

EMRTS Cymru

Emergency Medical Retrieval & Transfer Service



ELUSEN AMBIWLANS AWYR CYMRU
WALES AIR AMBULANCE CHARITY



EMRTS Cymru in North Wales



GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES

Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Betsi Cadwaladr
University Health Board



Ymddiriedolaeth GIG
Gwasanaethau Ambwlans Cymru
Welsh Ambulance Services
NHS Trust



Ariennir gan
Lywodraeth Cymru
Funded by
Welsh Government

Introduction

As part of the implementation of the **Emergency Medical Retrieval and Transfer Service (EMRTS Cymru)** across Wales, the next phase will see the Service become operational in the Wales Air Ambulance (WAA) Charity base in Caernarfon, North West Wales. This will enhance access to timely pre-hospital critical care, particularly in this region of Wales (including parts of Powys). The Service in Caernarfon is expected to become operational in summer 2017.

Who is EMRTS Cymru?



EMRTS Cymru, also known as the Welsh Flying Medics, provides consultant-delivered pre-hospital critical care across Wales, by air and by road.

The Service is delivered via an important partnership with the WAA. The WAA is a charitable trust which relies entirely on the generosity and support of the Welsh public to help keep the helicopters flying.

Since April 2015, EMRTS Cymru has been operational from the WAA bases in Dafen (Llanelli) and Welshpool.

The Service, a part of NHS Wales and supported by Welsh Government, supplies a highly-trained NHS Critical Care team made up of Consultants and Critical Care Practitioners (CCPs).



EMRTS Cymru services include:

- Pre-hospital critical care for all age groups (i.e. any intervention/decision that is carried outside standard paramedic practice).
- Undertaking time-critical life or limb-threatening adult and paediatric transfers from peripheral centres (inc. Emergency Departments, Medical Assessment Units, Intensive Care Units, Minor Injury Units) for patients requiring specialist intervention at the receiving hospital.

In addition, the Service provides an enhancement of neonatal and maternal pre-hospital critical care – both for home deliveries and deliveries in free-standing midwifery-led units (MLUs). This includes:

- Transferring neonatal teams to distant time-critical cases by air.
- Supporting midwife units and home deliveries by stabilising neonates and transferring them to a consultant-led delivery unit.

Finally, the Service provides a multitude of roles at major incident or mass-casualty events and, for the first time in Wales, a strategic medical advisor is available 24/7. This advisor is known as a top cover consultant.

EMRTS Cymru is coordinated and tasked centrally via the WAA-funded Air Support Desk (ASD) which is based at the Welsh Ambulance Service headquarters in Cwmbran. The Service is operational seven days a week between 8am and 8pm.

EMRTS Cymru First Year Service Evaluation

According to the EMRTS Cymru First Year Evaluation Report, the Service is having a positive impact on emergency healthcare in Wales.

The report was independently scrutinised by the Farr Institute at Swansea University and is the first part of a three-year evaluation. The University is using its world-class anonymised databank to compare the Service's operational and patient recovery figures with data from 9 billion patient records worldwide. In addition, patients and relevant NHS Wales and emergency service representatives are asked for their opinion of the service.

The first-year results indicate that:

- by taking the emergency room to the patient, the Service has shortened the time it takes for somebody who is critically ill to receive consultant-led treatment.
- more people in Wales, in rural and urban areas, now have equal access to timely consultant-led treatment during an emergency incident, and can be immediately transported to specialist care at healthcare facilities across Wales and beyond.
- the Service has relieved some pressure on frontline NHS emergency services. It has significantly improved the time it takes for a patient to be taken for a CT scan and/or emergency surgery. In addition, the Service has reduced timely and costly transfers between hospitals by taking patients directly to the appropriate specialist care.
- the Service has supported the development of skills and knowledge in critical care for NHS Wales employees, both during emergency incidents and by organising regular training opportunities.

Evidence of long-term patient health benefits will be presented fully in the year two and year three evaluations, however, the first-year report offers international evidence that suggests advanced emergency care at the scene of an incident or at a peripheral hospital improves the chances, and speed, of patient recovery.

As part of its findings, the report clearly identified an opportunity to further enhance the equity of access to the Service by introducing EMRTS Cymru into the WAA's operation in Caernarfon.

The Introduction of EMRTS to Caernarfon

The new model will be a hybrid across the Welshpool and Caernarfon bases. On any given day there will be a consultant based in one of the two above-mentioned locations. The base without the consultant will have autonomous Critical Care Practitioners who are able to offer a high level of care, above and beyond standard paramedic practice.

