



Safety Advisory Groups (SAGs)

29 December 2025

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To whom it may concern,

NWAS letter to Safety Advisory Groups (SAGs) on Medical Expectations

I am writing to provide you with an overview of the NWAS support being offered via the SAG to event organisers to ensure the safe and effective delivery of events specifically with regards to ensuring robust medical provision in line with statutory obligations and regulatory guidance.

Medical Cover for Events

The North West Ambulance Service NHS Trust (NWAS) provide the statutory ambulance service across the North West of England. Events across this footprint are presented to Local Authority (LA) organised Safety Advisory Groups (SAGs) for multi-agency review and scrutiny. Following the development of the NWAS events framework it has been agreed that a suitably qualified and experienced member of NWAS staff will review and provide feedback to the event organiser on private medical provider plans, event plans and contingency arrangements circulated through the group.

In order for a comprehensive review to be undertaken these documents and arrangements must be made available to NWAS with sufficient time to allow such a review. The primary aim of the review is to ensure the impact of the event on the National Health Service (NHS) is mitigated and medical provision falls in line with appropriate guidance resulting in safe, quality medical cover to the public. It is not the responsibility of NWAS to 'approve', 'sign off' or otherwise authorise private medical plans, and this remains the responsibility of the event organiser. Where concerns are identified with the medical plan or the ability of a medical provider to provide safe and effective care at an event, this will be raised via the SAG process.

As you will be aware, when planning for an event, the event organiser should complete a risk assessment. The risk assessment should consider medical requirements and result in a medical needs assessment. This should set out the level of medical cover required and associated rationale. From this assessment a medical plan should be formulated.

The following guidance is available to assist event organisers in the provision of adequate medical cover as well as other event related matters. Use of these will ensure best practice and, where appropriate, ensure statutory guidance is being followed:

- The Purple Guide (online version) to Health, Safety and Welfare at Music and Other Events (mostly outdoor/field events).
- Guide to Safety at Sports Grounds 6th Edition (Department of culture, media and sports).
- Alternative uses of Sports Grounds (Department of culture, media and sports).
- SG03: Event Safety (Department of culture, media and sports).
- A Good Practice Guide for the Provision of First Aid and Medical Services at UK Athletics Licenses Road Races (United Kingdom Athletics, Road Race Medical Services).
- Guidance on running events safely <https://www.hse.gov.uk/event-safety/>

Headquarters:
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at the right time,
in the right place;
every time.

- UK Government: Organising a voluntary event, a 'can do' guide.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/can-do-guide-for-organisers-of-voluntary-events>
- Mitigation of terrorist threats at venues during ingress and egress guidance.
<https://www.npsa.gov.uk/mitigation-terrorist-threats-venues-during-ingress-and-egress-guidance>
- Specific sporting body guidance such as boxing, football, rugby, cricket etc.

In addition to the above, the final report of the public inquiry into the Manchester Arena terrorist attack sets out several recommendations to those organising events. Specific medical recommendations that NWAS will be keen to see addressed in plans are:

- The need for a standard of healthcare at events.
- Ensuring all event healthcare staff are trained in first responder, lifesaving, interventions.
- Public access trauma first aid kits containing equipment to enable first responder, lifesaving interventions to be undertaken. These should be available at key locations where they are most likely to be needed.
- Provision of stretchers in appropriate locations in the event of a mass casualty incident.
- A new triage system recommended for use by all responders (Ten Second Triage).

Lastly, event organisers should also be aware of future requirements the upcoming Protect Duty (Marty's Law) may have on their event.

Key lines of enquiry for consideration when appointing a medical provider

NWAS is unable to recommend specific medical providers, and it remains the responsibility of the event organiser to ensure a competent medical provider is appointed. To complete this, several checks are expected:

- Public Liability Insurance – this must be current and valid, provide cover for any negligence claims and for the provision of first aid and medical cover. This insurance should cover all people providing the medical provisions, e.g. first aiders.
- Care Quality Commission (CQC) Registration – in the event an ambulance is required for the treatment and transport to hospital of a patient/s from an event, the medical provider must be able to provide evidence of current CQC registration for both areas of treatment and transport. This is mandatory and the CQC website and staff can assist further. (Whilst not mandatory the event organisers may also want to consider the medical providers CQC rating as part of their appointment process).
- Registration Numbers – when a medical provider uses registered Health Care Professionals (HCPs) such as Paramedics, Nurses, Doctors, and other Allied Health Professionals (AHPs), the registration number for all these registered staff must be provided by the supplier prior to the event in order for the event organiser to complete a check on their registration status.

Ambulances and Hospital Conveyance

When a medical provider supplies an ambulance to cover an event, good practice indicates that the vehicle will be staffed with at least one registered paramedic/HCP and a second member of staff trained to a suitable standard to operate an emergency ambulance, e.g. Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) / Care Assistant (ECA). It is NWAS' view that medical staff operating ambulances must not be included as part of the overall on-site event medical provision as they should be available to convey patients to hospital and may not be available on-site.

NWAS clinical pathways that see NWAS commissioned ambulances convey a patient to a specialist hospital (e.g. Stroke, Major trauma, Cardiac) have been agreed with NWAS commissioners, Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) and Acute / Specialist Trusts and therefore are for the use of NWAS resources only. Similarly, hospital pre-alert telephone numbers to alert a hospital of a critical patient inbound by ambulance are ex-directory and owned by the Acute Trusts and therefore NWAS is unable to provide these to private medical providers.

To reduce any impact on patient care, NWS will signpost private medical providers that provide CQC registered ambulances to the relevant Acute Trust / ICB staff for direct liaison regarding any of the above points, where they are not already known by the private medical provider. This will be completed pre-event during the planning stage.

Liaison with NWS

As the duty to provide a safe event, including medical cover, lies with the event organiser, NWS will liaise with the event organiser with regards to medical cover – not directly with the contracted private medical provider. Where the event organiser provides permission, in some circumstances, NWS may liaise directly with the contracted medical provider.

NWS should be made aware of events in most situations via the SAG and therefore event and medical plans should be circulated by this group. Any requirement for an NWS managerial presence at an event can be discussed via the SAG. For specific enquiries or other concerns, the NWS Resilience Team can be contacted on resilience.team@nws.nhs.uk where you will be directed to your local area representatives.

Where an event organisers medical planning does not meet the standard expected by NWS this will be fed back to the event organiser via the SAG. Where it is believed NWS concern has not been appropriately addressed, this will be raised in writing to the SAG chair and other key partner agencies.

Proposed next steps

NWS would propose that at the next available SAG, the contents of this letter are circulated to ensure SAG members and all current event organisers are aware of the expectations of NWS. NWS representatives will be in attendance at the SAG to present the letter and answer any questions.

It is recommended that this letter is published on all event portals or websites that Local Authority colleagues are in possession of to further enhance the communication.

We look forward to continuing to work well together in the interest of public and staff safety and effective use of NHS resources. If you have any queries regarding the content of this letter, please contact your NWS representative via the SAG in the first instance.

Yours sincerely



MATT COOPER

Area Director for Cumbria and Lancashire
NORTH WEST AMBULANCE SERVICE NHS TRUST