



Department of Health

*From the Lord Prior of Brampton
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for NHS Productivity (Lords)*

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25 JUN 2015

Thank you for your letter to the Secretary of State for Health about the death of Paul Alexander Murray. I am responding as the Minister with responsibility for NHS performance policy at the Department of Health.

I was very sorry to hear of Mr Murray's death and would be grateful if you would pass my condolences to his family.

Your report gave details of Mr Murray's experiences following a call to London Ambulance Service on 8 February 2013. You were particularly concerned that there were insufficient ambulance resources available for the Service to meet the demand in the area at the time of the incident.

As you may be aware, it is the responsibility of individual ambulance trusts to ensure that resources are aligned to demand. The Department of Health continues to work closely with its partners in the healthcare system including NHS England, Monitor and the Trust Development Authority (TDA) to monitor and support ambulance service performance.

Furthermore, in recognition that the NHS is busier than ever, we are backing the NHS' future plan with an extra £8billion by 2020.

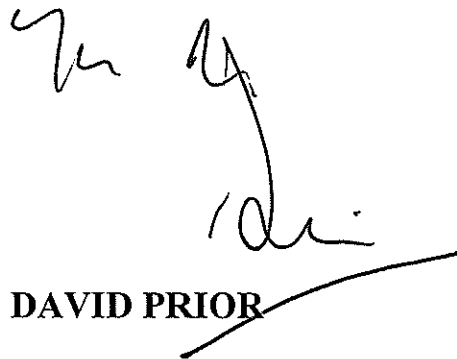
As a result of this incident, I understand the London Ambulance Service carried out a serious incident investigation, with four consequent actions:

1. The Trust plans to increase capacity through its modernisation programme and planning for winter, when demand increases.
2. As part of the Trust's winter plans, "Intelligent Conveyance" is aimed at reducing surges of demand at acute trusts.

3. The Trust is considering a process of clinical review where multiple repeated calls report deterioration in a patient's condition, but the category of the call itself does not otherwise change.

4. Call takers have been reminded to free text any potentially relevant information on calls that may be important for clinicians undertaking a clinical review or enhanced clinical assessment.

I have also sent your report to NHS England to ensure wider awareness of the issues you have raised. Thank you for bringing this matter to our attention.



Handwritten signature of David Prior, consisting of a stylized 'D' and 'P' followed by a horizontal line.

DAVID PRIOR