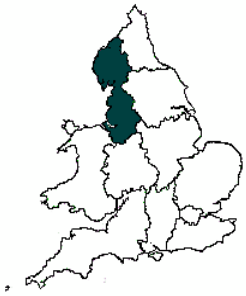


Organisation Patient Safety Incident Report

North West Ambulance Service NHS Trust

Organisation type: **Ambulance organisation**

Location: **North West SHA**

NHS
National Patient Safety Agency
National Reporting and Learning Service

PATIENT SAFETY FIRST

Organisation not signed up to PSF
Find out more[1]

Are you actively encouraging reporting of incidents?

The comparative reporting rate summary shown below provides an overview of incidents reported by your organisation to the National Reporting and Learning System (RLS) between 1 October 2008 and 31 March 2009. 130 incidents were reported during this period.

Organisations that report more incidents usually have a better and more effective safety culture. You can't learn and improve if you don't know what the problems are. So:

- Encourage staff to report things that go wrong. Don't shoot the messenger!
- Make it easy to report and provide feedback. Make reporting useful!
- Use national comparative data from the RLS to better understand the reporting and learning culture in your organisation.
- Review steps your organisation can take to make reporting matter.

Tips to help you: *Act on reporting: five actions to improve reporting; Questions are the answer! Seven questions every board member should ask about patient safety at:* www.nrls.npsa.nhs.uk/

How regularly do you report?

Your organisation reported incidents to the Reporting and Learning System (RLS) in 3 out of the 6 months between October 2008 and March 2009.

Report regularly: Incident reports should be submitted to the RLS at least monthly.

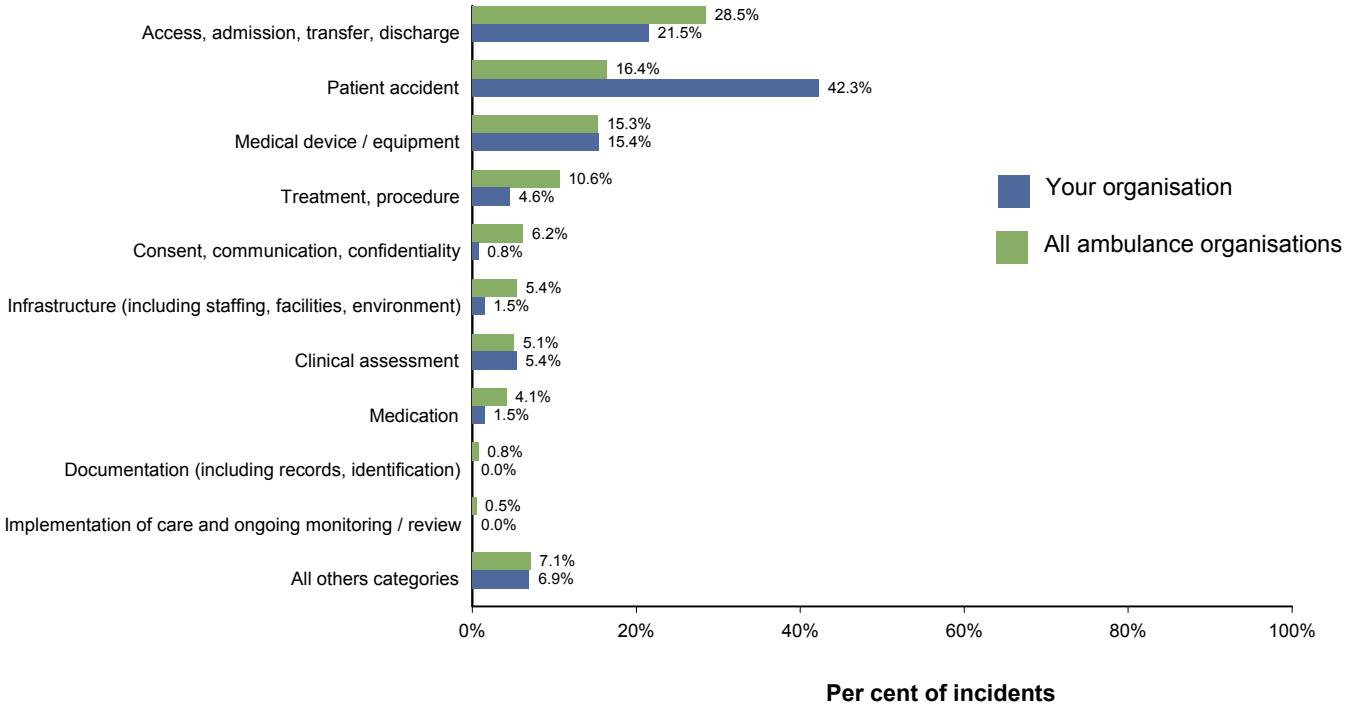
Fifty percent of all incidents were submitted to the RLS more than 57 days after the incident occurred. In your organisation, 50% of incidents were submitted more than 111 days after the incident occurred.

