

An MPs Guide to Paramedicine in England

Paramedics are one of England's most agile and skilled clinical workforces.

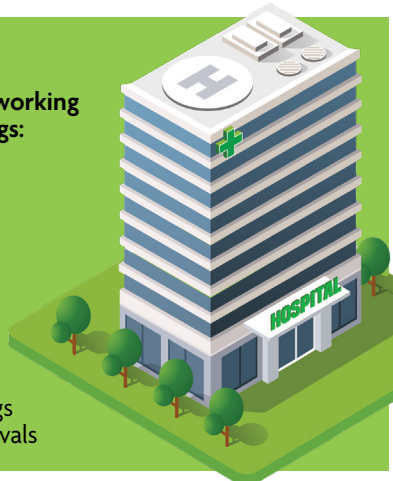
Paramedics are **highly trained, registered healthcare professionals** regulated by the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC). They provide lifesaving emergency, urgent and specialist care across healthcare, social care, and in the community.

Not everyone who works on an ambulance is a paramedic, but every paramedic is a qualified clinician.

Where do paramedics work?

England has over 16,000 paramedics working in a wide variety of healthcare settings:

- 999 and ambulance response
- Emergency departments
- GP practices
- Urgent and primary care
- Community and home-based care
- Palliative and end of life care
- Frailty services
- Police custody
- Military
- Remote, offshore and island settings
- Major events, motorsport and festivals



England has 39 universities delivering paramedics degrees, the highest number of the UK's four nations.

All programmes are three years, combining academic with practice-based learning. There are 10 regional NHS Ambulance Trusts in England, with those covering:

- North East
- North West
- East Midlands
- East of England
- West Midlands
- London
- South East Coast
- South Central
- South Western
- Yorkshire



Paramedic programmes are a minimum of BSc delivered over 3 years' combining academic learning with practice-based learning.

Why paramedics matter

A paramedic works autonomously as a generalist clinician across a range of healthcare settings, usually in emergency, primary, or urgent care. They may also specialise in clinical practice, education, leadership, or research.

Paramedics:

- Diagnose and treat patients
- Manage complex conditions
- Decide who needs hospital care, and who can safely stay at home
- Prescribe and administer medicines
- Lead urgent and community-based care
- Play a key role in supporting Emergency Departments, GP Services, and hospitals by reducing demand on services



Paramedics Delivering in England Case Studies

Berwick Community Paramedic Scheme – North East Ambulance Service

A permanent team of paramedics that provide rapid response care in the Berwick area.

The scheme:

- Supports local NHS services by treating patients at home.
- Has halved the ambulance response time for the most life-threatening Category 1 wait times.
- Provides extra support for care homes and GP practices in and around Berwick.
- Allows paramedics to extend their scope of practice, including being able to request x-rays for patients and take swabs and samples.

Asthma Support – South East Coast Ambulance Service

Paramedics have been working across Surrey and Sussex to help children and young people manage their asthma.

They:

- Support young people with advice and guidance on how to use their medication and control their condition.
- Report any environmental triggers in the person's home to local housing authorities (such as damp or mould in social housing).
- Share data with asthma groups to identify emerging trends, analyse the volume of cases, and develop new strategies.
- Help develop out-of-hospital clinical pathways to treat acute asthma.

Hazardous Area Response Team – Nationwide

These are highly trained, specialised paramedics that provide care in high-risk environments.

These teams:

- Enter risk zones where there is a high degree of danger to life and conventional ambulance crews cannot safely enter.
- Manage incidents involving chemical/biohazards, collapsed buildings, confined spaces, from height, underwater, train crashes, and terrorist attacks.
- Work alongside other emergency services to triage, treat, and rescue casualties.
- Provide specialist care for other emergency services that have been impacted by the environments they respond to.

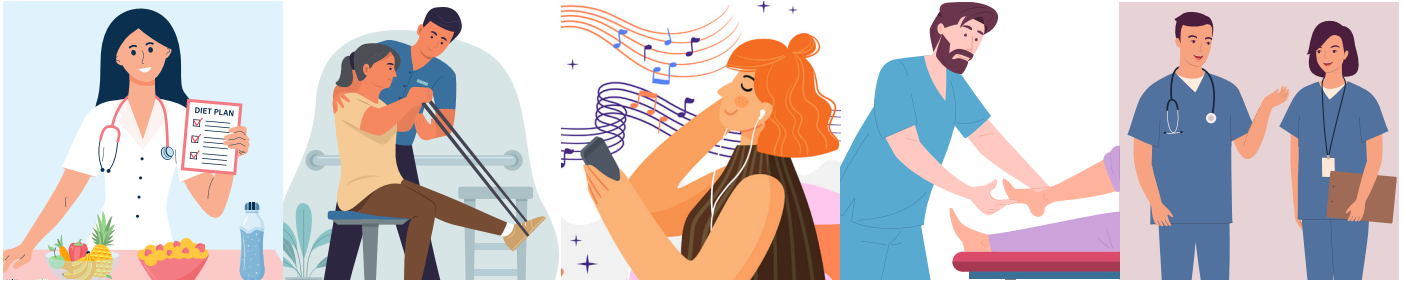
Paramedics are already:

- Treating people closer to home
- Supporting GP and hospital capacity
- Delivering care in rural, island, and remote areas
- Improving emergency and major incident responses

Paramedics are part of the Allied Health Professions (AHPs) in England. The AHP workforce is the third largest within the NHS in England, accounting for over 280,000 professionals.

