Control Room Week**.

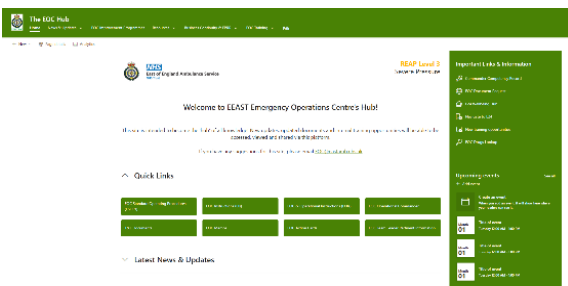
ECATs Nicola was presented with the **Queen's Medal for Long Service & Good Conduct.**

As part of business continuity, the **Senior EOC Team** attended **Call Handler training** to help support the team and patients.

Chelmsford EOC received substantial investment in its refurbishment.



We carried out the largest **Business Continuity Event** in recent EOC history and temporarily closed **Chelmsford EOC** as part of the **improvement, upgrade and refurbishment works.**



We released the **EOC Hub** to **support** and provide our teams with quick access to **documents and information.**



Call Handler **Billy Ginn** was presented with a **Discharged Alive Award** by our DCOO **Rachael Edwards**.



Senior Call Handler **Ellie Brace** was presented with a **Stork Award**.

Senior Call Handler **Kerry Summers** was recognised as an **EMD of the Year Finalist** by our EOC Improvement Manager **Zoe**.

The International Academies of Emergency Dispatch (IAED) hold **annual awards** across the world to **highlight and celebrate** the work and attributes of Emergency Control Room teams. This year we were **proud** to have a member of **our team** recognised as a **finalist**.



Dispatcher **Malcom Wells** was presented with a **Deputy COO Commendation**.



The Rt Hon **Kemi Badenoch** pictured with team members whilst visiting **Chelmsford EOC**.

“I could see first-hand the skill the staff require to establish people’s needs and determine the right help to send – all within seconds of picking up the call.

“The upgraded Ambulance Operations Centre at Chelmsford will definitely improve the working conditions for those in demanding jobs at the front line of local emergency healthcare. It’s also been an eye-opener to see that, although people with serious illness and injuries still get urgent hospital transport, a lot of the ambulance service’s work now also involves signposting less urgent patients to other services.

“NHS England has allocated an additional £150 million to address ambulance service pressures in 2022/23 and support improvements to response times through call handler recruitment and retention. The team at the operations centre in Broomfield are doing a remarkable job during a challenging time and I will continue to support them and EEAST wherever possible.” **The Rt Hon Kemi Badenoch MP following a visit to the Chelmsford EOC in November 2022.**

“Thank you for organising such a comprehensive programme that had such a positive impact, both professionally and personally. We were each struck by the warm, informed, and engaging welcome received from everyone we spoke to - ambulance crews, EEAST colleagues at the Cambridge and Peterborough base and call handlers in Norwich, who are the very first point of contact for the public.

It was a privilege to experience some of your services in action, giving us a much better understanding of the challenges faced by your team on a regular basis.”

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Integrated Care System Executive Team following a visit to the Norwich EOC in April 2023.



We worked to provide staff with additional **rest, relaxation, and wellbeing** spaces.



Wellbeing Rooms and Quiet Spaces for staff were redecorated and revamped.



The EOC has **invested** in its Business Continuity & Resilience processes and has expanded **inter-agency working**, exercising, and training. This ensures we are **ready to respond** to any incident.



Therapy Dogs Nationwide visited our EOCs to support **staff wellbeing**.



Supported staff in creating **outside spaces**.

Business Support Manager George, HR Manager Lucy, and **Hershey the dog** visited Chelmsford EOC on **Christmas Day** to thank our hard-working teams and provide a delicious breakfast.



Organised and held a **Staff Retirement Event** for Calvin, Maurice, Julie, and Arlaine from Norwich EOC to say **thank you** for their service.

5. Our Operational Functions | Team Updates



**Rachael
Edwards**

Rachael is the **Deputy Chief Operating Officer** for the EOC. She has overall accountability and responsibility for the daily operating, safety, performance, and strategic direction of the EOCs.



Simon King

Simon is the **Interim Head of EOC** and is responsible for the daily management of the EOCs, workforce, performance, clinical quality, and staff support.



**Michelle
Alston**

Michelle is the **Interim General Manager** for the **Tactical Operations Centre (TOC)** and is responsible for leading the team and supporting delivery of operational and clinical performance.



**Zoe
Martindale**

Zoe is the **EOC Improvement Manager** and leads on improvement workstreams, transformation and change projects, quality, assurance, compliance, and governance across the EOC teams.



**Richard
Smith**

Richard is the **Senior Operations Centre Manager** responsible for the **Clinical Assessment Service** and leads the EOC Clinicians. He also leads on clinical care across the EOC to ensure a high quality of service and care.



**Adrian
Blythe**

Adrian is the **Senior Operations Centre Manager** for **Bedford EOC** and is responsible for the operational management of the team, patient care, and service delivery across Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, and West Essex.



**Joanne
Bromley**

Joanne is the **EOC Business Continuity and Resilience Manager**. She is responsible for ensuring that there are systems and processes in place to ensure there is always robust service delivery.



Paul Frost

Paul is the **Senior Operations Centre Manager** for **Chelmsford EOC** and is responsible for the operational management of the team, patient care, and service delivery across Essex and Suffolk.



**Daniel
Hynes**

Daniel is the **EOC Infrastructure Manager**. He is responsible for improving technology across the EOC and linking in with colleagues to drive forward change which improves the patient journey.



**Alex
Laurent**

Alex is the **EOC Clinical Operations Manager** and is responsible for the day-to-day management of the Clinical Assessment Service. Alex reports into Richard Smith.



Liam Walker

Liam is the **Senior Operations Centre Manager** for **Clinical Governance and Workforce Planning** and is responsible for training, education, and quality assurance across the EOC teams.



Kelly-Anne Applegate

Kelly-Anne is the **Training and Education Manager**. She leads on EOC call handling and dispatch training as well as education, learning and development across the EOC teams.



Donna Finney

Donna is the **Quality Assurance Manager** and leads on EOC quality assurance, compliance, and call handling standards. Donna reports into Liam Walker.



Chris Hewetson

Chris is the **Patient Safety Officer** for EOC and works regionally across the EOC with a focus on patient safety, risk, and complaints as well as learning from incidents.



Maria Nethercote

Maria is the **EOC Compliance and Assurance Manager** and works regionally to ensure compliance within areas such as mandatory training, CQC regulatory compliance, health and safety and risk.



Charlotte Britcher

Charlotte is the **Senior PA to the Deputy Chief Operating Officer** for EOC and provides full business management, secretarial, administrative and diary support and general office management.



Yasmin Olney

Yasmin is the **Senior PA to the Head of EOC** and provides full business management, secretarial, administrative and diary support and general office management.

Emergency Operations Centres – Interim Head of EOC Simon King

I am delighted to be leading the EEAST Emergency Operations Centre team. Being part of our team is not something anybody can do. Calming callers in the midst of their unique life-changing emergency, talking people through life-saving intervention, dispatching operational responders when there are more patients than ambulances, and making urgent clinical prioritisation decisions, are just some examples of the myriad of amazing things we do, all day, every day. Many people wouldn't want to do what we do and plenty of them wouldn't be able to. Yet our EOC people keep giving their best in the midst of adversity, and that's our common identify. Everyone in our team contributes, whether they are planning our shifts, providing our training, making sure we are properly supported or ensuring our tech keeps us going. I am really proud to be part of that team, proud of our people and of our leaders.

The EOC has been going through a period of change over the last year with a focus on delivering improved performance through staff focused care. This has begun with improving working environments, cultural and leadership change programs, increased recruitment, and internal career progression.

Our people have told us they want to see more stability and consistency, and so we have been moving from a culture with staff acting-up in secondments or undertaking development opportunities for extended periods to recruit permanently to vacant roles. Our team have also told us they want to see equal opportunity for all and so we have been working hard at making development accessible across the team.

We have also invested and changed working environments through ergonomic changes to day-to-day working environments, improving the welfare of those who work here.

The next year will focus on the recruitment and retention of staff in key roles, and continuous improvement of our service to patients through our call handing and response times. I'm looking forward to us leading and implementing those changes together.

Michelle Alston, Interim General Manager – Tactical Operations Centre (TOC)

I am very proud to be the Interim General Manager for TOC. The team work exceptionally hard to ensure EEAST has the best opportunity to deliver the best service to our patients and the best support to our staff. TOC provides 24/7 senior leadership support to the whole of EEAST, ensuring all our leaders have support available whenever they need it. We liaise with many teams across EEAST, as well as local and national partner agencies to ensure the risks and challenges faced by EEAST are highlighted and addressed as swiftly as possible by being excellent collaborators and innovators as system partners.

Over the last 9 months whilst I have been in post, we have started a project to realign roles and responsibilities within TOC and the wider EOC to ensure all our teams have the right tools and capacity to manage our demands and our patient's needs. This is a significant, and important, part of ensuring staff welfare across the organisation.

We are also part of a review into the EEAST major incident response plan, reviewing the EOC management and coordination of a major incident, balancing the needs of the incident against the business-as-usual workload. This is a complex but vital piece of work, taking learning from recent major incidents across the nation, to ensure EEAST are prepared in the event we declare a major incident.

The next 12 months will see a continuation of the development in TOC and its role within EEAST, ensuring we continue to focus on staff welfare and supporting our EEAST colleagues to achieve our vision of outstanding care, exceptional people, every hour of every day.

Adrian Blythe, Senior Operations Centre Manager – Bedford EOC

Over the last 12 months we have been working on culture and leadership transformation as part of our Trust wide culture agenda. We have had support from Health Education England and the Strategy, Culture and Education Team to build upon many elements of the workplace, including staff welfare, inclusivity, staff development, and process. This is an improvement journey which we will continue to develop and engage with staff on over the forthcoming 12 months.

The local leadership team are all working towards improving our local people, quality, and performance targets, which are aligned to the Trust's goals of being an exceptional place to work, delivering excellent care to our patients, improving collaboration with the Trust's support departments, and making our operation more sustainable. A lot of commitment has been seen regarding our professional standards, and ensuring processes are clear, transparent, and aligned to our one team business approach to reduce variation across the EOC unit. We have also delivered a refurbishment in the wellbeing spaces to support our staff. Being supported by the Trust and NHS Leadership Academy, more and more staff are developing well and working towards making the team being more resilient in terms of succession planning and progression. The team have worked hard to improve our performance.

Paul Frost, Senior Operations Centre Manager – Chelmsford EOC

Chelmsford EOC has gone through a significant transition over the past year with all operational rooms refurbished, which has made real difference to the working environment, rest areas and well-being spaces. A focus on staff support has seen the introduction of a reporting process to track mandatory training and appraisals as well as sickness absence related support for our staff.

The team have improved communication and discussions by introducing staff surgeries and regular updates, to support staff engagement. There has been a real spotlight on inclusion with discussions and information shared about other religions and beliefs to promote our cultural differences. Welfare remains a high on the agenda and we continue to seek out ways to support and help staff. We are excited about the plans to further improve the interior and outside environment. We had the pleasure of Lucy Moss our Senior HR Business Manager into the EOC on Christmas Day to make breakfast for the team, which was much appreciated. We have hosted many visits from Executives and external partners throughout the year and improved our communication and engagement with our blue light partners.

Nick Morgan, Interim Senior Operations Centre Manager – Norwich EOC

It was a pleasure to lead the Norwich EOC team for 6 months. Their enthusiasm, professionalism, and desire to deliver high quality effective care was clear from the start. They worked well as a team with highly skilled Duty Managers taking ownership of the day-to-day performance and management of the "room". My role

was to standardise practice across the teams and further develop the teams thinking about areas of improvement. We made great headway with staff absence management, appraisals and statutory and mandatory training and local performance improvements. I also worked on the Dispatch Review to support the teams thinking regarding how else they could approach some of the challenges.

