



Due to the continued demand on our services, the number of colleagues who are unwell or self-isolating due to COVID-19, and immense pressure on our region's healthcare systems, we are taking a further proactive step now to safeguard the provision of a safe 999 service for our patients.

Arrangements have been made with the Ministry of Defence for 60 military personnel to work alongside our Urgent Care colleagues, responding to patients requiring inter-facility transfers or who have already been seen by a healthcare professional.

At this stage we are not planning to use military colleagues as part of our 999-ambulance call response.

The aim of this proactive step is to:

- reduce long delays currently being experienced by lower-acuity patients (those who are non-emergency but do need further assessment and treatment), and reduce the anxiety experienced by staff due to the delays,
- to enable our emergency crews to focus on responding to emergency 999 calls, and
- to help relieve some pressure in the wider NHS system.

The 60 military personnel are due to begin training later this week and will complete three-day EMAS familiarisation training course led by our Clinical Education team. They will be available to support our Urgent Care crews 16 hours a day, seven days a week.

They will follow the EMAS values and EMAS protocols, policies and procedures, including infection prevention and control (IPC) and the wearing of appropriate personal protective equipment, and will carry out support tasks such as:

- driving the vehicles,
- the safe moving and handling of adult patients and essential equipment,
- support in Adult Basic Life support including the use of automated external defibrillation, and
- raising any safeguarding concerns as appropriate.

The implementation of military support has always been part of NHS plans in case of increased pressure. You will have seen in the news that military personnel are already supporting, amongst others, colleagues in North West Ambulance Service, and so we are being proactive in having robust plans in place to ensure our EMAS clinicians can continue to provide care to our patients who need us. We look forward to making our new military colleagues feel welcome at EMAS.

Thank you for your ongoing support in helping us to provide the best possible care for each of our patients in very challenging circumstances.

Ben Holdaway  
EMAS Director of Operations