

To: SHA cluster Chief Executives,
Ambulance Chief Executives, PCT cluster Chief Executives
and SHA Directors of Performance

Gateway reference: 17725

Dear Colleague

**PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT OF CATEGORY A RED 1 CALLS FOLLOWING
THE TECHNICAL AMENDMENT TO THE CATEGORY A8 AMBULANCE
RESPONSE TIME STANDARD**

The purpose of this letter is to request trajectories from ambulance trusts, via their SHAs, that demonstrate improvement in Cat A Red 1 performance, with an expectation that each ambulance trust will achieve 80% within 8 minutes by April 2013.

You will be aware that from the 1st June 2012, the A8 measure has split into two parts, Red 1 and Red 2 and that clock start for Category A Red 2 calls is being changed. This is described in Gateway letter of 16 May reference 17609, from Peter Bradley & Matthew Cooke. This split reflects the way that ambulance trusts already sub-divide their Category A calls for operational purposes as Red 1 calls are the most time critical patients.

For Category A Red 1 calls, the existing Call Connect clock start will remain. This will ensure that patients who genuinely require emergency ambulance care will continue to receive the most rapid response. For Category A Red 2 calls, a new clock start will be used. This will allow more appropriate ambulance resources to be provided to patients' based on their specific clinical needs. The new clock start will be the earliest of

- I. The point at which the chief complaint of the call has been identified*
- II. A vehicle has been assigned to the call*
- III. A 60 second cap from the Call Connect time*

Performance against the Category A 8 minute standard will be reported and assessed separately for Red 1 and Red 2 calls, including in the NHS Performance Framework for ambulance trusts. ROCR approval for this change has been applied for. The existing standard of performance will remain for 2012/13, i.e. 75% of calls should receive a response at the scene within 8 minutes. These changes will allow

ambulance trusts to identify and embed the changes necessary to realise the benefits of reduced double despatch and cancellations, improve productivity and drive the continuous improvement required in Red 1 performance. In realising these benefits, there is an expectation that ambulance trusts will demonstrate improvement in performance from 1st June 2012 to reach 80% for Red 1 calls by April 2013, as they update their operational dispatch and resource allocation procedures. We expect SHAs to work with Ambulance trusts to set trajectories for this achievement, for these trajectories to be submitted by 22nd June 2012 to their normal PDT contact and for SHAs to review Red 1 performance throughout the year.

There will be no change to the Category A19 standard. This will continue to be reported as one figure; with the clock start remaining as the time the request for transport is made as per the technical guidance.

If you require any further information in relation to this letter, please contact:

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Yours sincerely



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