Wellbeing was a key element of the Norwich room with many Senior Call Handlers, Dispatchers, Call Handling Team Leaders, and Dispatch Team Leaders taking an active role in supporting health and well-being for all their staff. certainly, bank” is certainly one to be very proud of with staff donating selflessly to support the whole team. Though my time with the team was short, I really feel that the team are one. There is always a need to improve culture and morale in any organisation and team, however, this team were certainly all pulling together in the same direction to make the working environment one to be very proud of. With the support of Tom Pont, Rob Hazel and Yas Olney, we managed to deliver hot Christmas dinners to the entire team, including some road staff and has some left over. Thank you all for an amazing 6 months, I felt very privileged to have this opportunity to lead the team.

Lee Brooks, Interim Senior Operations Centre Manager – Norwich EOC

Norwich EOC faced high demand and pressures over the last quarter of the year, which were managed well with the support of the team and the wider Trust. As the focus turns back to the improvement agenda, wellbeing, and training, we should recognise how well our staff manage the ever-changing challenges in a professional and engaging manner. We have been working hard to improve the culture of EOC, raising our professional standards and delivering improvements in the Trusts values and building awareness of cultures, inclusivity, and humility. We have improved some of the estate to enable improved access and egress for our colleagues using mobility aids, however, have much to do to make the environment a better place. Our establishment is increasing, and sickness has been reducing meaning more opportunities for development. A huge thank you to all staff in Norwich have delivered excellent leadership and support to the team.

ECAT – Richard Smith, Clinical Services Manager and Alex Laurent, EOC Clinical Operations Manager

EOC Clinical Services comprises of multidisciplinary teams that support the clinical functions of the EOC within EEAST. The teams provide the Trusts hear and treat of incoming emergency calls, management of the pending dispatch queue and

emergency clinical advice. The team also includes frequent callers, CAD markers, SPOC, and specialisms in paediatric care. The last year has been challenging for the EOC clinical service team, this has been due to the ongoing demand experienced within the health system and the impact on ambulance operations. Despite this, ECAT has begun a journey of transformation to become a Clinical Assessment Service and modernise its approach to Hear and Treat for the Trust as well as working with partners on co designing an improved way to refer non ambulance work to community services.

6. Our People | Be an exceptional place to work, volunteer and learn

Tactical Operations Centre

The Tactical Operations Centre (TOC) is a critical function which is headed up by Michelle Alston. The wider team keep the wheels of daily business turning and are responsible for tactical level leadership which includes performance, patient safety and care, staff support and welfare along with daily operational planning needs. The team are responsible for the setting and coordination of tactical actions across the Trust to ensure we can provide robust service delivery and the best possible care.

The team are responsible for working with local Urgent and Emergency Care systems to ensure co-ordination and escalation of service issues such as Arrival to Handover delays and other system pressures which may have a direct impact on the ability for us to respond to patients. This ensures that our EOC teams can continue with focusing on providing business as usual.

The team will also assume tactical command of serious and significant incidents including major incidents and follow local and national plans to ensure that we can still provide a service to patients. The TOC team consists of Duty Tactical Commanders, Support Managers and Tactical Assistants who will all work together to provide ongoing oversight of our daily business whilst ensuring staff are supported and service is maintained.

Training and Education

Liam Walker heads up this team with Kelly-Anne Appelgate who leads EOC Training and Education and Rob Hazel who leads EOC recruitment. Rob was instrumental in strengthening our recruitment processes over the last year. With the continued focus on recruitment the team worked above and beyond to provide new team members with the best possible support and training. A high quality and robust training package was revised and implemented, ensuring that our new starters were ready to work in the operational EOC environment. Kelly-Anne and the wider team were pivotal to the delivery of this.

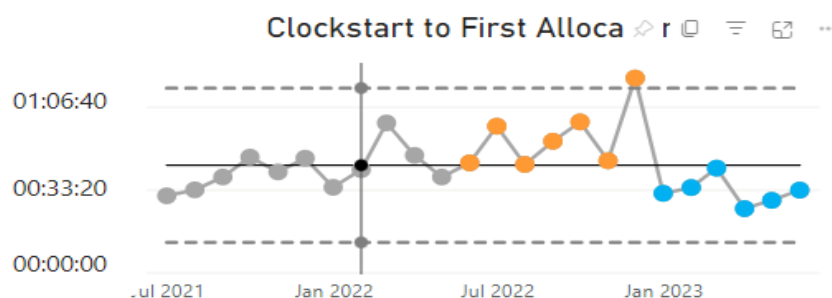
Across 2022/2023 493 Call Handlers and ECHMs were trained, 179 of which passed the MPDS exam and have since become workforce effective. 13 dispatch courses

were delivered, and 35 dispatchers were trained. Alongside this the team has responded with a proactive approach to urgent requirements for training such as creating and delivering an Industrial Action Call Handler and Dispatcher training package to all EOC Senior Managers and the Trusts Communications and Engagement Director. Throughout the year the team has also offered learning development opportunities and has trained an additional 14 members of EOC staff as Educators which supports training across each area.

There has been a tremendous amount of work completed by our Senior Call Handlers in mentoring large volumes of staff in the “live” environment often under pressure with regards to call demand. Qualifying as an Emergency medical Dispatcher through the International Academy of Emergency Dispatch is a great honor for our call handlers and our sincere appreciation goes to all our Mentors.

Whilst the primary focus has been on Call Handler and Dispatcher recruitment the ongoing educational needs were considered, developed, and implemented to support the continuing education and development of the wider team. These have been produced in response to learning from serious incidents, data from Quality Assurance Team and qualitative information provided by the EOCs. Some of the topics included assigning ECHO codes, MPDS upgrades, Airport Emergencies, CPIS/PDS, Protocol 25 (Psychiatric calls) to name a few.

The additional Dispatchers have delivered improvements in the code to first allocation position.

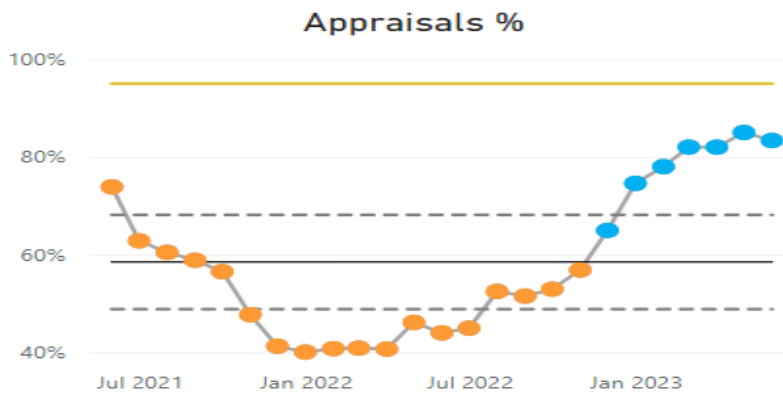


Graph shows improvements in clock start to first allocation position across 2022/2023

In terms of materials and content, the team have worked hard to entirely review the course content, make amendments to course structure, and re-evaluate methods of delivery to ensure that training courses are to the highest standards. New Call Handler and Dispatcher manuals have been implemented and the team are working towards moving away from paper-based assessments and materials to utilising an online platform which we hope to see come to fruition within the next few months.

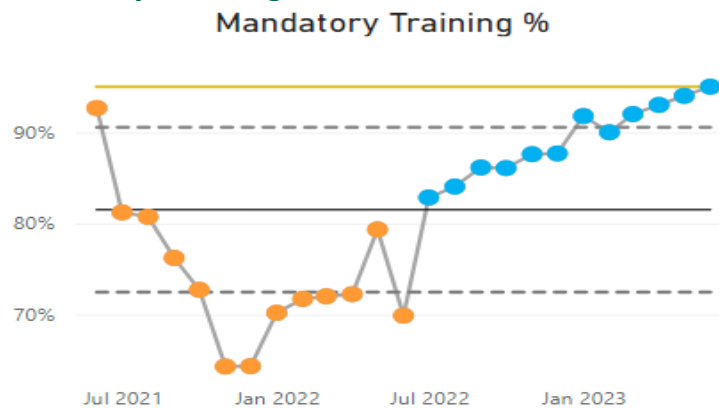
Appraisals

Our people play a significant role in improving our service; therefore, we recognise it is imperative that we work as one team, clear on expectations, open, honest, supportive, develop our people and provide effective leadership. Supporting staff to achieve their career aspirations are key and to understand what training our staff want, we have focussed on delivering staff appraisals, and ensuring appropriate statutory and mandatory training has taken place, as a result there has been significant improvement in these areas.



Graph shows improvements in staff appraisals rate across 2022/2023

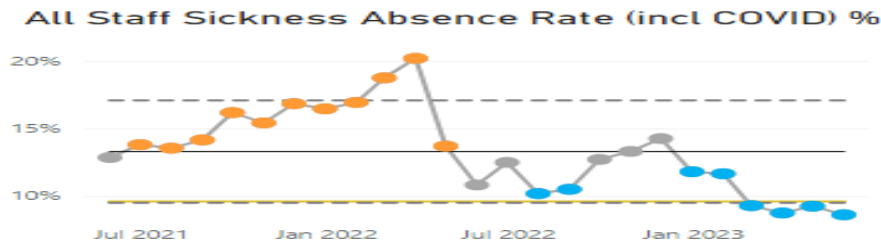
Statutory and Mandatory Training



Graph shows improvements in mandatory training rate across 2022/2023

Sickness Absence

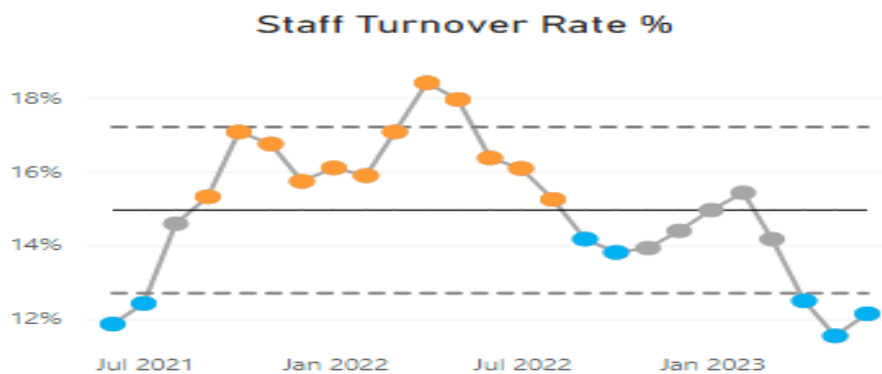
Sickness Absence is another area where we have focussed, with pre-arranged welfare checks, weekly review meetings and monthly review with the Occupational Health Team, we have been able to support staff to be well and supported in returning to work. This has had a great impact on Sickness Absence Rate.



Graph shows a reduction in overall EOC staff sickness absence rate across 2022/2023

Another key area of EOC improvement this past year has been the focus on recruitment and retention initiatives, quality improvement along with support and wellbeing workstreams. We want to create a happy, healthy place to work where careers, development and support are at the heart of what we do. We want to encourage our teams to be the best that they can be. We have seen amazing improvements in our staff turnover because of some of these Retention and Well-Being Plan initiatives too.