AHPs are:

- Art Therapists
- Dietitians
- Dramatherapists
- Music Therapists
- Occupational Therapists
- Orthoptists
- Orthotists and Prosthetists
- **Paramedics**
- Physiotherapists
- Podiatrists
- Radiographers
- Speech and Language Therapists.



The Royal College of Paramedics calls on policy makers to:

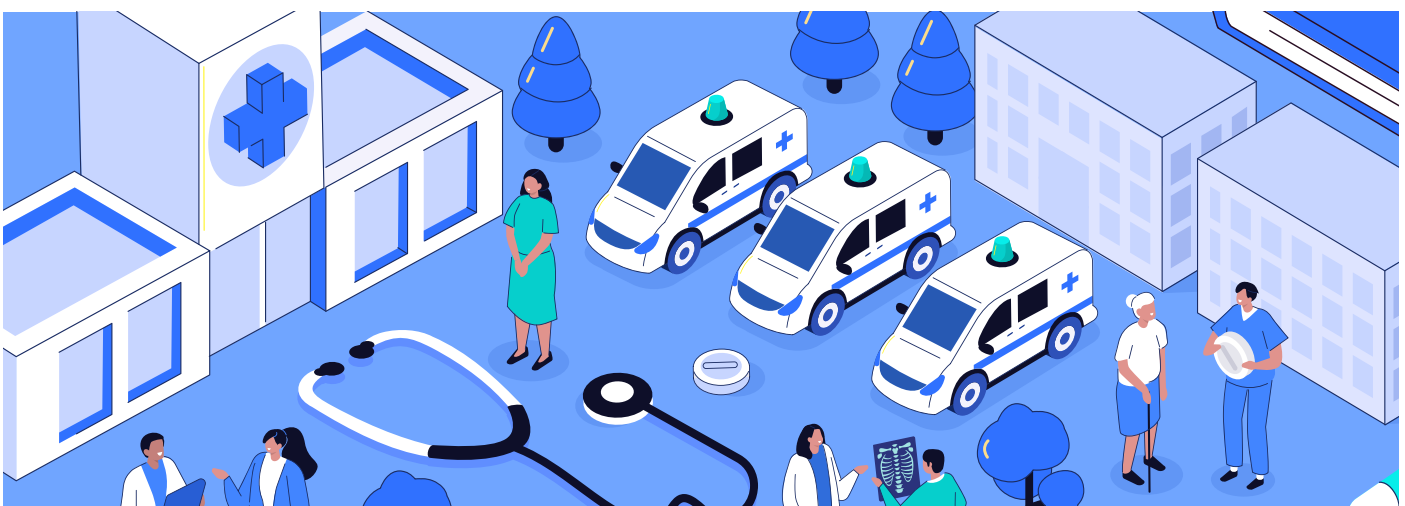
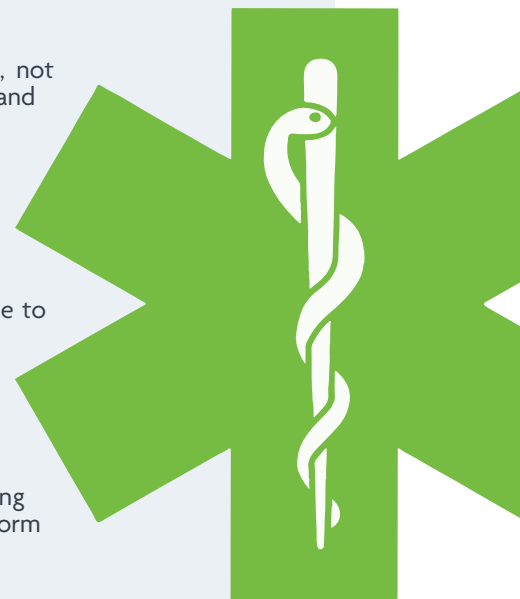
Recognise paramedics as autonomous clinicians within England's healthcare workforce, not solely as ambulance responders, and reflect this in national workforce, primary care, and community care planning.

Embed paramedics more fully within primary, urgent, and community services, including GP practices, frailty pathways, palliative care, and virtual wards to support earlier intervention and reduce avoidable hospital admissions.

Invest in advanced and enhanced/specialist paramedic roles, particularly in rural, island, and remote communities, to improve equity of access to healthcare and enable more people to receive care closer to home.

Integrate paramedics into national strategies addressing ageing populations, long-term conditions, and preventative care, recognising their ability to manage complex cases and support people safely at home.

Measure and report the system-wide impact of paramedic-led models of care, including reductions in ED pressure, community GP workload and hospital conveyance, to inform evidence-based policy and long-term service design.



The Royal College of Paramedics is the only recognised professional body for the paramedic profession. We support the profession by providing leadership and advice to our members, and to people considering joining the ambulance professions. We provide support and leadership across the four pillars of the profession: research, education, clinical practice, and leadership.

Contact:

Mandy Powell, Policy & Public Affairs Manager
policy@rcop.co.uk

Tom Taylor, Policy Assistant
policy@rcop.co.uk