



**24<sup>th</sup> August 2015**

**THE EMAS / FIRE CO-RESPONDING PILOT AND THE BBC NEWS PIECE RELATED TO IT**

The Association of Ambulance Chief Executives (AACE) has been made aware of a news item that appeared on a BBC TV news channel today about the co-responding pilot scheme currently in operation between East Midlands Ambulance Service (EMAS) and Lincolnshire Fire & Rescue Service, which includes a statement purporting to come from AACE about this particular pilot scheme.

AACE would like to make it clear that it received no media enquiries about this piece from the BBC, the statement used in the piece was not provided by AACE and it is not a direct response to any specific enquiry about the EMAS pilot scheme.

The line attributed to AACE in the piece was misleading because it did not relate specifically to this pilot scheme. It was taken out of context from a general set of guidance notes produced by AACE that are meant to help its member services understand what the general AACE position is on a number of key issues, in this instance the heading for the section being, '*Working with other blue light services.*'

The guidance note used in the BBC piece stated, "*Handing over of pre-hospital trauma care to a non-NHS body will have a catastrophic effect on the quality of patient care in this country.*" Source: *Association of Ambulance Chief Executives*. However this note only related to instances where there was a clear abrogation of clinical responsibility away from the NHS ambulance service, which is something the AACE would never support.

The EMAS and Lincolnshire Fire & Rescue Service pilot does not advocate this, with the EMAS paramedic remaining with the patient at all times and retaining clinical responsibility for the patient at all times. If the patient needs transporting, the paramedic travels in the ambulance and one of the firefighters follows in the paramedic's response car.



In terms of the pilot itself, AACE remains supportive of any co-responding schemes that are safe and have clear benefits to patients, and continues to monitor the results of the EMAS and Lincolnshire Fire & Rescue Service pilot with interest.

AACE Managing Director Martin Flaherty says: “We are aware of early positive feedback about this pilot, especially in the context of Lincolnshire being a large, rural county with a widely dispersed population. However we would point out that these types of schemes are less likely to be as suitable in less rural communities, something that has been echoed by the fire service.

“It is still early days for the Lincolnshire pilot and we look forward to the final results when the trial concludes. AACE has also begun work on developing a high-level guidance document related to the development of a strong governance framework for co-responding schemes in general, and we will be sharing this with all services when complete.”

**-Ends-**

**Notes to editors**

The Association of Ambulance Chief Executives (AACE) is a membership organisation providing ambulance services with a central body that supports, coordinates and implements nationally agreed policy. It also provides the general public and other stakeholders with a central resource of information about NHS ambulance services. The primary focus of the AACE is the ongoing development of the English ambulance service and the improvement of patient care.

More information about the AACE is available at [www.aace.org.uk](http://www.aace.org.uk).

High (and low) resolution versions of the AACE logo are available upon request.

**For more information please contact**

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