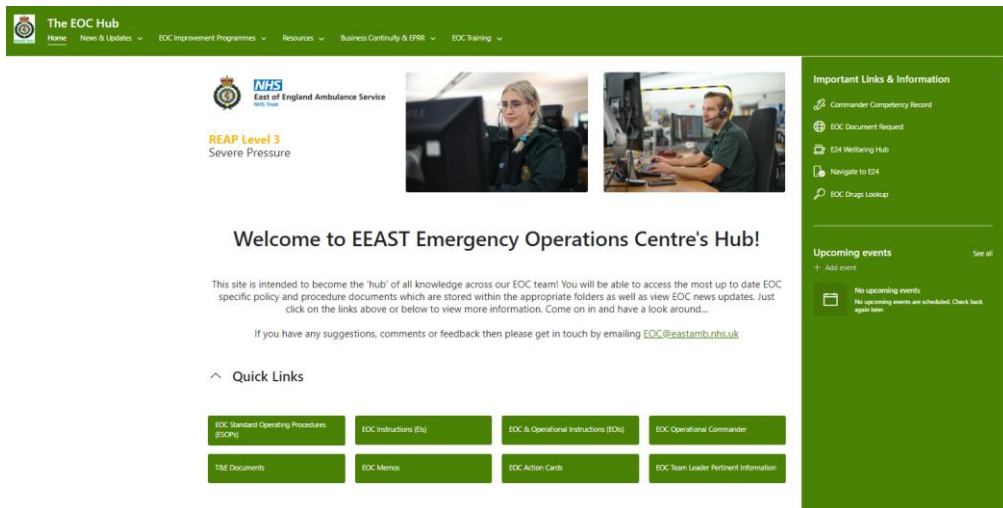
Staff Turnover



Graph shows a reduction in EOC staff turnover rate across 2022/2023

February 2023 saw the exciting launch of the EOC Hub which was designed by George Barber, Business Support Manager. The Hub was designed to assist the EOC teams to easily find documents such as policies and processes and action cards, quickly and effectively without the need of searching through emails and folders. It

also contains pertinent information that relates to the job roles and teams within the EOC, keeping our people updated and informed. The Hub also contains a latest news section where communications can be shared with the team. [The EOC Hub - Home \(sharepoint.com\)](#)



Graphic shows the EOC Hub

Celebrating Success | Recognising Achievements

Our Admin Support Team Charlotte Britcher and Yasmin Olney were responsible for introducing and co-ordinating EOC Staff Celebration Events. The aim of these events was to recognise the excellence of our workforce to ensure the team felt valued and that achievements were recognised and celebrated.

We wanted to show our team that their work and contribution to patient care is not just incredibly important but also appreciated and valued. These events are hosted by the Deputy Chief Operating Officer or Interim Head of EOC and are also used as a 'meet and greet' opportunity.



Graphic shows the achievements we celebrated across 2022/2023

Mandatory and Statutory Training (MAST)

EOC staff undertake Training, attend EOC relevant or role specific training and Continuing Professional Development (CPD), via e-learning or face to face sessions, as required to enable them to perform their role. Progress is recorded on Evolve, EEAST’s Learning Management System, and compliance is monitored at the EOC Quality and EOC Delivery Group Meetings to provide assurance.

This is further complimented by the recently implemented EOC Hub where internal training opportunities are highlighted for staff to access.

EOC supports “protected time for learning”, abstracting staff where possible, to facilitate staff development and are committed to providing opportunities for staff to do so. Future plans include incorporating this into rotas to ensure delivery and planned abstractions.

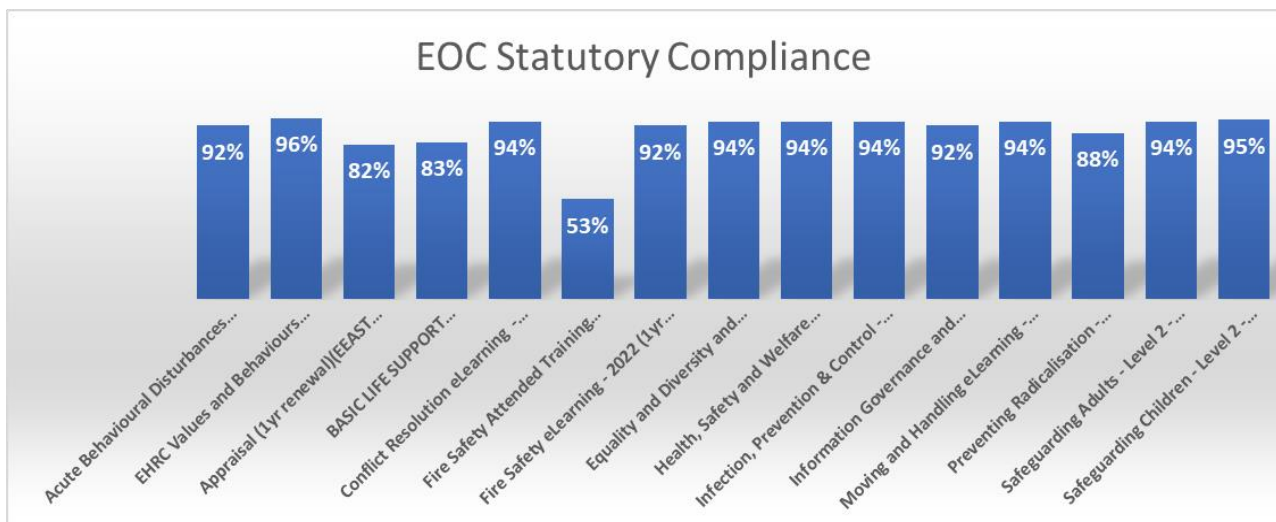


Chart 1: Graph shows EOC Statutory Training Compliance (all staff) as of March 2023

10 of the 11 Statutory Training Modules were met or exceeded the 85% threshold requirement towards delivery of the CQC Action Plan Key Objective 1 working towards the Trust target of 95%:

- BLS
- Conflict Resolution
- Fire Safety E-learning
- Equality and Diversity
- Health, Safety and Welfare
- Infection Prevention and Control
- Information Governance
- Moving and Handling
- Preventing Radicalisation
- Safeguarding Adults and Children

The remaining Statutory Training Module Fire Safety, compliance currently at 53%, is on track to meet the required target by June 2023.

ABD, EHRC and Appraisals are EEAST specific mandated training modules (refer to chart 1) with a 95% target compliance being progressed towards.

Managers have undertaken Mandatory Management Training and continue to do so as new learning is introduced.

Next steps will be to improve and maintain compliance in all areas through continued monitoring with specific focus on Level 3 Safeguarding Training for all Clinical Registrants within EOC to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements.

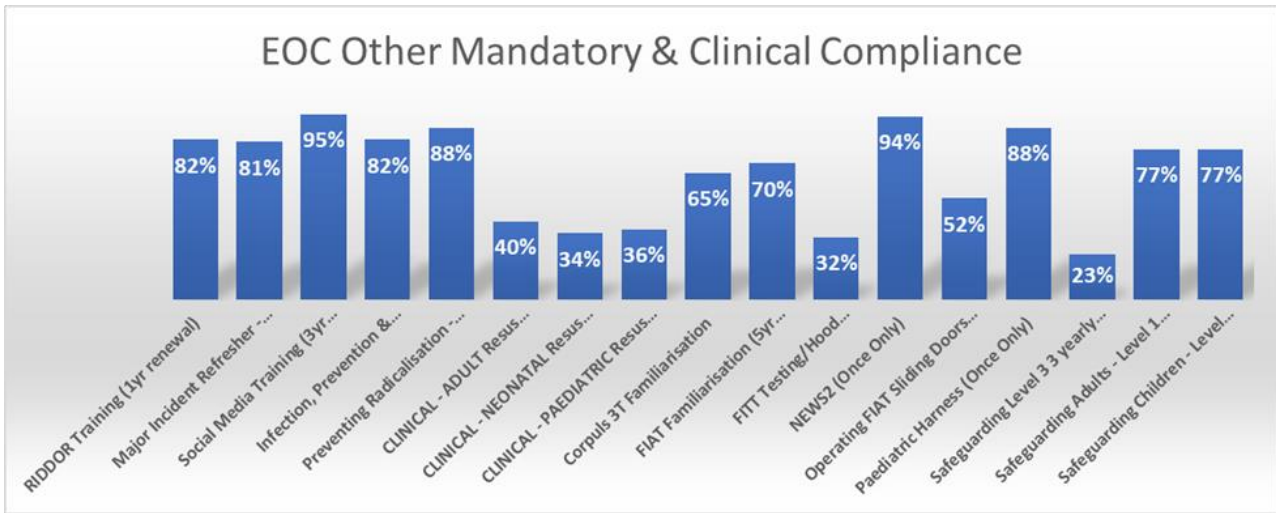


Chart 2: Graph shows EOC Other Mandatory & Clinical Modules Compliance Performance at March 2023

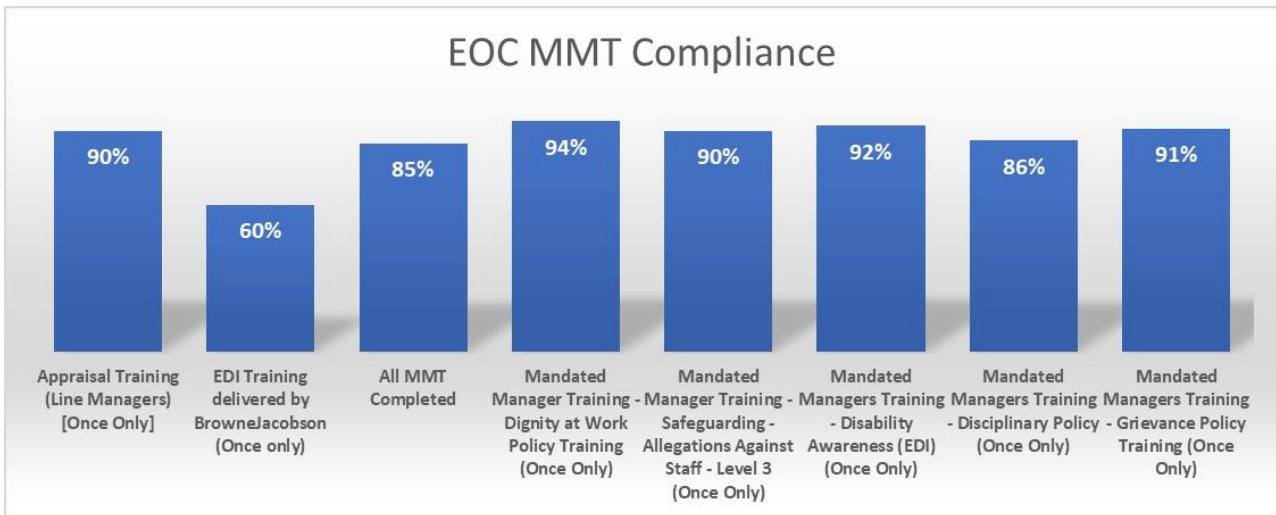
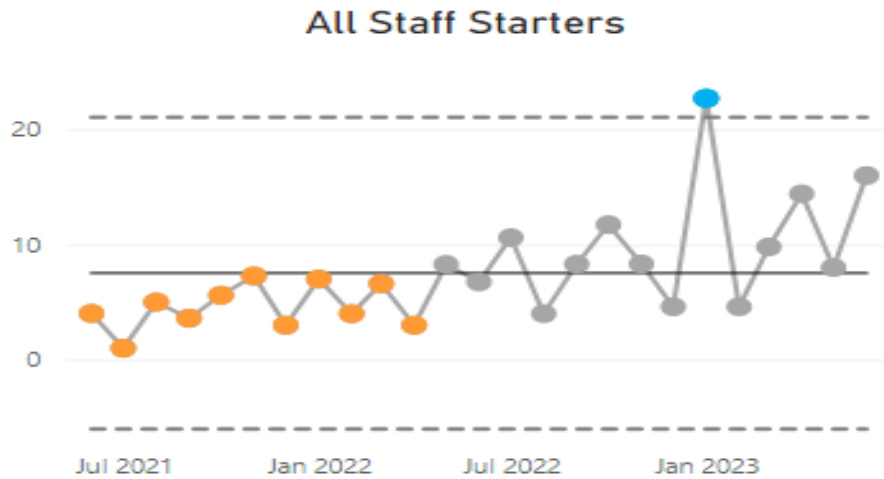


