



ASSOCIATION OF
AMBULANCE
CHIEF EXECUTIVES

NATIONAL AMBULANCE VOLUNTEERING NEWSLETTER

A QUARTERLY UPDATE ON VOLUNTEERING FROM AACE. AUTUMN 2024

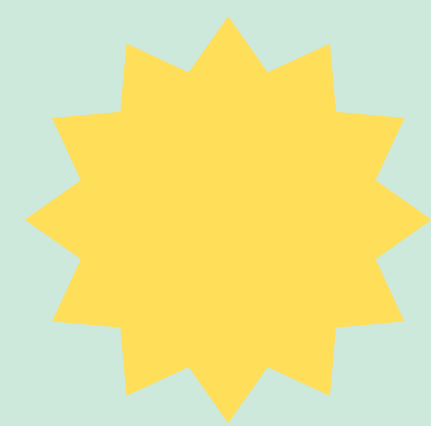
WELCOME

Welcome to the Autumn 2024 edition of the national volunteering newsletter. We are excited to share some fresh insights into the world of ambulance volunteering. We have some updates on the next phase of the national volunteering strategy and some new data which outlines the size and contribution of ambulance volunteering nationally. In addition, we shine a light on some innovative projects taking place around the UK. This is a new look newsletter which we hope to publish quarterly. If you have any feedback, or some exciting news that you might like us to include, then please contact me at Joe.Crook@aace.org.uk

Joe Crook, National Ambulance Volunteer Lead, AACE

NATIONAL STRATEGY

The next phase of the national volunteering strategy was launched recently, and provides a focus for national-level coordination for the next 18 months, up to March 2026. The three priorities are outlined opposite.



The last two years has seen growing levels of coordination between trust volunteering teams, with the creation of a national volunteering dashboard, a national CFR framework, the launch of a national volunteer survey, and much more. We are confident that we can increase that coordination, further unlocking the potential of volunteering to help the ambulance service improve patient care, reduce waiting times, and tackle health inequalities. [Here](#) is a short video which provides some further context and an overview of some of the strategic priorities.

NATIONAL PRIORITIES

1

As a provider and a partner of choice, we will work to ensure volunteering is diverse, inclusive and helps to reduce health inequalities.

2

As an organisation of choice, we will develop strong leadership structures around volunteering, and will work to increase the evidence base and profile of volunteering.

3

As an organisation of choice, we will ensure that ambulance volunteering meets the highest standards of recruitment, training and deployment.

FALLS PREVENTION

It was Falls Prevention Week in September and Yorkshire Ambulance Service (YAS) chose to highlight the important work of their dedicated volunteer schemes who help uninjured patients who have fallen.

They currently have 19 dedicated falls schemes with volunteers who are equipped with a raizer chair and moving and handling equipment. Unlike volunteer community first responders (CFRs), their falls volunteers can also travel 30 minutes to Category 3 and 4 patients.

All the volunteers can provide life-saving interventions. They gather a patient history using a dedicated Patient Care Record. This is supplemented by basic observations of breathing rate, pulse, pain score, level of consciousness, pulse oximetry, temperature and blood pressure. This can then be shared with clinicians in the Emergency Operations Centre prior to the arrival of an ambulance.

The volunteers also go through a falls checklist before discussing with a clinician the appropriate action to get the patient off the floor. A falls referral is completed if the patient is left at home with support. "Our falls volunteers have attended around 3,000 patients of all types in the last 12 months," said Neil Marsay, Volunteer Falls Lead with Community Resilience. "When attending patients who have fallen, an ambulance was not required for 45% of patients." Thanks to the volunteers at YAS for volunteering tirelessly to improve patient care for those who have fallen.





NEW VOLUNTEER DASHBOARD

We have recently launched a new dashboard which summarises the size of the volunteering contribution to the ambulance service. This will be released quarterly. In quarter 1 over 7000 volunteers contributed 438,995 hours nationally.

Volunteering looks different at each trust and this dashboard is not intended as a comparative tool between trusts. Different trusts have different size teams, differing priorities, resources, demographics, and population sizes. What unites trusts is that volunteering is more than a “nice to have”. It is a highly professional service, and volunteers are a vital part of the ambulance team.

