



June 2010

**Kent LINK Response**  
**South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Trust**  
**Quality Accounts 2009 / 2010**

The Kent LINK would like to thank South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Trust for the opportunity to comment on its Quality Account for 2009 / 10. Our assessment is based on the extent to which the account achieves the following intentions:

1. Aiding the public's understanding of what the organisation is doing well
2. Where improvements in service quality have been made and what the priorities for improvement are for the coming year
3. How the organisation has involved service users, staff and others with an interest in the organisation in determining those priorities for improvement.

The LINK has assembled information from a range of sources to inform its commentary using qualitative and quantitative data and academic input from a local University.<sup>1</sup>

**1. Aiding public understanding**

Overall the language of the document was accessible, with terminology and acronyms being explained including the use of diagrams. Pages were well laid out and outlining progress and future priorities alongside each other in detail makes it easy to follow. Although the structure of the account becomes more tabular towards the end, consideration is still given to patient understanding through clarifying acronyms.

The different levels of paramedic are made clear in the account for those who might not necessarily have an understanding of this. It might have been useful to have had more information about the different grades of staffing, to explain the term 'registered clinician' and illustrate who else might be providing treatment, for example to the 10% of patients who do not see a registered clinician in the first instance (page 10).

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<sup>1</sup> Canterbury Christ Church University Centre for Health and Social Care Research

## **2. Improvements in service quality and future priorities**

The feedback on the Trust from the LINK focus groups and interviews was positive overall and almost all reported a very good experience of the Trust, echoing the improvements outlined in the Trust's account.

### **Priority 1**

It was not possible to establish the Trust's performance in Kent in relation to the percentage of patients being attended by a registered clinician in January 2010, as data was not available. The target to increase the percentage significantly from 58% to 90% over the next five years demonstrates the Trust's commitment to improve care quality, and will enable future progress to be monitored. Clear targets in workforce development are also included to support this priority.

### **Priority 2**

Figure 3 on page 13 caused some confusion and could have been better presented to make it clear that when a Paramedic Practitioner attends there is a genuine improvement in the conveyance result. Although a target to achieve this priority is outlined, it is not possible to measure exactly how each of the individual improvement measures outlined will contribute to this.

### **Priority 3**

A target for improvement is provided, against which future progress can be measured. During the focus groups and interviews a need for the ambulance service to be aware of any particular requirements which may impact on an individual's journey to hospital was highlighted. It was felt that a robust Patient Clinical Records system could enable these issues to be flagged up and communicated to the service in advance of responding to an incident.

## **3. How the organisation has involved people in determining priorities**

There was little evidence of how the priorities were selected however the account acknowledges the Trust's intention to work with stakeholders on this, and the Kent LINK looks forward to supporting the Trust with this task in the future.