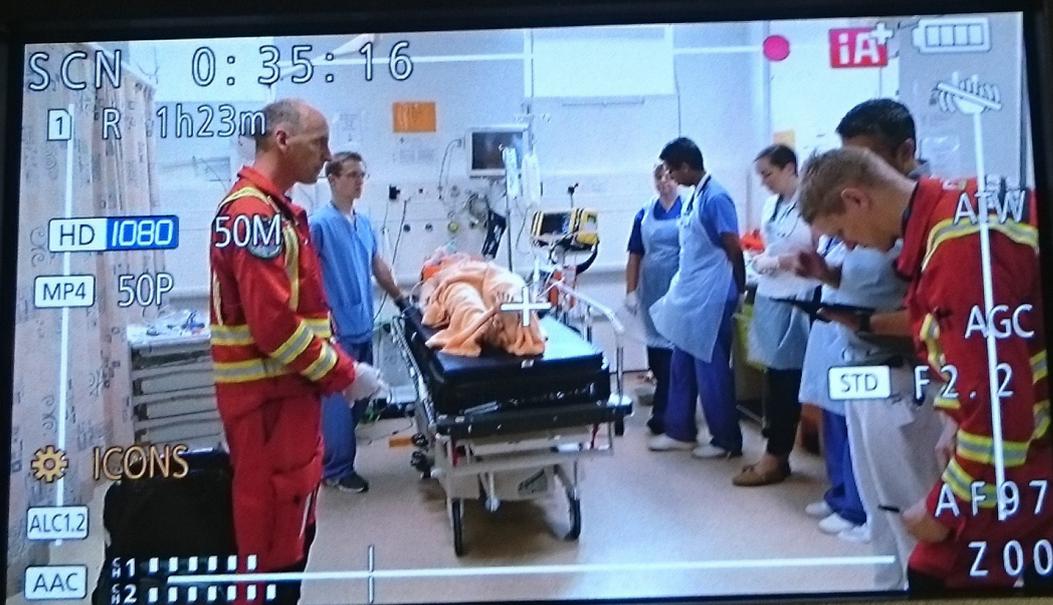
EMRTS Cymru already has a cohort of consultants working across North Wales who can facilitate the new model. Replacing the existing three paramedic positions in Caernarfon, five Critical Care Practitioners will be recruited to work from the North West Wales base. This is in addition to five CCPs who will work from the Welshpool base.

The Service will continue to run seven days a week and will be dispatched via the Air Support Desk at the Welsh Ambulance Service headquarters in Cwmbran.



Benefits of introducing EMRTS Cymru to Caernarfon

- According to the recent EMRTS Cymru First Year Evaluation, the Service has “demonstrated excellent clinical and operational governance”. This robust system of governance will be implemented at the WAA’s Caernarfon base.
- Increased access, in North Wales and parts of Powys, to the enhanced level of clinical skills and medical equipment offered by the Service.
- With the introduction of EMRTS Cymru at Caernarfon, the Wales Air Ambulance Charity will be able to launch a new H145 helicopter. This aircraft will have ‘night vision’ technology to operate in the hours of darkness and will, therefore, enhance EMRTS’ ability to attend incidents during the time frame 8am – 8pm.
- Caernarfon Airbase is well located to support the hospitals of North Wales. On a standard air ambulance helicopter, Ysbyty Gwynedd (Bangor) can be reached in five minutes, Glan Clwyd (Bodelwyddan) in fifteen minutes, and Wrexham Maelor in twenty-five minutes.
- An EMRTS Rapid Response Vehicle will be located in Caernarfon and its proximity to the road network also makes a time-critical road response a viable option in poor weather to reach patients.



Simulation Training - Wrexham Maelor Hospital

- There will be a reduced need for aircraft to operate outside of the region. An increase in the scope of practice for Helimed 61 (WAA's Caernarfon aircraft) will make it less likely that Helimed 59 (WAA's Welshpool aircraft) will be required to attend incidents in North West Wales, and less likely that both aircraft will be required to attend the same incident. This will prevent double dispatch and improve helicopter availability for other requests.
- The introduction of EMRTS to Caernarfon has the potential to enhance staff recruitment and retention. Consultant vacancies advertised with the option to work for EMRTS may improve the number and quality of applications. Adding the Service to Caernarfon would provide North Wales hospitals with an ongoing recruitment incentive.
- This new development will provide Bangor ED's Clinical Fellows with the opportunity to work alongside consultants and experience the full spectrum of UK HEMS advanced practice. This will significantly enhance the quality and attractiveness of the Clinical Fellowship programme. There is also the potential to replicate the programme across Wales.
- The Wales Pre-hospital Emergency Medicine (PHEM) training scheme has two trainees in post. Having a third EMRTS base would provide additional potential to train high-calibre individuals within Wales.
- The introduction of Critical Care Practitioners (CCPs) in Caernarfon offers the potential for clinical and skills development in North West Wales with BCUHB and WAST personnel.



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