Chart 3: Graph shows EOC Manager Mandatory Training Compliance Performance at March 2023

Supporting our Workforce

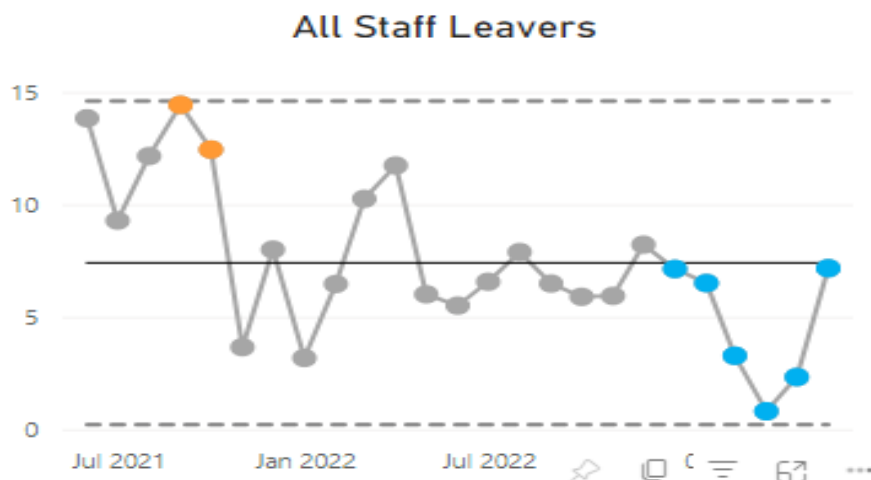
Last year the work of EOC Recruitment Lead Rob Hazel, saw a continued focus on recruitment with the implementation of 14 different initiatives to further strengthen retention across the EOC. These included introducing new starter experience leads, ‘taster days’ for candidates to attend the EOC before commencing in their new role, new starter, anonymised feedback survey, an increased mentoring period, new induction process including staff benefits information, and creation of a regional mentoring feedback group to celebrate and champion successes.



Graph shows a steady increase in all EOC new starters

We have worked to strengthen the ‘onboarding’ process which sees candidates who are moving across to EEAST contracts receiving regular contact and updates throughout. We do this through a ‘keeping warm’ process and plan in regular catch ups with candidates to ensure a smooth transition which means we can identify any issues early on and work to resolve these. Prior to this method it was noted that we began to lose the interest of potential candidates around the time of ‘onboarding’ due to the length of time it could take.

We are pleased to report that we have also seen our retention rates improve with data showing that by the end of March 2023 we were losing an average of 2 WTE per week compared to 4 WTE per week in April 2022. In addition, 50% of this is also positive attrition (promotions). Feedback shows that the top reason staff leave is due to personal circumstances (staff deciding the role is not suitable for them).



Graph shows a reduction in all EOC leavers

12 Call Handlers were promoted to a Senior Call Handler role and 4 were promoted to a Call Handler Team Leader role.

Across 2022/2023, 12 Call Handlers were successfully appointed to the role of Senior Call Handler, whilst 4 were promoted to Call Handler Team Leader positions. This clearly shows the career progression which is available within our EOCs and that many staff chose to stay within the EOC.

14 Dispatchers were recruited, many of whom came from our Call Handling team which further shows the career progression paths available. Also 5 Dispatchers successfully secured promotion to Dispatch Team Leader positions.

14 Dispatcher vacancies were recruited into and 5 were promoted to a Dispatch Team Leader role.

"Support you receive. Everyone is always willing to help."

"People friendly, support available and development options are many."

"Good work atmosphere and made friends for life."

"Amazing Team and support, felt settled & loved the role."



“Word It Out”

Based on words used to describe our amazing team of people who are working in the specialist function to deliver the very best care to our 999 emergency patients.

Culture and improving our workplace

Across the EOCs we have been working hard to continuously transform and improve the culture of the workplace. We want to achieve the Trusts goal of becoming an exceptional place to work, volunteer and learn and ensure our teams are treated with dignity and respect to achieve their potential with pride and commitment.

The team are more cohesive and working better together, in addition communication has improved dramatically. The impact has been a more connected workforce who are actively looking at ways to improve the service to our patients. Our people are more engaged and are recognised for their achievements and patient feedback is celebrated.

This year some areas of focus have included:

- Estate improvement, decoration and improving office space for wellbeing and confidential meetings



- Improved staff wellbeing areas such as rest area, quiet room with plans for a multifaith room
- Training courses and enrolling more staff of all roles onto development courses
- Provided learning to better support our staff. This included improving resilience, health, and well-being, coping with suicidal callers, and managing difficult conversations. This has been well received with teams feeding back that this has supported them in managing calls and their resilience more effectively. In addition to this the Culture and Development team facilitated a career workshop to discuss development opportunities available to our people
- Leadership communications and staff recognition and celebration events. This resulted in the publication of newsletters, information on Health and Wellbeing, diversity, and recognition. Inviting the Samaritans to talk to our staff, and encouraging our people to speak out or contact FTSU should they have concerns
- Building better relationships by encouraging staff to observe each different role
- Enhanced training and development for Team Leaders
- Re-introduced 1-2-1s with all staff groups to support and monitor wellbeing, feedback, learning and development needs
- Focusing on professional standards and assisted with supporting staff to refine and create process to ensure high standards. We focused on:
 - Transparency and Fairness
 - Providing a safe place to work
 - Developing our leaders to ensure our people processes were consistent, to ensure HR processes were adhered to
 - Expanding our welfare and wellbeing offering
- Created opportunities to listen to our staff and respond to concerns, support wellbeing and any ideas for improvement
- Developed and ensured there was a robust training and support programme for staff returning to the workplace following any extended leave
- Worked to improve wellbeing for staff following equipment funded by AACE along with Garden additions, coffee area, and additional wellbeing spaces

Wellbeing

At the end of 2022, NHS England and AACE worked in partnership to undertake a joint project around the Health and Wellbeing and support for Ambulance Service staff. We received funding from NHS England which helped us to look at ways we could increase support. This involved the Trust bidding for monies which were specifically to use towards EOC staff wellbeing initiatives.

EEAST was successful in its bid to secure money that could be used to improve wellbeing areas, massage chairs, improve outside gardens and provide stress relief such as colouring books which help to calm the mind and relax the body along with the more traditional stress ball. Working collaboratively with the EOC wellbeing leads, Procurement, Finance and Estates we were able to target this directly on improving areas for our staff to enjoy and relax.

Staff Survey

Each autumn everyone who works in the NHS in England is invited to take part in the NHS Staff Survey. The survey offers a snapshot in time of how people experience their working lives. Its strength is in capturing a national picture alongside local detail, enabling a range of organisations to understand what it is like for staff across different parts of the NHS and work to make improvements.



1. We have a voice that counts
2. Staff Engagement
3. WE are safe and healthy
4. Morale
5. We are always learning
6. We work flexibly

Whilst there has been a great deal of work across the EOCs in 2022/23 on all of these areas, we cannot demonstrate where we are until the survey results are published. This report has demonstrated the great achievements over the last 12 months, however significant culture change takes years to implement, so we feel

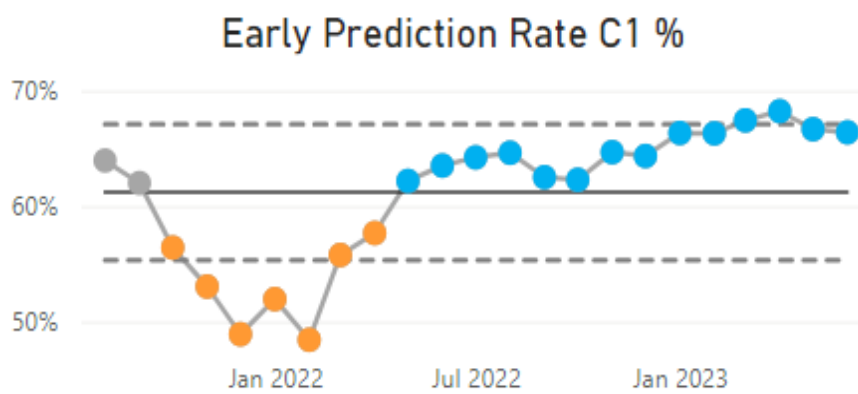
this is a journey of improvement. We will of course publish the results when we have them.



7. Quality | Providing outstanding quality of care and performance

Clinical Outcomes

Our **Call Handlers** answered **10,264** cardiac arrest calls and provided over **64,000** minutes of CPR instructions. Our teams are the **first link in the chain of survival**.



Graph shows an increase and improvement in C1 early prediction rates

Our systems support us in delivering automated allocation for C1 calls. Our EMD's are experts in identifying peri cardiac arrest and use key words within the system to identify C1 emergency calls quickly. This has improved dramatically over the last year. That means, our EMDs are making a real difference and helping to save lives every day.

Quality Assurance

Our Quality Assurance Manager Donna Finney has made great progress throughout the year on the Trust's portfolio to achieve Accreditation for Centre of Excellence (ACE). This work is continuing with the Academy with the goal of completing the ACE status in early 2024.

A Quality Improvement Lead was appointed in a secondment to support the QA and Education Team focussed on the continuous education and learning to improve call handling compliance.

In addition to the auditing of EMD and ECHM cases, several Special audits were undertaken, and training provided to improve Call Handlers understanding and application of ECHO calls, how to abort ProQA and to reduce instances of Call Handlers remaining on calls that are over 60 minutes.

The team celebrated the following:

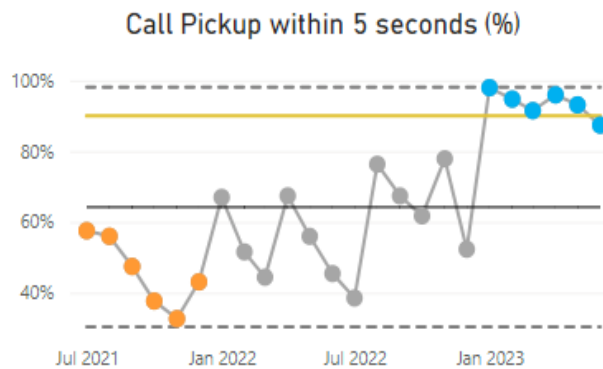
- Awards for Stork badges each month and Discharged Alive badges and letters also awarded.
- IAED EMD of the Year nominations made for 5 call handlers, one of which was a finalist.

Quality Improvement

“In the past 12 months I have been involved in some exciting projects, not only to improve the patient quality and performance of service we provide to our patients but also to improve our staff wellbeing and satisfaction. I’m extremely passionate about listening to our staff and embedding their suggestions into our working practices. In the summer of 2022, I led the Call Handler Change programme alongside 7 dedicated and passionate members of the call handling team across the 3 EOCs. Together we have implemented a lot of change to streamline processes and share best practice.” **Zoe Martindale, EOC Improvement Manager**

In 2022/2023 EOC implemented many exciting improvement workstreams such as the launch of the Call Handling, Dispatch and ECAT improvement programmes, integral to these workstreams is the involvement of our experienced and dedicated staff who are best placed to suggest and make change within the task and finish groups. The EOC Improvement plans also feeds into the Trusts Organisational Performance Improvement Plan (OPIP).

As part of the Call Handling Improvement Plan, we demonstrated great achievement, thanks to the leadership of the changes and the call handlers themselves who together with the support of the Senior Call handlers and Call Handler Team Leaders, significantly improved performance.



