



South East Coast
Ambulance Service
NHS Foundation Trust



Saving Lives, Serving Our Communities

Reducing health inequalities

Date: 11/07/2025



Why is reducing health inequalities important?

JD died from ischemic heart disease in June 2024.

He is from an ethnic minority group who **are** included in the Core20Plus documents for that ICS footprint.

- Language and cultural barriers
- Poor health literacy
- Underuse of preventive care
- Socioeconomic disadvantage
- Policy invisibility due to underrepresentation in data



Why is reducing health inequalities important?



- Second-party call describing JD as having “fallen to the floor and wouldn’t get up”
- English was not the callers first language. However, language line was not used
- The language barrier resulted in frustrations from both sides
- The call reached a C2 disposition despite being told “the body is cold”
- Additional call made by the same bystander. Language line was not used
- “Are you checking where the ambulance is”?
- “Yes, please send the ambulance”. Treated as an ETA call



Our patient safety priorities

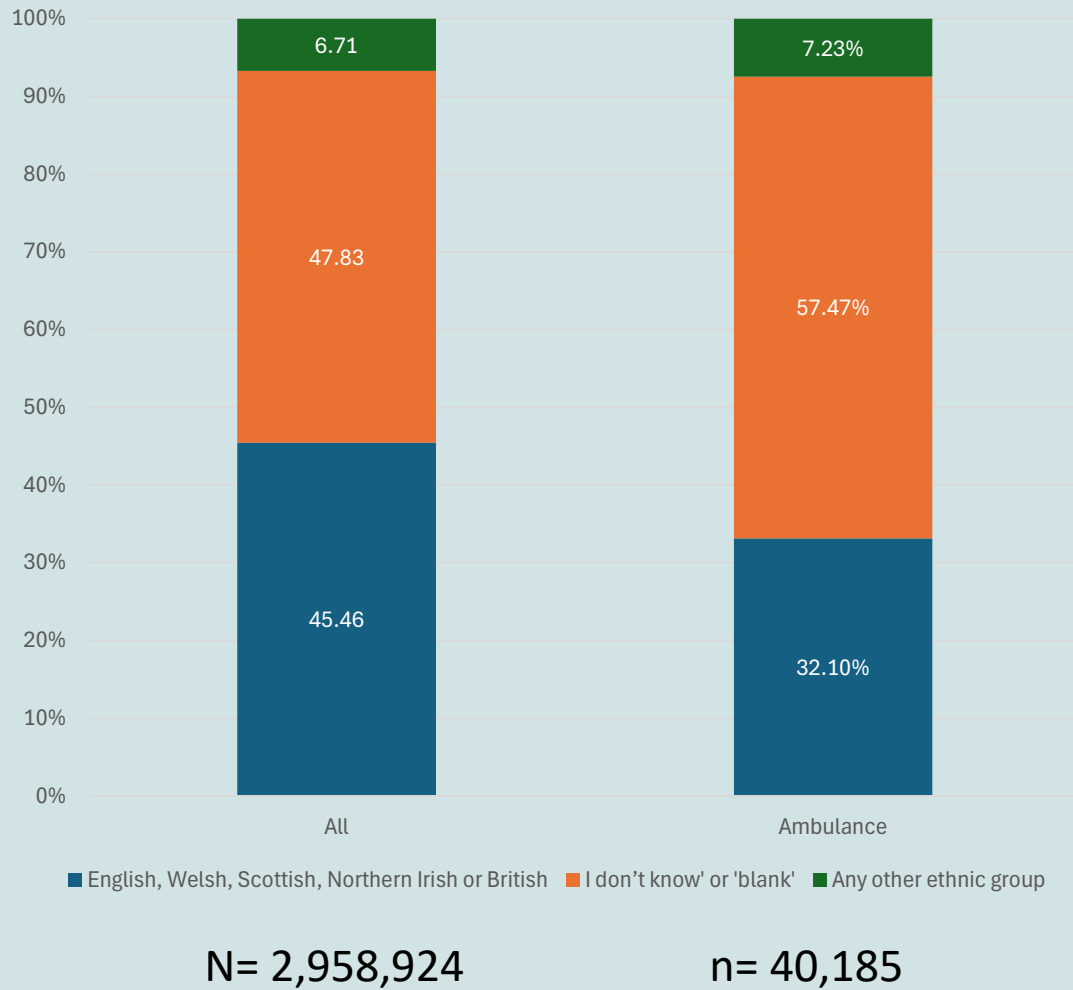


Delays to hands on chest

- + Agreed learning response (investigation)
- + Involve and engage those affected



How big is our problem?



Patient safety healthcare inequalities reduction framework

ONE: access to information, translation and interpretation services when needed.

TWO: patient safety training, ongoing training, and accessible resources that improve their awareness and understanding of healthcare inequalities related to patient safety risks.

THREE: Accurate and complete diversity data are collected for protected characteristics and inclusion health groups on digital platforms.

FOUR: Representatives of diverse communities are involved in the design and delivery of improvements aimed at reducing patient safety healthcare inequalities.

FIVE: Improve the understanding of patient safety healthcare inequalities and drive improvement through identifying priority areas for research.

Setting priorities



- + Reading the Signals inquiry (maternity)
- + Impact of asylum centre at Manston Airport
- + Mental health access
- + Access to primary care
- + Commissioning of pathways



Key Takeaway Messages



- ✦ Health inequalities aren't just unjust — they are unsafe.
- ✦ Safety improvement without equity leads to widening gaps.
- ✦ Small, intentional actions (better data, co-designed solutions, tailored interventions) can yield system-wide safety benefits. Start simple and collect the data.

