What do users value about the emergency ambulance service?

Fiona Togher¹, Viet-Hai Phung¹, Janette Turner², Professor A. Niroshan Siriwardena¹, Professor Alicia O’Cathain²

¹University of Lincoln, ²University of Sheffield

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Background

- Narrow focus of current quality indicators for ambulance services.

- Patient perspective of care becoming increasingly important.
Aim

• To investigate patients’ experiences of the 999 ambulance service to understand the processes and outcomes important to them.
Method

- Purposive sampling
- Three levels of response
  - Category 1 = hear and treat
  - Category 2 = see and treat
  - Category 3 = see and convey
Method

- Semi-structured interviews.
- Topic guide.
- NVivo8.
- Thematic analysis.
Results

- 11 Males and 11 Females participated (n=22)
- 13 of the participants were aged 65+ over

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Official Response Category</th>
<th>Hear and treat</th>
<th>See and treat</th>
<th>See and convey</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Patient Reported Response category</th>
<th>Hear and treat</th>
<th>See and treat</th>
<th>See and convey</th>
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<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
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# Emerging themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Sub-theme</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not waiting too long for help</td>
<td>• Alleviation of fear, distress and panic</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Perceived need</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Timeliness vs. time</td>
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<td>Information provision</td>
<td>• Communication style</td>
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<td>Professional relationship</td>
<td>• Reassurance</td>
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<td>• Confidence in clinicians abilities</td>
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<td>• Clinician behaviour and conduct</td>
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<td>Smooth transition along the prehospital care pathway</td>
<td>• Call handling stage</td>
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<td>• Wait for ambulance</td>
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<td>• Time on scene</td>
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<td>• Journey to hospital</td>
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<td>• Handover</td>
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CaHRU@lincoln.ac.uk  
CaHRU  
Community and Health Research Unit  
UNIVERSITY OF LINCOLN
Not waiting too long for help

- The meaning of help was different for different people
- Distinction between needing and wanting a quick response time
Not waiting too long for help

- Desire to have immediate contact with individual(s) that are perceived to know what they are doing
Information Provision

- Patients wanted to be kept ‘in the loop’ with approximate response times

- The approach used to request information or disseminate it to patients was important
  - Jovial vs. Formal
Professional Relationship

- Patients valued the reassurance provided to them within the rapport developed with the clinicians.
- There was an association between the reassurance provided and the confidence felt in the clinicians' abilities to treat patients effectively.
Smooth transition along the prehospital care pathway

- Some patients reported the call handling stage as being the most highly valued stage.
- Often the call handler would remain on the phone until the clinicians arrived.
Smooth transition along the prehospital care pathway

- Patients were satisfied with the assessments and treatment they received on scene

- Only voiced concerns if they were:
  - not able to choose the hospital they were being admitted to
  - the hospital care was not at the same high standard as the prehospital service
What have we learnt?

• Aspects of prehospital emergency care other than ‘response time’ were highly valued by patients

• It was challenging to engage participants in considering factors other than response times for potential new outcome measures
Where do we go from here?

• Results will contribute to the identification of candidates for new outcome measures

• Potential implications for the delivery of urgent and emergency primary care services – clinical education?
Thank you