Graph shows journey of improvement in 999 call pick up rate

Our performance programmes aren't just about improving performance, but also how we improve and streamline processes for our staff, improve everyday working and listen and act on staff suggestions and ideas. As a result of learning and implementing change following staff engagement, we launched an Innovations Portal, to capture all staff ideas. [EOC Innovation Portal \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

To ensure we can improve service delivery and provide the best possible patient care and be dedicated to excellence we have reviewed all of our policies and processes such as EOC Standard Operating Procedures [The EOC Hub - EOC Standard Operating Procedures \(ESOPs\) - All Documents \(sharepoint.com\)](#). We have also refreshed and revised our EOC Instructions [The EOC Hub - EOC Instructions \(EIs\) - All Documents \(sharepoint.com\)](#) and share our thanks to Andrew Beardsley, EOC Duty Manager, for his support with this workstream.

Compliance and Assurance

Maria Nethercote is the EOC Compliance and Assurance Support Manager. She is responsible for supporting the EOC Senior Leadership Team to deliver on organisational objectives, and be effective, whilst meeting standards. Collaborative working with colleagues from other directorates is a requirement of the role to achieve this.

Over the past 12 months we have been working towards ensuring EOC is on track to achieve, maintain or exceed expectations in compliance. Clearly articulating and managing risks and taking action to address and reduce any risk to an acceptable level of acceptance if the risk cannot be eliminated completely.

A key element within this area is providing assurance through the collation of evidence that we are meeting recognised standards and regulatory requirements in all areas. This includes the CQC Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE) of Safe, Effective, Caring, Responsive, and Well Led whilst identifying any gaps and actions. Evidence and information are uploaded to InPHASE which is the compliance software used by EEAST to record self-assessment.

These are all ongoing workstreams routinely discussed at EOC Quality meetings which were newly implemented this year and overseen by the EOC Compliance and Assurance Support Manager. In addition to this the Reward & Recognition Payments workstream has been concluded, COVID and IPC audits have been overseen along with the reimplementation of Health and Safety Walkabouts into EOC.

“Good infection prevention and control are essential to ensure that people who use health and social care services receive safe and effective care. Effective prevention and control of infection must be part of everyday practice and be applied consistently by everyone. Good management and organisational processes are crucial to make sure that high standards of infection prevention and control are set up and maintained” Code of Practice (2015).

NHS Code of Practice 2015 - The Health and Social Care Act 2012

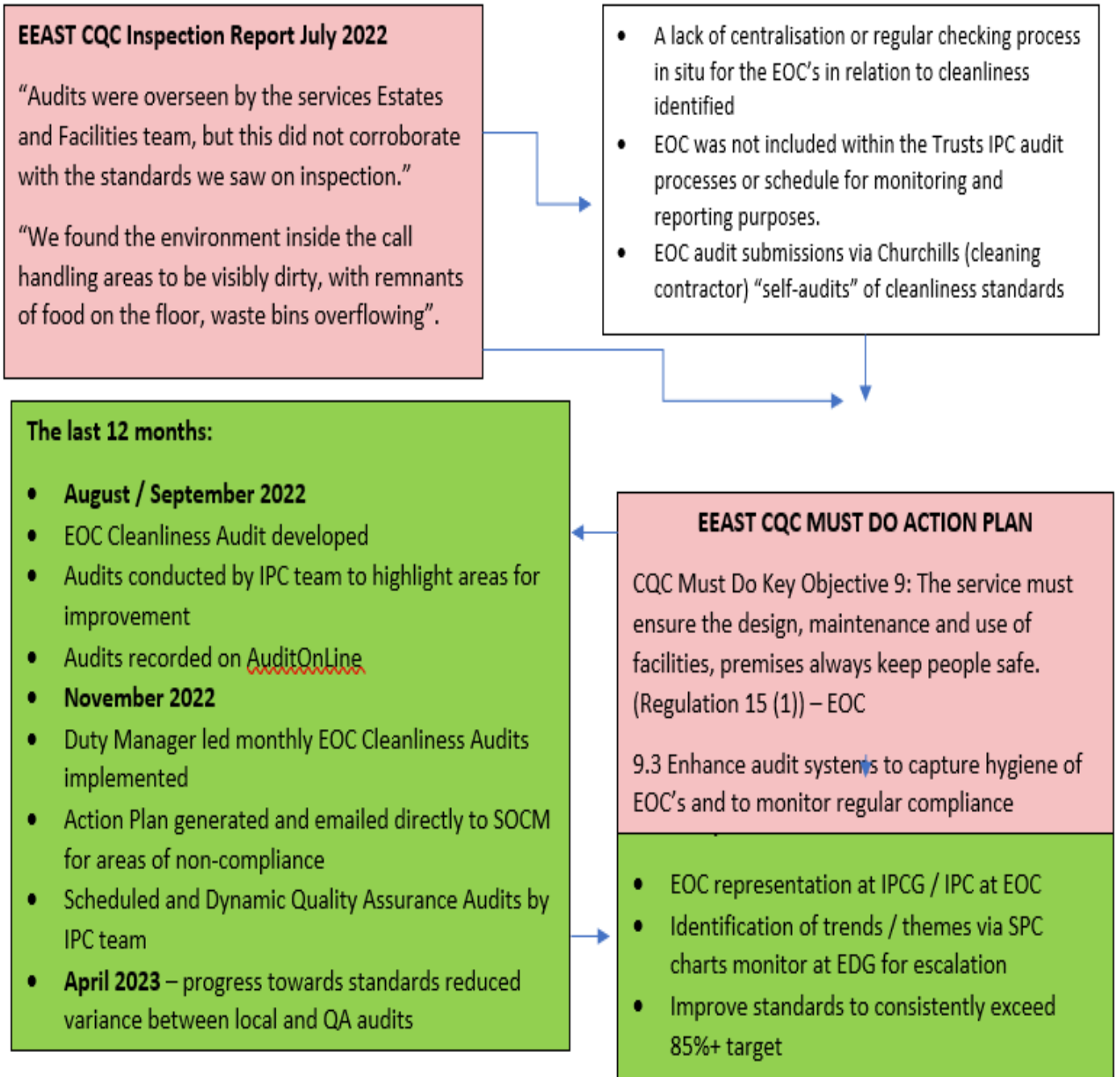
Applies to registered providers of all healthcare and adult social care in England.

Care Quality Commission (CQC) judges a registered provider against 10 criteria on how it complies with the cleanliness and infection control requirement, which is set out in regulations.

Infection Prevention and Control (IPC)

Our Senior Operations Centre Managers are responsible for ensuring IPC measures are in place.

As a team, we are committed to providing our workforce with a clean and safe environment, to reduce the risks of Infections. We achieve this by identifying and reducing infection risks, continually developing safer working practices, ensuring staff have the appropriate training and by following strict policies and procedures.



CQC and InPHASE

The CQC’s Core Service Frameworks are based on the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014 which EEAST, as a health services provider, is required by law, to be compliant with.

The 5 CQC “Standards” or “Key Lines of Enquiry” (KLoE) that the Emergency Operations Centres (EOC), as a core service line, are measured against are SAFE, EFFECTIVE, CARING, RESPONSIVE and WELL LED and rated as Outstanding, Good, Requires Improvement or Inadequate.

EEAST last CQC inspection was in April / May 2022 with publication of the report in July 2022 – ratings for each KLoE are summarised below:

	Safe	Effective	Caring	Responsive	Well-led	Overall
Emergency operations centre (EOC)	Requires Improvement ↓ Jul 2022	Requires Improvement ↓ Jul 2022	Good ↔ Jul 2022	Requires Improvement ↓ Jul 2022	Inadequate ↓↓ Jul 2022	Requires Improvement ↓ Jul 2022
Patient transport services	Requires improvement Jul 2019	Requires improvement Jul 2019	Good Jul 2019	Good Jul 2019	Requires improvement Jul 2019	Requires improvement Jul 2019
Emergency and urgent care	Requires Improvement ↔ Jul 2022	Requires Improvement ↔ Jul 2022	Good ↓ Jul 2022	Requires Improvement ↓ Jul 2022	Requires Improvement ↔ Jul 2022	Requires Improvement ↔ Jul 2022
Resilience	Good Jul 2019	Good Jul 2019	Not rated	Good Jul 2019	Outstanding Jul 2019	Good Jul 2019
Overall	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Good	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement

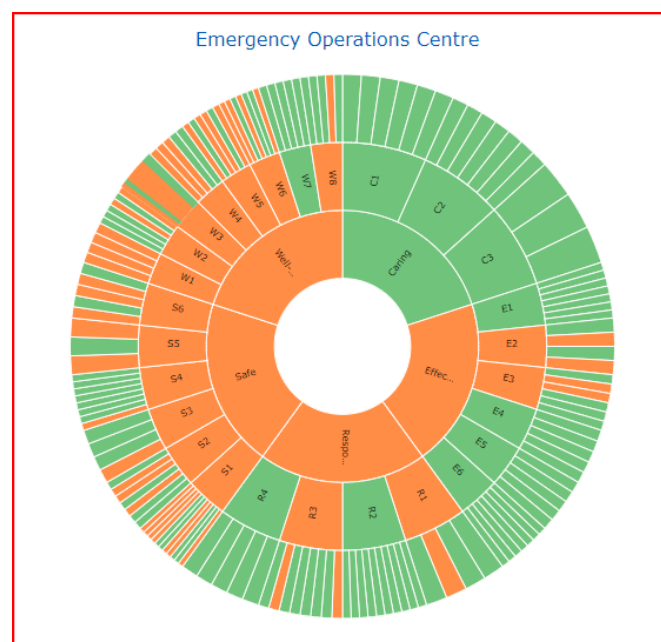
InPHASE is the compliance software that EEAST uses to carry out self-assessments and ratings in line with the CQC ratings on a quarterly basis. Each Standard or KLoE has several themes consisting of prompts answered through commentary, evidence,

and actions. This enables us to monitor our compliance and give local assurance and identify any gaps for address whilst recognising areas of good practice, innovative and outstanding work.

EOC self-assessment of the 161 prompts and overall rating of each Standard for Q4 2021-2022 are illustrated below and is multifaceted encompassing EOC, ECAT and TOC.

