



EEAST Community Paramedic Service - FAQs

A list of questions from recent meetings with PCNs and CCGs. The list is not exhaustive and the answers may be updated as the service offer develops over time. If you would like to know more, please contact the EEAST Business & Partnerships team at BusinessPartnerships@eastamb.nhs.uk.

1. Overall Service - Introduction

	Question	Answer
1.1	What is the EEAST Community Paramedic Service?	Community Paramedics are first contact practitioners working in the community in an MDT setting. They have enhanced clinical assessment and treatment skills and can manage patients effectively within the community. For patients who present with acute symptoms, including minor illnesses, injuries and pains a Community Paramedic would assess and manage these patients and be able to work alongside other practitioners.
1.2	When will we be able to start using the service?	We require PCNs and CCGs to work together to decide on what the community paramedic numbers would be sufficient for their neighbourhood or place. We will then internally recruit suitable candidates to the service. This process could take three months.
1.3	Who are the key contacts at EEAST for us to discuss this further?	To discuss the Community Paramedic Service within your locality, please contact businesspartnerships@eastamb.nhs.uk

2. Service Model - How will the rotation work?

	Question	Answer
2.1	What will the rotation look like?	In most cases, there will be 2 members of staff who will take it in turns to work for the PCN for 12 -13 weeks rotate back into EEAST. The PCN will be involved in the recruitment of the paramedics aligned to their PCN allowing for continuity and consistency of service. We are also exploring longer rotation periods as we have listened to the feedback of PCNs/CCGs and we will need to evaluate the impact for the staff member having a longer rotation period.
2.2	Will we have the same staff working with us in the rotation?	Yes, the PCN will have the same staff allocated to them and will be asked to be involved in the recruitment process.
2.3	Will we need to arrange an induction into our PCN?	Yes, it will be expected that the PCN offer an induction at the start of the contract. Ideally, both staff involved in the rotation will be able to attend the induction at the same time prior to the rotation beginning. The induction period will depend on the PCN's requirements.
2.4	What ongoing support will the paramedics get from EEAST?	We are offering a fully managed service including all the background management and support that we provide for all our staff, including ongoing training (eg statutory & mandatory training), staff management, HR support (including Occupational Health etc), payroll etc.
2.5	What ongoing support is expected from the PCN?	The PCN will be expected to define the work requirements for the Paramedic and then provide ongoing support in the form of clinical debriefs to enable our staff to align their practice to that of the PCN. It would be expected that there would be some form of clinical supervision or clinical debriefing at the start of the contract which would reduce once the paramedics become embedded in the work of the PCN.
2.6	Can the rotation be longer than 3 months?	This is something we are investigating. The 3 months limit enables paramedics to retain their existing terms of service in terms of pay. It also enables them to maintain their emergency care skills. However, if a longer-term rotation can be arranged, then we will consider the possibility.
2.7	Is there the option for us to have part time staff or will they have to be full time (37.5 hours per week?)	We can consider different contract hours, and this can be discussed at the outset to ensure the needs of both the Trust and the PCN are met and that a workable rotation can be established.
2.8	What hours will the Paramedics be available for?	A normal working week for a full-time paramedic is 37.5 hours. How these are utilised will be up to the PCN to determine, based on service requirements.

3. Competencies

	Question	Answer
3.1	What are the competencies of the Band 6 and Band 7 paramedics?	Band 6 and 7 paramedics are registered healthcare professionals. They are highly skilled in assessing and managing complex, undifferentiated medical complaints across all age ranges using a wide range of equipment and PGD medications. They have a well-established awareness of how the wider healthcare system operates in their local area and work within a defined scope of clinical practice. Staff looking to work within PCN teams have undertaken additional training in primary and urgent care to include in-depth patient assessment, history-taking, referral pathways and the use of a broadened suite of medications under PGD.
3.2	What are the primary care competencies of the paramedic particularly around primary care cases, history taking, examination of systems and prescribing etc?	Paramedics looking to work within PCN settings are experienced registered healthcare professionals who have undertaken further training in primary care related presentations, clinical assessment skills and history-taking, usually at university level 6 or 7 or equivalent.
3.3	Are the paramedics bound by specific duties and responsibilities? Will they be able to do work that the surgeries allocate?	They will be able to carry out duties that the PCNs allocate, remaining within their scope of practice.
3.4	Can the paramedics be used for telephone triage?	Yes – some are already experienced in telephone triage. Others will have less experience and will require some support to become established. All will possess the necessary clinical skills to contribute usefully to telephone and video consultation processes however.
3.5	Can paramedics prescribe?	Most provide medications under existing Patient Group Directions (PGDs). Here at EEAST we are embarking on our non-medical prescribing journey, with staff undertaking training at our partner universities in the near future.
3.5	How much induction will be needed before the paramedics are ready to work for us?	There will be a need for our staff to be familiarised with PCN processes, procedures and systems. Exactly what this entails will depend on a variety of factors and should be decided on at a local level.


