

Green light for highly successful blue light model

The decision comes off the back of a positive independent evaluation of the model commissioned by the Emergency Ambulance Services Committee (EASC).

The clinical response model, announced in summer 2015, moves away from historic time-based targets for all but the most immediately life-threatening or 'Red' calls. It places a greater focus on patient outcomes, prioritising those in most need of an urgent response.

The target is for 65 per cent of the most urgent 'Red calls' to be responded to in eight minutes. The 65% target has been achieved each month since the trial started in October 2015; performance has continued to improve and in each of the last 9 months, more than 75% of red calls have received an emergency response within eight minutes.

Health Secretary Vaughan Gething said:

"Since the implementation of the new clinical response pilot, the Welsh Ambulance Service has improved its performance significantly.

"The independent evaluation published today backs our decision to take the bold step to adopt the new model, following the successful pilot. The fact they found there to be clear and universal acknowledgement, both from within the ambulance service and external partners, that moving to the new model was appropriate and the right thing to do, is excellent news.

"I also welcome that the report confirms response time performance for those in most need of an immediate clinical intervention has improved substantially. The latest ambulance statistics confirm this with a standard response time of less than five minutes to immediately life-threatening calls in each of the last six months.

"I'd like to thank Welsh Ambulance Service, the ambulance service call handlers, clinicians, volunteers and other staff for their hard work in making the model the success it has been.

"It's fantastic that the pilot has attracted global interest and the Welsh ambulance service has not only been invited to provide advice to a number of ambulance services in England and Scotland, but further afield to Canada, New Zealand, Australia, USA and Chile. The Scottish Ambulance Services Trust is currently undertaking a nationwide pilot of a very similar model to our own.

"It is crucial that we now grasp the opportunity and continue to lead the way internationally in this important area for the benefit of the people of Wales."