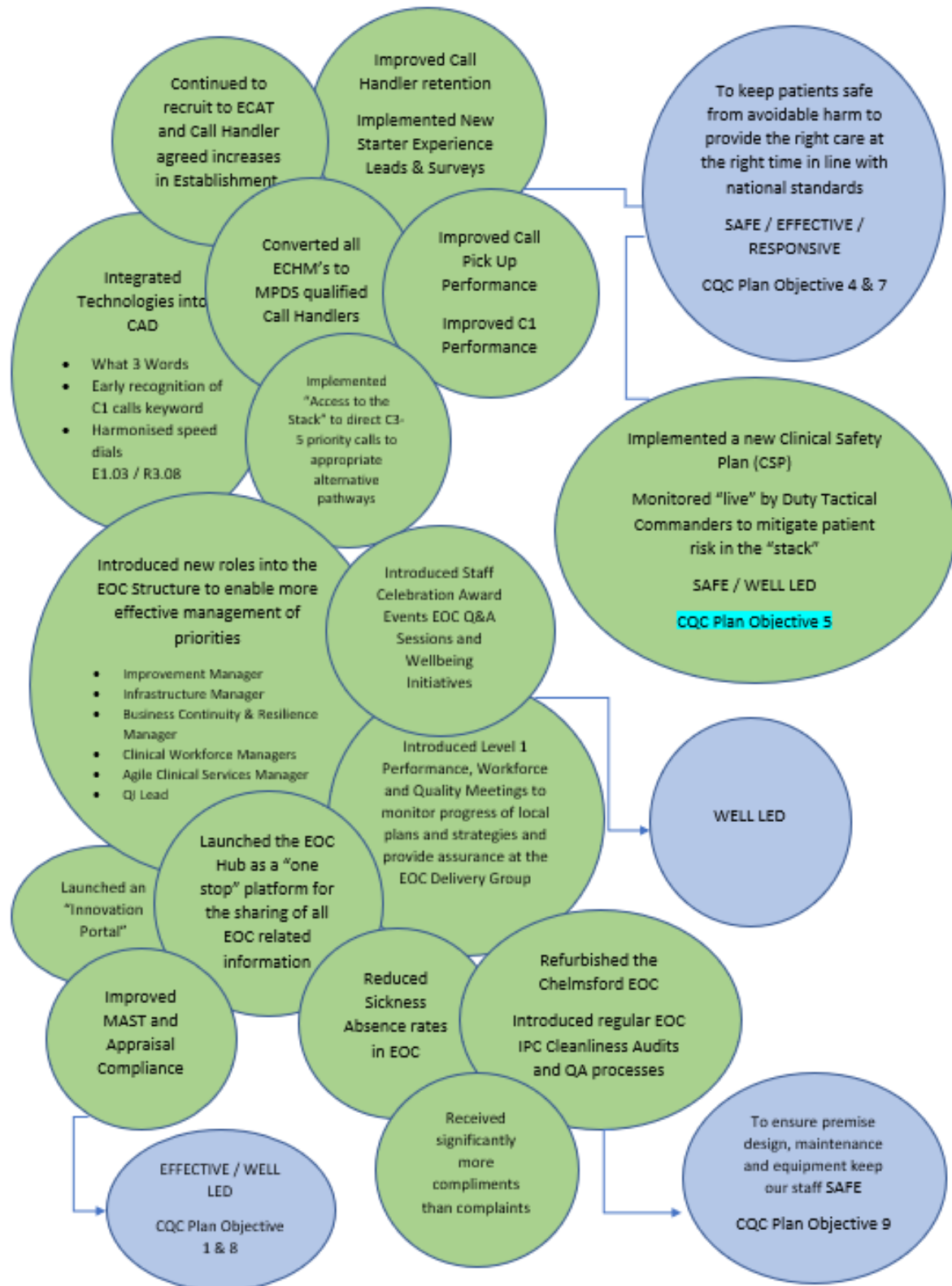
Noting that the ratings at the CQC prompt level roll up to the theme and Standard or KLoE taking the lowest rating given and that not all prompts included in the ratings are applicable to the EOC Service Line.

DOMAIN	SAFE	EFFECTIVE	CARING	RESPONSIVE	WELL LED	Overall RAG
OUTSTANDING	0	0	0	0	0	0
GOOD*	21	30	16	24	23	114
REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT	16	4	0	3	24	47
INADEQUATE	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL PROMPTS	37	34	16	27	47	161



Graph shows EOC L2 Self-Assessment for Q4 period end 31st March 2023

Following the CQC inspection and rating of EOC overall as Requiring Improvement with specific concerns around Well Led EOC has taken action to address issues identified monitored via the Trust CQC Action Plan and InPHASE, we have:

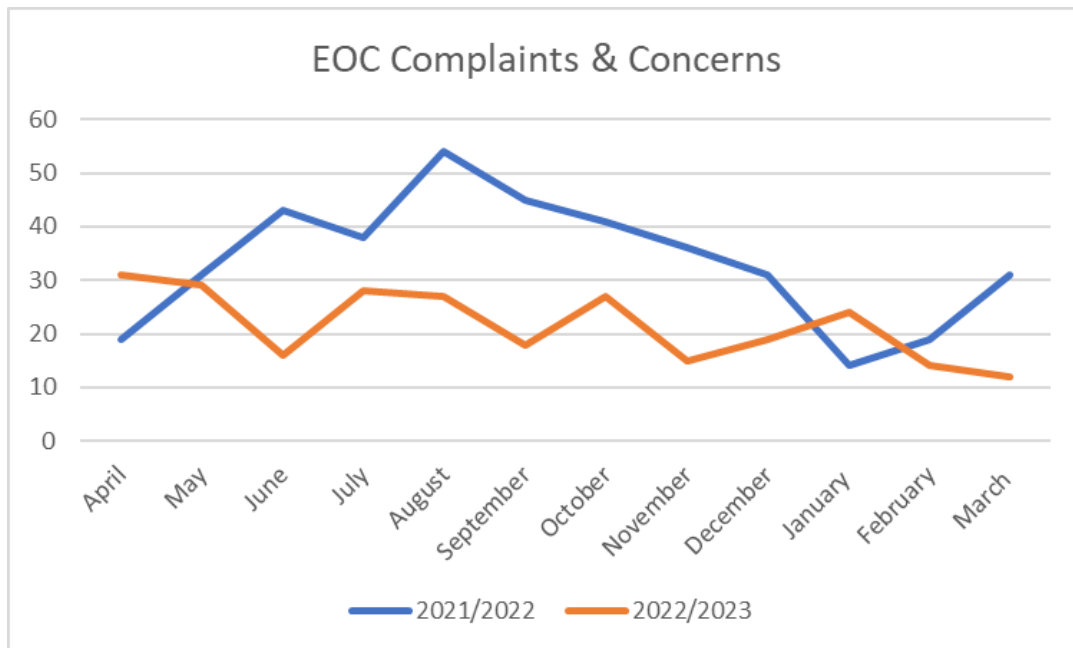


Patient Experience

All Patient Experience related feedback is managed centrally by the Trusts Patient Experience Department in line with the Local Authority Social Services and NHS Complaint Regulations 2009. However, the EOC is a specialist area and business unit, so we have a dedicated Patient Safety Officer who is responsible for local co-ordination of feedback, complaints, and concerns.

Complaints and Concerns are thoroughly investigated to identify any learning points and areas for improvement and development. This ensures we continually developing and enhancing the quality of our services which allows us to provide the best possible patient care.

Looking at common themes and trends are vital to helping us learn and improve the care we provide. Common themes in the last year have included, delays, clinical treatment and assessment, attitude, communication, and call handling.



Graph shows a reduction in EOC complaints and concerns across 2022/2023 compared to 2021/2022

We received **142 less** complaints and concerns this year compared to the previous year which is a **reduction of 35%**.

Despite a busy and challenging year with an increase in call volume, we saw a reduction of 35% in the total number of complaints and concerns reported. We received 260 complaints and concerns this year compared to 402 the previous year (2021-2022).

Breakdown	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	YTD
EOC Complaints	19	18	12	24	18	11	18	9	13	15	4	7	168
EOC Concerns	12	11	4	4	9	7	9	6	6	9	10	5	92
													260

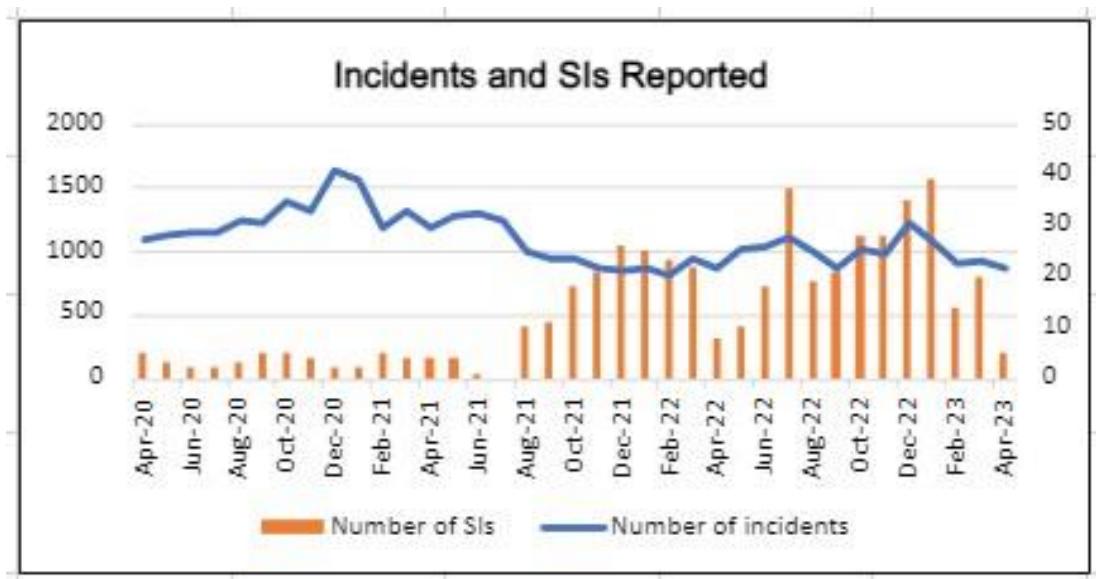
Table shows total number of EOC complaints and concerns across 2022/2023

Attitude	14
Clinical Treatment and Assessment	60
Communication and Call Handling	29
Delay	147
Transport and Driving	3
Safeguarding	1
Property Damage	2
Patient Property	1
Not Applicable	3

Table shows further breakdown of EOC complaints and concerns by type across 2022/2023

262 compliments were also received this year. It should be noted that this figure outweighs complaints. This is a real testament to our workforce's dedication to delivering excellent and compassionate care. Our people work hard every day to achieve excellent results.

We received an average of **21 compliments per month** which were specifically about the **EOC and our people.**



Graph shows number of incidents and SIs reported

“The lady who I was on the phone to until the Ambulance arrived **guided** and advised **really well** and stayed on the line until they arrived.”

“I would like to pass on my thanks to the **lovely** call handler who spoke to my children who phoned an ambulance for me. **Thank you** for being there with them and **guiding them.**”

“They were very **calming** and **reassuring.**”

“My partner was the one who phoned 999 and he would like to thank the **Call Handler** as he was **really good** and **helped** him in a moment of **panic** (I unexpectedly when into labour at home). He would like to thank the call handler because he really helped him stay **calm and deal** with the situation at hand.”

“The Call Handler was so incredibly **calm, warm** and **informative**, he put my husband at ease in what was a few moments of madness! He was so **clear** in his instruction and had such **understanding**. We will forever be grateful.”

“I would like to pass on my **thanks** to the Call Handler. Your **quick response** of sending an emergency response **saved my life.**”

“The call handler **helped** me and talked me through **what to do** for the patient to help they were **calm** and that **helped me.**”

“The call to 999 was **calm, friendly, reassuring** and in control of the situation very quickly.”

“Call handler stayed with me throughout dealt with the situation so **quickly and calmly.**”

“**Calming, professional and rational** and had the skill to get the info they needed to get the help we needed as quickly as possible.”

“The call handler treated me with **kindness and respect.** They were very thorough, and I would like to thank them. Very **efficient** and handled my call with **expertise.** Couldn't have been any better.”

“The 999 Operator was most helpful. Could not fault them. Very **helpful** and **efficient.**”



Graphic shows ratings for 999 call handling as per EEAST Patient Experience Reports

Learning from Incidents

Chris Hewetson leads on Patient Safety and deals with deaths which are referred to His Majesty's (HM) Coroner. Referrals are made to HM Coroner by either the Police, a GP, or an Acute Hospital for several reasons. The most common reasons for referring a death to the HM Coroner are:

- If the death was unexpected, unexplained, or sudden
- The cause of death is unknown
- The cause of death is violent, unnatural, or suspicious
- The death occurred whilst in custody or detention.

HM Coroner will review the file and, if they are satisfied that the death was due to natural causes, permission will be given to the GP or hospital doctor to issue the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (MCCD). HM Coroner will open an inquest into the death if there is reasonable cause to suspect the death was not due to natural causes or the death took place in state detention. An inquest is a fact-finding hearing to establish who the deceased was, when and where they died and how they came about their death. Usually, HM Coroner will open the inquest shortly after the death and then adjourn the hearing whilst information and evidence is gathered. This may include requesting information or attendance from the Trust.

