

IMPACT REPORT

For the year ended
September 2020

THAMES VALLEY
AIR AMBULANCE



OUR MISSION



To push the boundaries of medical intervention, helicopter aviation and on scene patient care to deliver a unique life-saving service to patients, where and when it is most needed.

INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of last year, we were looking forward to a full calendar of events and a 21st Anniversary celebration. Then everything changed. The Covid-19 pandemic has dominated every aspect of society, and healthcare services have coped with immense pressure.

2020 was a year like no other and was certainly a challenge for all of us at Thames Valley Air Ambulance. Yet through it all we can look back with pride on how crew, office staff, volunteers and supporters have all pulled together to ensure we provided world-class emergency care to anybody who needed us.

Your support meant that during the first lockdown, we had the capacity for our crew to take on shifts at the John Radcliffe Hospital, helping our NHS colleagues on the emergency wards and transporting patients. When our crew needed PPE, you answered our call. When times were difficult, your morale -

boosting messages and support lifted our spirits. I can't thank you enough.

Everything we have done, every patient we have treated and every life we have saved has only been possible because of your incredible generosity.



Amanda McLean, CEO

HOW WE HELP

On an average day, we are called out seven times to treat people in urgent need of our life-saving service. Within minutes, we bring the expertise, equipment and treatment of the hospital to the most critically ill and injured patients across Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire.

With a doctor and a critical care paramedic team on board, we can administer **advanced drugs and treatments** beyond that of a regular ambulance.



In an emergency, every minute matters. We can be anywhere in Berkshire, Buckinghamshire or Oxfordshire within **15 minutes by helicopter**.

Our five critical care response vehicles carry the same crew and life-saving equipment as our helicopter, providing greater **flexibility and coverage**.



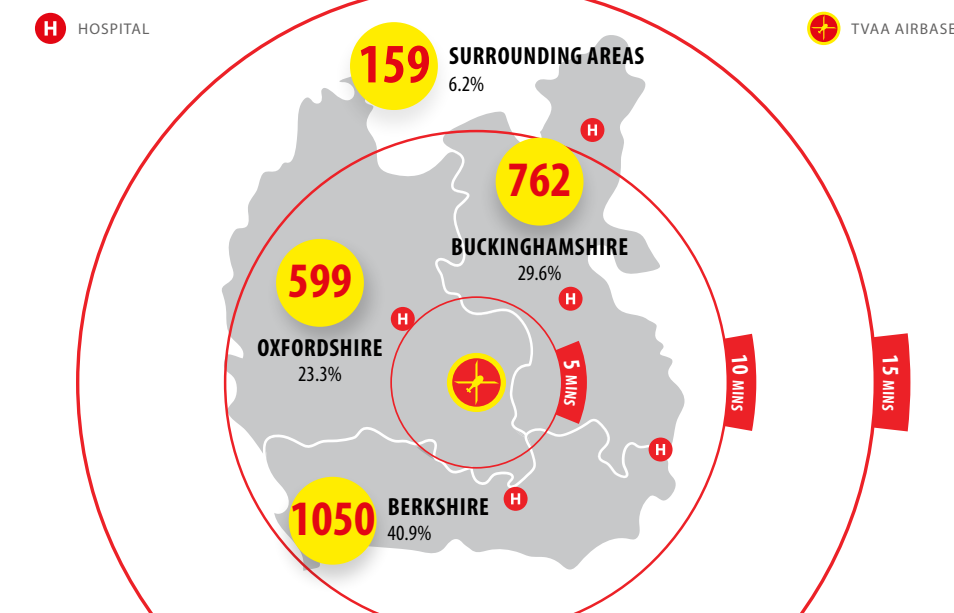
OUR IMPACT IN NUMBERS

We are a charity at the frontline of saving lives. Between 1st October 2019 and 30th September 2020...

▶ WE WERE CALLED OUT **2,570 times.**

▶ WE DELIVERED ADVANCED MEDICAL CARE TO **1,497 patients.**

OUR CREW WERE TASKED TO INCIDENTS ACROSS THE THAMES VALLEY AND BEYOND.



WE WERE CALLED OUT TO THE MOST CRITICALLY ILL AND INJURED PATIENTS.



Cardiac arrest

692

(26.9%)



Accidental injury

550

(21.4%)



Road traffic collision

466

(18.1%)



Medical emergency

398

(15.5%)



Assault

143

(5.6%)



Other

129

(5.0%)



Intentional self-harm

113

(4.4%)



Sport and leisure

79

(3.1%)

WE DISPATCHED THE FOLLOWING ASSETS.