4. Training

	Question	Answer
4.1	What qualifications do Paramedics have to have in order to be part of the service?	All paramedics are educated to degree level or equivalent, taking a minimum of 3 years to qualify before they are able to register with the HCPC. They then undertake a 2-year preceptorship. It takes 5 years to become a fully autonomous paramedic, at which point they become eligible for the service. Paramedics can then progress to undertake an MSc in Advanced Practice.
4.2	The band 6 paramedics are on a training pathway – are PCN's expected to train them?	The band 6 paramedics entering the rotation will be offered a newly created FCP Level 7 course currently being developed by HEE. This will require staff to take part in clinical debriefs which could be provided by the PCN – by medical, nursing or other practitioners - as long as they are qualified at Level 7 or above.
4.3	What training is available from EEAST?	EEAST will continue to provide staff with Statutory and Mandatory training and their annual updates of clinical skills. Staff will also have access to the full range of training and development offered by EEAST as appropriate to their training requirements.
4.4	Is there training for rotational staff from HEE – how do we access it?	HEE are developing an FCP Level 7 course aimed at developing the skills of paramedics working at Level 6 in community settings.
4.5	How much mentorship will PCNs need to provide?	PCNs will be asked, but not expected, to provide support in the form of clinical debriefs to enable the Paramedics to develop their skills within the PCN.

5. Logistics

	Question	Answer
5.1	Will the paramedics provide their own equipment?	The Community Paramedic service will not include equipment or vehicles unless this is agreed as an additional provision under the individual arrangement with the PCN/CCG.
5.2	Do they have access to a vehicle? If not, who will pay their travel expenses?	The Community Paramedic service does not include a vehicle, however, should a PCN/CCG wish the member of staff to have access to a vehicle then this should be specified with the discussions with the Business and Partnerships representative. It is our understanding that travel expenses would be provided for under a ARRS claim.

6. Finance & Contracting

	Question	Answer
6.1	What is the cost of the service?	<p>Costs are set out in the PCN engagement pack which can be found here:</p>  <p>EEAST Community Paramedic Service Inf</p>
6.2	Why is there a VAT element and can we avoid paying VAT?	<p>The VAT element is added because Paramedics are not covered by a HMRC exemption which applies to other healthcare professionals.</p> <p>The application of VAT will be required for any direct contractual arrangement with a PCN/GP practice. VAT is not normally payable when contracting with CCGs and we are pursuing commissioning arrangements with CCGs.</p>
6.3	The ARRS funding only enables salary costs to be covered. Does the price include a management cost and if so, how much is this?	<p>The price covers salary costs and on costs such as pension, national insurance etc. It also includes a contribution for the wide range of Trust management and support that will be provided throughout the rotation including ongoing training (eg statutory & mandatory training), staff management, HR support (including Occupational Health etc), payroll etc.</p>
6.4	Does the costing include cover for sickness, annual leave, time off for training etc?	<p>The cost of the service does not provide cover for abstractions such as annual leave, sickness etc.</p>
6.5	How will the service be contracted for? Will we have individual PCN contracts, or will the CCG arrange this for us?	<p>This is dependent upon locality arrangements between PCN and CCG. EEAST is happy to contract directly with PCNs, but please bear in mind that costs over and above the ARRS and VAT will be applicable.</p>
6.6	Will PCN's be able to be involved in recruiting their paramedics?	<p>Yes, we will encourage PCNs to be involved in the recruitment process, including interviewing staff as appropriate.</p>
6.7	Why do your costs appear higher than those we see in job adverts?	<p>Job adverts typically advertise the basic salary without on costs such as employer's contributions to pensions, national insurance etc. Therefore, they are not comparable to the costs borne by EEAST which include a range of on-costs and management costs.</p>

For further information about the EEAST Community Paramedic Service, please contact the Business and Partnerships Team at:

BusinessPartnerships@eastamb.nhs.uk

www.eastamb.nhs.uk

EEAST PCN Community Paramedic Service FAQs v1.2

#WeAreEEAST 