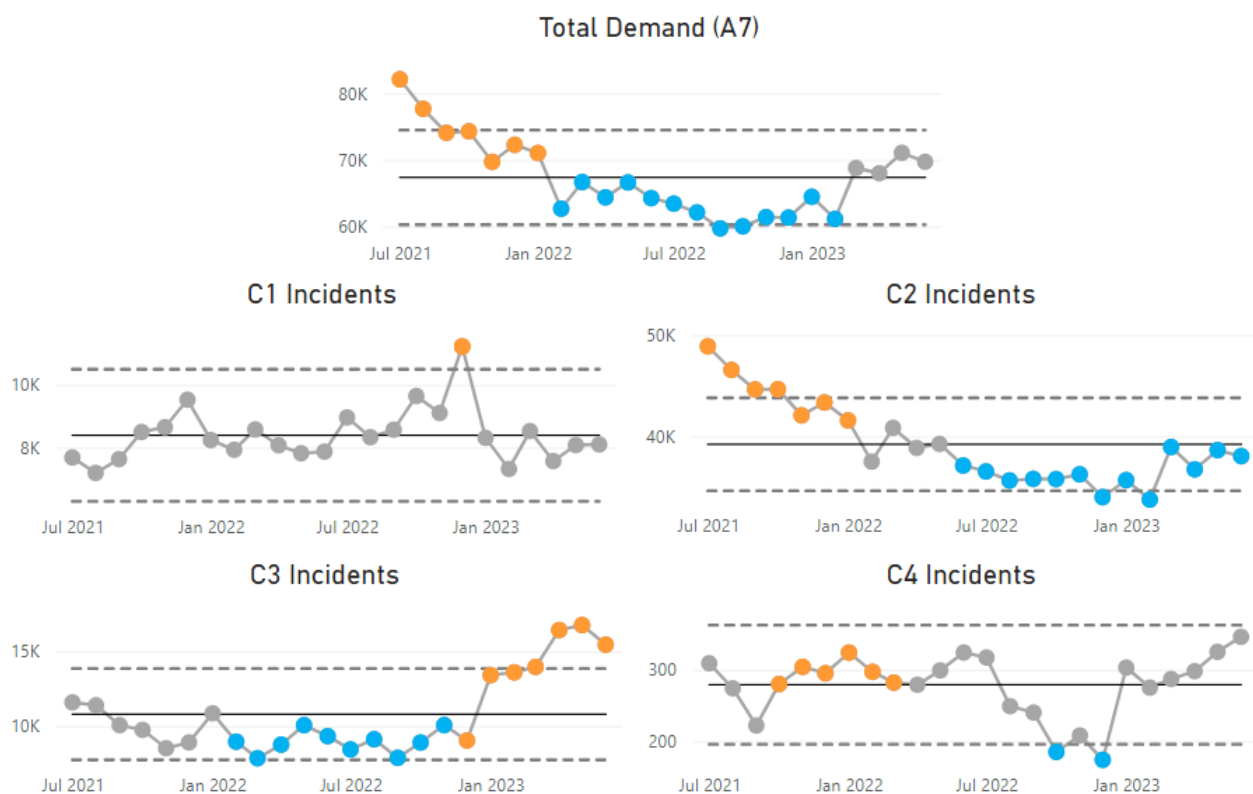
Across the period 2022/2023 EOC representatives attended 29 Inquests with the support of our dedicated Patient Safety Lead. As with patient experience, complaints and concerns each case is reviewed to identify any learning points and areas for improvement and development. Looking at common themes and trends are vital to helping us learn and improve the care we provide. Common themes in the last year have included, delayed response, communication with other agencies, recognition of ABD call coding, no send process and advice provided to callers.

Whilst on the whole HM Coroner has been satisfied with the measures the Trust is taking to reduce delays and improve the care provided to patients, two Prevention of Future Deaths Reports (PFDs) were issued to the Trust. A PFD is issued to an organisation when HM Coroner has identified learning that can take place to prevent a similar death recurring in the future.

8. Performance | Be excellent collaborators and innovators as system partners

We received 1,393,675 emergency contacts to our Emergency Operations Centres last year which is an average of almost 3000 calls a day. Whilst there have been great improvements in call pick up, we have yet to see these sustained over any long period.

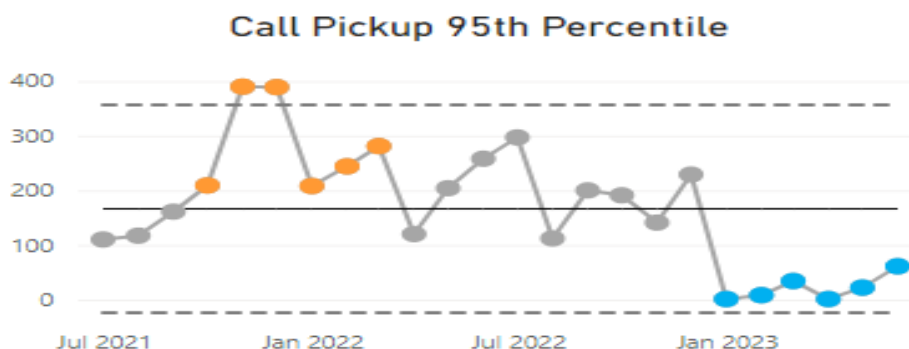
We attended 754,460 incidents, providing care and support to patients. 14% of these incidents were triaged as the highest priority, Category 1 - immediately life threatening with 58% triaged as Category 2 which is our second highest priority.



Graphs show total demand and demand by incident C1-C4

999 Call Answering

The national standard for Ambulance Services to answer 999 emergency calls (referred to as call pick-up) is for a target of 95% to be answered within 5 seconds. The Trust and EOC teams have delivered outstanding improvements in this area. However, this has not been sustained and we recognise there is more work to do to ensure we are consistently meeting this target.

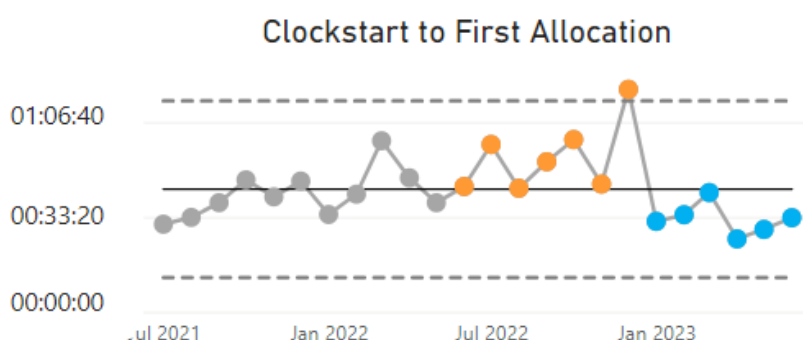


Graph shows journey to improvement in 999 call pick up rates

Dispatch

All Ambulance Trusts in England are measured against Ambulance Quality Indicators, including standards on how quickly patients receive a response following their 999 calls. The national standard for responding to the sickest patients (Category 1) is an average of 7 minutes and we aim to attend to 9 out of 10 of these calls within 15 minutes.

The EOC play a huge role in ensuring Category 1 calls are dispatched on as soon as possible. We have seen great improvements in this over the year. Sustaining this when crews are delayed at hospital is not always achievable as there will be limited resources for the Dispatch Teams to allocate to our patients. It is imperative that Dispatchers review the CFR and other responder positions who are available for Category 1 allocation.



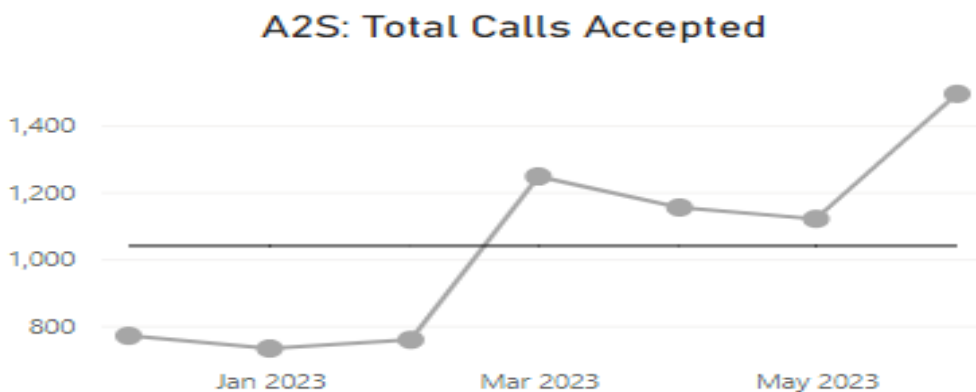
Graph shows clock start to first allocation position

Clinical Assessment Service



Our Clinical Assessment Service (CAS) and EOC Clinicians helped support 58,584 patients through the 'hear and treat' process which involves further triage, signposting and arranging alternative help. This is approximately 8% which falls just short of the 10% target, at the time.

The initiative to refer C3-C5 calls that do not require Ambulance Service input to alternative care providers equated to 30% of calls. These cases were transferred re-clinical assessment, to alternative care providers, which resulted in the inability to deliver the 'hear and treat' target. Since December 2022, a total of 7465 calls were passed to providers, of which 45% accepted and 41% rejected. Rejected calls are then triaged by the CAS team. This downward trajectory due to partnership working is represented in the high volume of calls being transferred and accepted by other providers; identified below.

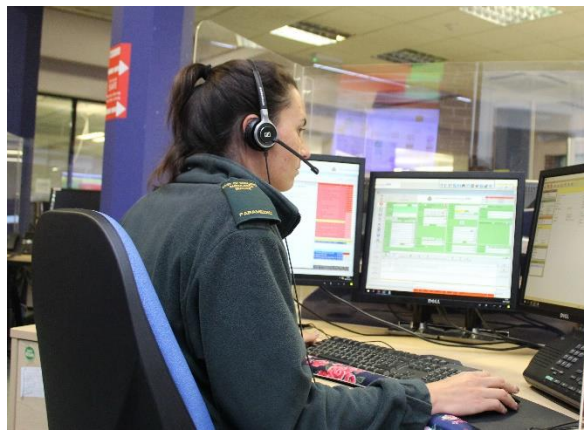


Graph shows calls accepted by other providers

The team delivered the following key achievements/milestone within the last year:

- Revised and delivered an improved Clinical Safety Plan in conjunction with the Clinical Team, to support the most senior staff to manage the risks on shift
- Expand the capacity by 40wte to manage clinical validation of 999 calls to reduce the need to dispatch ambulances

- We opened recruitment for speciality nurses to support the multi-disciplinary team ethos. have expanded the types of professionals that can work within the team, now having Mental Health Nurses', a Paediatric Specialist, who provides clinical supervision to the team as it expands to recruit more general nurses
- Implemented Clinical Workforce Managers into the team. This is to allow consistent staff support and line management to be delivered
- Increased our compliment of Band 7 Clinical Navigators to 24
- Planned the transition to an alternative triage support tool, to support increase productivity in clinical validation
- To transition over to the national model for a Clinical Assessment Service



Frequent Caller Management:

- On average over the last 12 months the team have investigated 108 new patients every month that meet the frequent caller criteria (this is in addition to the ongoing cases)
- There are currently 133 active known regular caller plans in place for patients across the Trust, to support these patients and the wider Trust
- On average 20 new plans are implemented each month following sign off by the appropriate teams
- On average each month 26 known regular caller plans were reviewed with an average of 12 plans being removed due to the patient no longer meeting criteria

Unmet Needs Team:

The aim was to develop partner working and identification of appropriate pathways to support unmet non-medical needs of our patients. This involved building a

contact base, as well as support networks across the community to refer patients and carers to with a view to meet any unmet social needs. This has continuously developed and strengthened over the project duration. It has enabled us to explore all angles to better support our patients in the community.

The team were embedded in October 2022, with a project go live shortly after. We were lucky to secure funding support from the NHS Charities which saw our soft launch of the team quickly gather momentum. The number of referrals to the service has increased week on week. This can be linked to the initial groundwork around developing a robust contacts list, which greatly supported the success of the project.