932



1,638

OUR CREW



Our doctors and paramedics must undergo a minimum of **80 hours** structured, mandatory training.



Our crew are on call between 7am – 2am, **365 days a year**. Our crew includes **30** doctors, **24** critical care paramedics, **5** pilots and **6** emergency dispatch assistants.

Our dedicated crew of doctors, critical care paramedics, pilots and emergency dispatch assistants use their skills and expertise to give our patients the best chance, when the worst happens.



“As a critical care doctor, I am trained in pre-hospital emergency medicine. I bring hospital-level expertise and treatment to critically ill and injured patients. Put simply, my role is to keep a patient alive and give them the best chance of recovery.”

Dhushy, PHEM Doctor



“We make a difference for patients through procedures and treatment that may save their lives at a time they need it. We help them to remain calm and reassured in the most difficult circumstances, and ensure they're transported quickly, to the most appropriate hospital for their needs.”

Emma, Critical Care Paramedic



“As a pilot, I am responsible for aviation aspects throughout the duty. This includes maintaining the aircraft, monitoring the changing weather conditions and briefing the crew. I deliver the critical care team to the patient's side both safely and swiftly, by day or by night and in varying conditions.”

Dave, Pilot



“I monitor all the incoming 999 calls to identify those that would benefit from critical care, and dispatch the nearest and most appropriate resource. The dispatch team is the first point of call for our life-saving service and we provide essential communication link between our crew and other emergency services.”

Jodie, Emergency Dispatch Assistant

“When Thames Valley Air Ambulance arrived, they brought a new sense of calm. How they handled the situation, I never in a million years could have imagined. We had assemblies in school about them – but they are really amazing at their job.”

Former patient, Lucy.



Last year, we treated
181 children.

WHEN ACCIDENT TURNS EMERGENCY - **LUCY'S STORY**

Accidents can happen at any time. On what should have been an evening of celebration on New Year's Eve, accident quickly turned into emergency for 10-year old Lucy and her family.

While playing outside, the metal latch of a gate swung towards Lucy, stabbing her in the chest causing a traumatic injury. Panicked, and unable to help their daughter, parents Andrew and Sophie dialled 999.

Speed is vitally important in an emergency. Poor weather conditions prevented our helicopter from flying, but it took just seconds for Doctor John and Critical Care Paramedics Jo and Clare to be dispatched by critical care response car carrying the exact life-saving equipment found on our aircraft.

“When we arrived, Lucy was conscious but frightened. She was in deep shock and having trouble breathing. Our initial priority was to treat her pain and keep her calm,” said Jo. Through their expertise and care, our crew brought reassurance to the scene and began delivering advanced hospital-level treatment to Lucy.

“The first thing doctor John did was administer advanced pain relief to make Lucy more comfortable,” continued Jo. “This is something over and above what a normal ambulance crew can provide, as they do not have doctors as part of their crew. And because we carry treatments especially for children, we could simply spray the pain relief into Lucy's nostril instead of putting her through the further trauma of an injection.”

Our crew applied a specialist wound covering used specifically for lung injuries. Lucy was also given intravenous antibiotics, vital for reducing the risk of infection from a penetrating wound.

Lucy was taken to the John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford, and underwent surgery to remove some of her damaged lung and repair the wound to her chest. She has since gone on to make a full recovery.

“You always hope you will be able to look after your children when they need help the most. But that night we couldn't, and we desperately needed someone with the skills to help us. They saved Lucy when we couldn't, and we owe them so much.” Lucy's dad, Andrew.

▶ Find out more at: www.tvairambulance.org.uk/appeal

LOOKING BACK...

The achievements of our charity are only thanks to you, our wonderful supporters. Simply put, it is only because of your compassion and generosity that we continue to be there for our patients. Thank you for being there for us, as we are for you.

We were back on your television screens in **Emergency Helicopter Medics** series three. In episode one, we treated 12-year old Oliver who suffered a severe leg injury.

Emergencies don't stop for Christmas, and neither do our crew. We were called out to **28 incidents** between Christmas Eve and Boxing Day 2019.

We hosted our first ever **Learning & Development Symposium**. Pre-hospital practitioners from across the Thames Valley were invited to take part in a series of educational lectures and interactive workshops, including a live thoracotomy demonstration using a high-fidelity manikin.

We were awarded an **"Outstanding"** rating from the Care Quality Commission (CQC), becoming the first air ambulance in England to achieve the highest available rating from the regulator. With only one in twenty registered health and social care services currently rated as "Outstanding", the result recognised us as **one of the best emergency care providers** in the country.

