Participant Information Sheet

Title: Clinical Leadership in the Ambulance Service, to what extent does clinical leadership influence Paramedics?

You are invited to participate in a research project, which aims to explore the views and perceptions of paramedics in relation to clinical leadership within the North East Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (NEAS NHS FT). This project aims to inform the future model of clinical leadership from your professional perspective recognising that significant organisational change is happening with the A and E review.

This information sheet is to help you understand why the study is being carried out and what it will involve for you before you decide if you’d like to participate.

This should take about five minutes to read. Please contact Ann Fox on ann.fox@neas.nhs.uk if you have any further questions.

What is the purpose of this study?

A prominent review entitled Taking Healthcare to the Patient: Transforming NHS Ambulance Services (DoH 2005) recognised the need for a new vision and embraced four key challenges for ambulance services to be different for the future. These challenges were mainly focussed upon education, involving patients and the public, partnership working with other health care providers and leadership capability. This project will focus upon clinical leadership.

More recently a review of the six years progress of the Taking Healthcare to the Patient: Transforming NHS Ambulance Services (DoH 2005) was undertaken by the Association of Ambulance Chief Executives, (AACE) which resulted in publication of Taking Healthcare to the Patient 2, (AACE 2011). This report acknowledges that despite the improvements in the ambulance service in the last six years, improving staff satisfaction and morale remains one of the biggest challenges facing trusts.

Staff in the ambulance service report lower levels of feeling valued by colleagues compared to other healthcare groups (National NHS Staff Survey 2009). Therefore, a key area for further development identified is developing initiatives to improve staff satisfaction and ensuring ‘high quality clinical leadership, supporting, mentoring and challenging clinical practice’.
This grounded theory research study aims to explore the practice issues outlined above with a resultant research question:

**Clinical Leadership in the Ambulance Service, to what extent does clinical leadership influence Paramedics?**

The study therefore aims to determine the views of Paramedics as they practice their professional role in a changing climate and to inform future leadership developments necessary to ensure staff feel supported and to identify the impact of clinical leadership on practice and service delivery.

**Why have I been invited?**

You have been invited to take part in this study as you are a Paramedic working within the NEAS NHS FT.

**Do I have to take part?**

You do not have to take part in this project, participation is completely voluntary. Whether or not you choose to take part in the project will have no impact on your employment or career progression.

Should you decide to take part, I will fully explain the project and the content of the information sheet. I will then ask you to sign a consent form to demonstrate that you have agreed to take part. You are free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason.

**What will happen to me if I take part?**

This research project will last 3 academic years. You will be asked to complete a blog/questionnaire and to have two individual interviews with the researcher to determine your views regarding clinical leadership during a period of change.

**What will I have to do?**

You will be asked to complete a blog/questionnaire and you will then be asked to have an individual interview with the researcher at a time and location convenient to you at the beginning of 2013. The interview will take approximately 1 hour and will be digitally audio taped.

The interview will be repeated at the end of 2013, beginning of 2014 to establish any changed views over time.

**What are the possible benefits of taking part?**

The benefits of you taking part in this project would be to highlight what Paramedics need to enable them to feel supported and engaged within the NEAS NHS FT and to influence the development and implementation of a model of clinical leadership for the future.
What if I have any problems or concerns?

If you have any questions or concerns about any part of this project please contact me, Ann Fox on 0191 4302281 or email ann.fox@neas.nhs.uk and I will do my best to answer your questions.

Will my taking part be kept confidential?

You will not be named or your work location identified in any documents. Every effort will be made to ensure participants remain anonymous throughout the study however some experiences shared may only affect key individuals which could compromise full anonymity – the use of this data will be approved/or not by those individuals.

Recordings and paper transcriptions will be kept in a secure locked place which only the researcher has access to.

Transcriptions stored on computer databases will be password protected to ensure that no one has access apart from the project lead and the academic supervisor.

Only information necessary to the project will be included in the final report.

What will happen to all the information collected for the research?

Recordings and paper transcriptions will be destroyed and information saved digitally will be deleted once academic verification is completed and within three years of completion of the study in line with research governance guidance.

What will happen if I don’t want to carry on with the project?

You may withdraw from the project at any time without giving an explanation and without prejudicing your future employment or career progression.

Any information relating to you will be destroyed, unless you specifically agree that it can be included in the final report.

What will happen to the results of the project?

An executive summary of the research project will be sent to all participants via email with the option of requesting a full report if required. Findings may also be used in publications and presentations, meetings and conferences.

Who has reviewed this?

This project has been approved by Northumbria University School of HCES Ethics subcommittee and the NEAS NHS FT Joint Consultative Committee and Research and Development Group.

Where can I find further information?
You can contact me on 0191 430 2281 or via email on ann.fox@neas.nhs.uk