The scheme has received positive feedback from colleagues which is great to see. We have also been successful in extended funding until the end of March 2024 with a view to try and have this project embedded as business as usual. The team also won a Star of EEAST Award for innovation which should be celebrated.

CAD Flags Team:

Responsible for all CAD markers within EEAST. This includes risk and clinical markers. The team have worked incredibly hard on the maintenance of this workload. There have been technology changes with the inputting of the flags. Work continues to ensure we have the correct information on our systems.

Single Point of Contact (SPOC)

The SPOC is managed by Alison Syme, the team are a dedicated single point of contact staffed by Call Handlers who work hard to provide colleagues across our organisation support in ensuring patients have access to the right care to meet their needs. The SPOC operates 24 hours a day, every single day of the year. This specialist team includes the ability to refer patients to a range of different services, like social care or diabetic hypo education teams.

Across the period April 2022-March 2023 our SPOC Call Handlers received 113,741 contacts, that's around 9,400 calls a month. Within this period, SPOC were operating on business continuity procedures between August – December 2022. This was due to a systems issue whilst also maintaining BAU for all staff contacting SPOC and

maintaining our usual high standards of service delivery. A breakdown of the types of referrals and activity into **SPOC** is outlined below.

Type of Referral	Total number of patients referred	Percentage of patients referred
Social Care	29,113	25.60%
Falls Service	21,002	18.46%
GP	55,168	48.50%
Hertfordshire Admission Avoidance Response Car (HAARC)	2,158	1.90%
Diabetic Hypo	1,127	0.99%
Safe and Well	1,620	1.42
KARMA2 Study	34	0.03
Datix (Telephone)	3,519	3.09%

Critical Care Desk

“We are providing senior clinical support to our highest priority patients thus ensuring the highest level of care is a key element of core activity. This means we will get critical care assets to the right patient faster than ever before, improving outcomes and saving lives.” **Tim Daniels, Air Operations Manager**

The Critical Care Desk (CCD) has gone through its biggest change programme since being commissioned in 2012. The function which has been co-located within the Tactical Operations Cell in Chelmsford EOC and historically separate to the main EOC function is being incorporated within each of our EOCs.

The objective of this move is to ensure the CCD function is at the core of all emergency activity and being effectively utilised to identify, interrogate, and triage those patients within the system most in need.

Nationally, Clinicians are typically utilised in Control Rooms to assess the lower priority and lower acuity calls to negate dispatch and seek alternative pathways/hospital avoidance. CCD are providing senior clinical support to our

highest priority patients thus ensuring the highest level of care is a key element of core activity.

This means we will get critical care assets to the right patient faster than ever before, improving outcomes and saving lives.

Main responsibilities:

- ✓ Senior clinical interrogation and triage for our highest priority patients
- ✓ Challenge current understanding of what constitutes unmet need via wider engagement.
- ✓ Ensure 'whole system' identification of patients who would benefit from higher levels of care.
- ✓ Provide additional clinical support within the EOC.
- ✓ Provide operational crews with immediate remote emergency clinical advice and support via airwave.
- ✓ Effective utilisation of advanced care available within the East of England.
- ✓ Support EEAST operational need and provide resilience where required.

To achieve this:

- ✓ Floor plans have been modified to allow CCD to operate from within the middle of each EOC to actively engage and capture activity.
- ✓ We are investing in the training of significant numbers of Dispatchers and Managers within all three EOCs to provide development opportunities and integration.
- ✓ A separate CCD stack has been set up to allow all EOC staff to flag calls they feel may have the potential for critical care need which will prompt a timely clinical review.
- ✓ We are working with the Helicopter Emergency Medical Service (HEMS) aviation provider Babcock in establishing a bespoke Crew Resource Management training module for both EOC Managers and staff
- ✓ A regional HEMS rota change (implementation currently planned for Aug '23) will provide a regular critical care paramedic presence within each room.

We are incredibly grateful for the support provided by the EEAST Senior Leadership Team and within our partner organisations to make these significant strides towards maximising the benefit of our highly skilled resources we are fortunate to have within the East of England and the opportunity to fully integrate within the EOC team.



Essex and Herts Air Ambulance pictured flying above Central London

Operational Infrastructure

“A new role within EOC for Infrastructure Manager has been recruited to. The role is to improve processes, links between IM&T, Estates and EOC, furthermore, to drive the technology changes and requirements within EOC. So far, the Infrastructure Manager has been reviewing the patient journey of an incident through the EOC to document and look at bringing technology changes.” **Daniel Hynes, EOC Infrastructure Manager**

The EOC Infrastructure Manager assists all elements of operational system delivery and improvement, relating to estate and technology in the EOC. The postholder has made enormous progress and has been a significant leader in the modernisation agenda within EOC.

The telephony system is being reviewed to help assist with call pick up, this has involved the creation of reports, trialling and testing the after-call function to report and drive down ‘not ready’ more accurately. In turn this enhances patient care and service delivery by ensuring our workforce are available and ready to always respond to the call.

We have also reviewed skillsets within the system to implement new non-emergency telephone lines for blue light partners and other emergency services such as Police to reduce the ‘999’ queue. This technology change means that more routine calls into the EOC are connected to Call Handlers on lower priority lines.

Furthermore, extensive work has been done to link into partners to ensure contact details are correctly held for both calls in to and out. One outcome of this was the creation of centralised speed dials which are held on the technology to increase effectiveness, reduce paper, and align the EOCs.

To support workforce management and service delivery we are in the trial and test phase of new wallboards which show live information around call demand and activity as well as Call Handler performance. A new agent map has been created to show a visual layout of the room to help with identification of long calls.

Resilience plans have been created to allow for each Dispatch Desk to have its own telephone number as a fall back to radio systems, this has been already used when 'open channel' working has been required and sensitive conversations have been needed between crews and EOC. In addition, Action Cards have been created to better support our teams when there is a technology or business continuity issue.

New features have been brought to the CAD including the VIP function which allows restriction of incidents to reduce data breaches/inappropriate access when an incident may be highly sensitive. The Child Protection Information Sharing (CPIS) system has been brought online in addition to the Patient Demographic Service (PDS) to allow NHS numbers to be matched at point of call.

The role exists to support BAU working across the EOC and look for technology and system wide improvements which not only support our workforce but also help us provide the best possible patient care. It's an exciting time across the EOC as we work towards constantly seeking ways to improve.

Another area of focus was the implementation of the NHS Number across the services. This is to ensure that the service can access Child Protection Information Service data to improve the quality of care. This has shown an amazing improvement in the last few months of 2022/23.

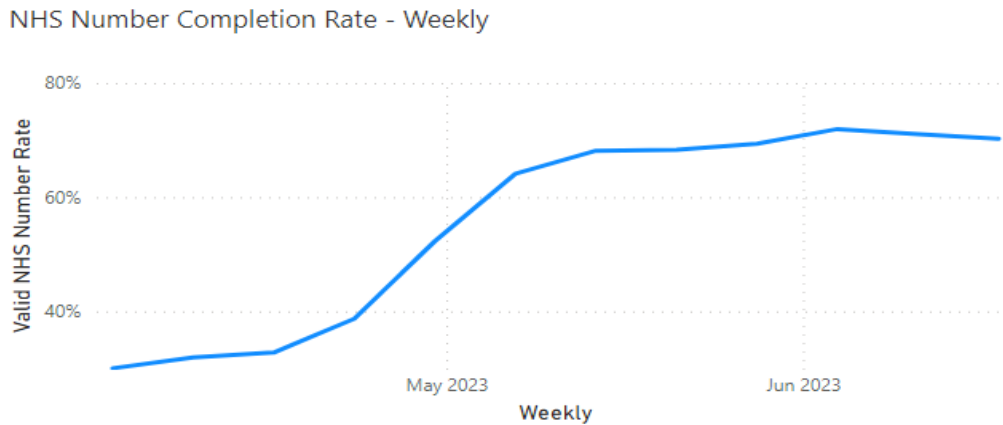


Chart shows completion rate of Call Handlers capturing NHS Numbers

Business Continuity and Resilience

“I have engaged with staff to get them trained in JESIP and Major incident training ensuring the recommendations from the Manchester Arena Inquiry are being implemented. I have worked to form strong links with the other blue light services, as well as engaging in testing and exercising with them on a regular basis. I have undertaken and organised the first EOC Major incident exercise with operations along with Resilience colleagues” **Jo Bromley, EOC Business Continuity and Resilience Manager**

This post has enabled the Industrial Action planning for the EOC along with the Trust’s EPRR planning. Ensuring all elements of business continuity were considered for the Chelmsford refurbishment and the management of the business as usual during the upheaval. A big part of role in to ensure the Duty Managers are Commander trained and attend regular exercises to maintain their commander skillsets, this included arranging Duty Managers and Dispatch Team Leaders attendance at JESIP training as well the Senior EOC Managers and Duty Managers are attending the communications Tactical Advisor courses (CTA) to ensure resilience within our EOC.

We are now able to share joint learning from meetings and exercises ensuring that everything we do in EOC is aligned to the EPRR core standards and Civil Contingences Act. Working as part of the Trust team, Jo has supported and reviewed site-specific plans with the Resilience Manager’s, to ensure they are up to date and available for commanders during an incident.

Working closely with EOC team members, Specialist Operations, and Police, Fire, and other Ambulance Services, to ensure good working relationships and understanding. The Eastern Region Inter Control Room forum ensures that EEAST and EOC are implementing change and learning from incidents such as Grenfell and Manchester Arena inquiry.

The Trust Fire Safety Officer has been supporting EOC to ensure we comply to legislation and law, keeping our staff safe and our critical functions safe. All EOC staff are completing the Fire Safety face to face training, and we already have staff nominated for the Fire Marshall courses.

Exercising the evacuation of the EOC and testing what would happen with a loss of power, CAD, or Airwave to ensure the team are well practiced in Business Continuity incidents is also part of the role, working closely with the SOCMs and other Senior Managers to ensure the action cards are up to date and followed when appropriate. Joa works as part of the EOC Business Continuity Team who are outstanding in actioning change as they represent all roles in EOC.

Working on recovery plans and fall-back plans should we ever be in a situation that requires them. The relationship with our blue light partners and other stakeholders will remain strong and a focus to ensure change and learning comes from incidents, we will train with the Control Rooms and Operational teams to ensure a joined up working together to save lives.

9. The Year Ahead | 2023/2024

High level next steps for the EOC Team in year 2 - 2023/24:

1. To identify and plan further improvements in the way we deliver services, identifying how all elements of service deliver the overall Trust performance requirements, working collaboratively with partners to provide outstanding quality of care and performance. To achieve ACE Accreditation.
2. To deliver Time to Lead, recruiting to vacancies and improve available time to recruit, train, develop and retain our staff. Enabling our managers to deliver the very best people management and to be an exceptional place to work, volunteer and learn. To improve our Staff Survey results and achieve a good CQC standard for Leadership.
3. To collaborate further engagement with community services, our volunteers and the wider organisation, to ensure we have the capacity to provide services in a sustainable manner in the future. To promote the use of CFRs and review the management of HCP calls.
4. Strategic Estates Programme – we will continue to work with our dedicated Ergonomics Specialist, John Hargreaves, to develop an environment fit for the future for our staff. The study of people, process and technology collectively will ensure an improved working environment within our control rooms. To try to expand Norwich to enable full recruitment at pace.
5. To identify areas of duplication and variation internally and externally, address efficiencies and effectiveness in service delivery with our partners, to address our 4th organisational goal of being an environmentally, financially and sustainable organisation.

Year two (2023/24) of our improvement journey is about investing in our structure, our workforce, our estate, and our partnerships.

Year three will focus on efficiencies, performance, and clinical outcomes.

Our extended thanks and appreciation to Zoe Martindale (EOC Improvement Manager), Andrew Beardsley (EOC Duty Manager) and the wider team who all joined together to gather this amazing collection of achievements.