With the coronavirus pandemic, we called upon local businesses to donate stocks of **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)** to help protect our crew and our patients from the risk of infection. We received an overwhelming response, with our community stepping up to help us in our time of need.

During the first lockdown, when demand for our critical care service dropped, **we answered the call of the NHS** and redeployed clinical staff to the John Radcliffe Hospital, Oxford, to help treat the most severely ill Covid-19 patients.

We welcomed an additional **five new doctors** to our service. Having a doctor on board our vehicles enables us to bring hospital-level expertise to the scene of an emergency, something that sets us apart from a standard ambulance.

In 1999, we were dispatched to treat our first ever patient. In September 2020, over two decades and 24,000 call-outs later, we **celebrated the 21st Anniversary of our first flight**. What started as a single helicopter carrying less equipment than a land ambulance, has now grown into a fully-independent healthcare service including five critical care response cars and an expert team of doctors, critical care paramedics, pilots and dispatch assistants.



Last year, we treated **120** patients with pre-hospital emergency anaesthesia.

2019

NOV

DEC

2020

JAN

MAR

APR

MAY

AUG

SEP



We performed **227** intubations, where we took over a patient's breathing.

SPENCER'S STORY

Cyclist Spencer Hillier suffered life-threatening injuries after colliding with a car. Having punctured both his lungs, he could barely breathe.

Spencer was in urgent need of advanced critical care. Doctor Stewart, part of the team who treated Spencer, said that he was 'the sickest patient he had ever seen who had gone on to survive and thrive.'

"I genuinely believed I was dying. I remember them cutting my cycling kit off and making me lie down, but I remembered nothing else until waking up in the ICU. In those intervening two hours, the amazing doctors and paramedics saved my life. Thames Valley Air Ambulance is incredibly important to me, and the job that all of the air ambulances do is amazing."

► Find out more at: www.tvairambulance.org.uk/spencer

WHERE YOUR MONEY GOES

As an independent charity, we receive no Government or National Lottery funding. We rely solely on the generous donations of our supporters. Like all charities, we are governed by a Board of Trustees. These volunteers monitor our expenditure and ensure that we operate within the relevant regulations and guidelines.

► EACH LIFE-SAVING MISSION COSTS US:

£3,750



£1,625



We need to raise **£19** per minute to keep our life-saving service in the skies and on the roads for our patients.

► TOTAL INCOME RAISED IN 19/20

£9,713,431.

► FOR EACH £1 OF EXPENDITURE, WE SPENT:



33p

GENERATING MORE FUNDS TO FURTHER OUR CHARITABLE ACTIVITY.



67p

SPENT ON CHARITABLE ACTIVITY, GIVING OUR PATIENTS THE BEST POSSIBLE CHANCE WHEN THE WORST HAPPENS.



Between October 2019 and September 2020, **£74,588** was spent training our crew on the latest life-saving treatments and procedures.

* Please note: these figures are subject to formal approval at the charity's AGM. Final figures will be available via the Charity Commission website at: charitycommission.gov.uk

LOOKING FORWARD

If 2020 has taught us anything, it's that nobody knows what's around the corner. With this in mind: trying to predict what 2021 will hold is a difficult task. However, the last year has also shown us how resilient, resourceful, and innovative we can all be. We want to take that positivity with us into the year ahead.

While the vaccine roll-out gives us light at the end of the tunnel, it will be some time yet before our frontline staff take off their PPE and our office is fully open. These restrictions aren't easy for crews or office staff, but there are some benefits to a more flexible way of working. We've loved hosting online meetings, for example, which have allowed some of you to

join in remotely. We have high hopes for the coming year. We don't just want to survive; we want to thrive. Whether it's recruiting extra clinicians, further upskilling our critical care paramedics or implementing the latest in life-saving equipment and technology, we are committed to continually developing and improving our service. To achieve this, we are working on an ambitious strategy, which will show our supporters how dedicated we are to putting their donations to the best possible use.

We might not have a looking glass to see into the future of 2021, but we are proud to reflect our community. With your help, we will continue to provide the highest quality of care to our patients, no matter what.



Last year, we treated **413** patients with enhanced pain relief that is not available on standard ambulances.

**“Thames Valley Air Ambulance is incredibly important to me.
The amazing doctors and paramedics saved my life.”**

Former patient, Spencer.

TVAIRAMBULANCE.ORG.UK



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Number: 1084910 | Telephone 0300 999 0135
Thames Valley Air Ambulance, Stokenchurch House,
Oxford Road, Stokenchurch, Bucks, HP14 3SX