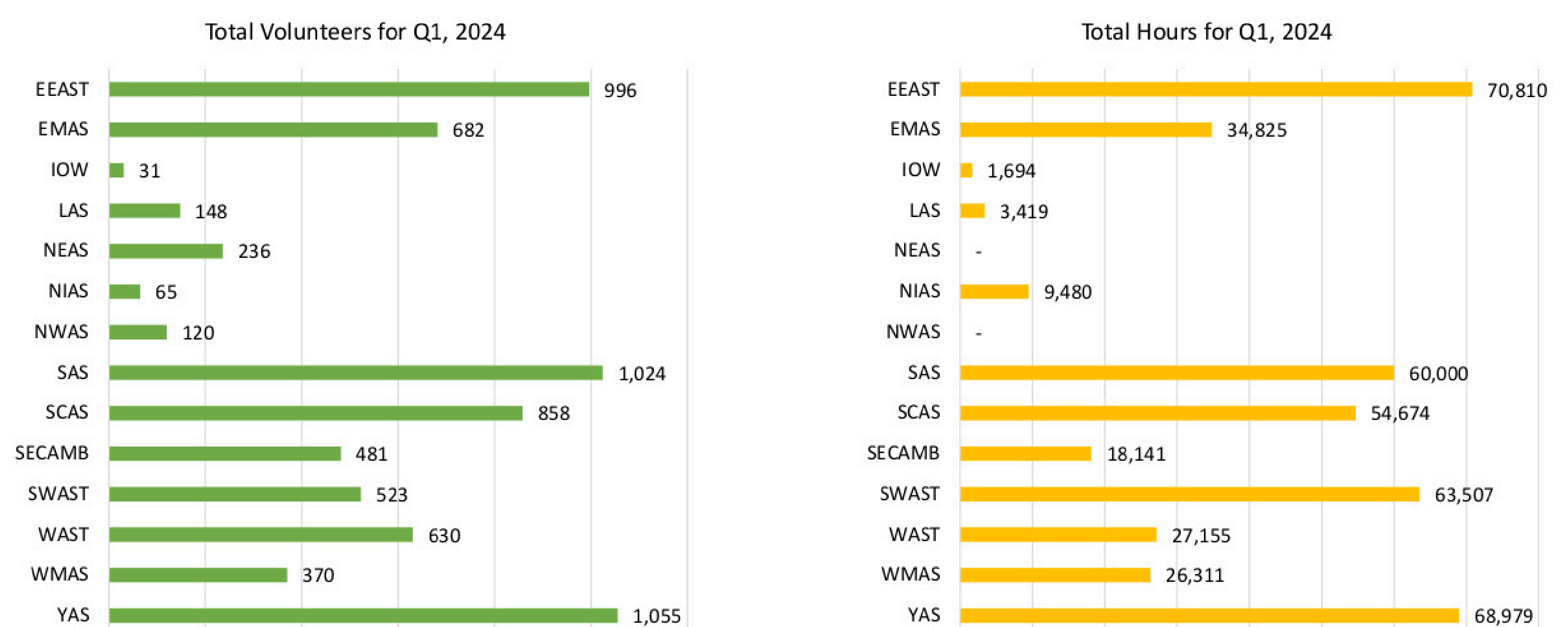
For more information, and to see the latest data, please visit the [volunteering dashboard page](#) of the AACE website.

National Volunteering Dashboard Q1 2024 (April/May/June)



There were 7219 volunteers in Ambulance Trusts across the UK in Q1, 2024

Together, Ambulance Trust volunteers recorded 438,995 hours of volunteering in the UK in Q1, 2024



HEALTH INEQUALITIES

Volunteering can play an important part in reducing health inequalities. Firstly, it can help people who are isolated to make new connections. It can also help link people to new career and development opportunities in the ambulance service and beyond. Volunteers can also be deployed in areas of higher need.

Earlier this year we discussed these issues with Chris and Sue, two CFR volunteers at SCAS, and Ruth Crabtree, the Public Health Lead at YAS. You can watch the video [here](#).

CRISIS HELPLINE

In November 2022, The Ambulance Service Charity launched the Ambulance Staff Crisis Phonenumber to provide immediate and ongoing suicide and mental health care for UK ambulance staff, volunteers and students.

- Completely independent and confidential – nothing you tell us will be shared with your employer, manager, colleagues or loved ones.
- Run by qualified counsellors who are supported by clinicians.
- Available 24/7, 365 days a year.

Just call 0300 373 0898 or, to learn more about the service, visit www.theasc.org.uk/crisis



SEXUAL SAFETY

In October 2024, the Worker Protection Act becomes law in UK which places a legal duty on organisations to take action to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace. Examples of preventative measures include having clear reporting processes, appropriate training and supporting cultural improvements.

We want everyone in the ambulance service, including our volunteers, to feel sexually safe in their roles and to feel confident raising a concern if you experience or witness inappropriate behaviour. If you are interested in learning more about the ambulance sector approach to reducing misogyny and improving sexual safety you can contact the programme lead by emailing Bron Biddle, Programme Lead-Reducing Misogyny & Improving Sexual Safety at AACE, bron.biddle@aace.org.uk.

For any volunteers that wish to raise concerns, please contact your local volunteering team or your local Freedom to Speak Up representative. You can also find support via the [24/7 support line](#) or call free on [0808 500 2222](tel:08085002222).