Report serious incidents quickly: It is vital that staff report serious safety risks promptly so that lessons can be learned and action taken to prevent harm to others.

1 www.patientsafetyfirst.nhs.uk

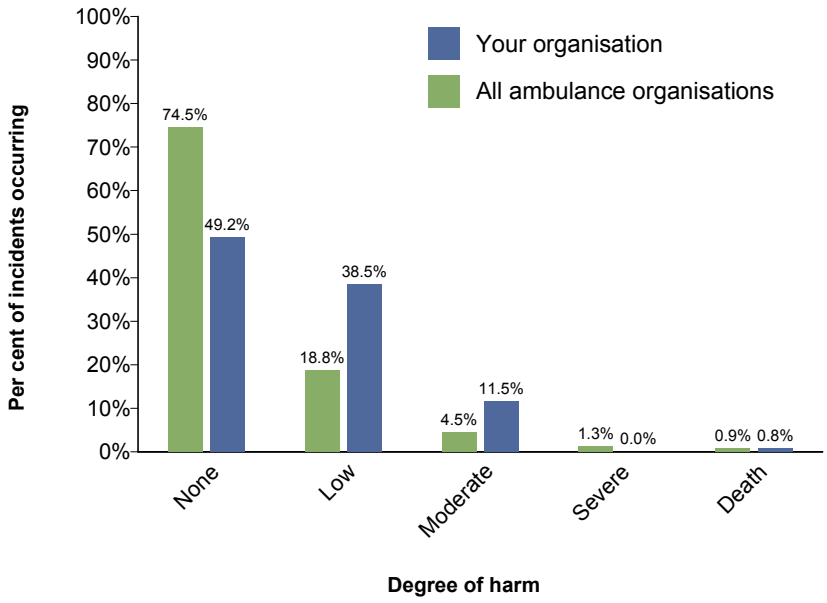
What type of incidents are reported in your organisation?

Figure 2: Top 10 incident types



If your reporting profile looks different from similar organisations, this could reflect differences in reporting culture, the type of services provided or patients cared for. It could also be pointing you to high risk areas. The response system is more important than the reporting system.

Figure 3: Incidents reported by degree of harm for ambulance organisations



Your figures:	None	Low	Moderate	Severe	Death
	64	50	15	0	1

Do you learn from patient safety incidents?

- Investigate incidents thoroughly so that you can identify contributing factors, identify root causes and successfully implement recommendations.
- Train staff on investigation techniques such as root cause analysis or significant event audit.
- Provide board members should receive regular reports of investigations and implementation plans.
- Go to www.nrls.npsa.nhs.uk/ references, tools and guidance on how to deliver patient care safely.

Do you understand harm?

Nationally, 66 per cent of incidents are reported as no harm, and just over 1 per cent as severe harm or death. However, not all organisations apply the national coding of degree of harm in a consistent way, which can make comparison of harm profiles of organisations difficult.

- A consistent approach to coding of degree of harm ensures that we can compare and analyse data in order to set clear priorities for national learning.
- Organisations should record actual harm to patients rather than potential degree of harm.

Further information for you

We help the NHS to understand why, what and how patient safety incidents happen, learn from these experiences and take action to prevent future harm to patients. National data from the RLS can be found at: www.nrls.npsa.nhs.uk/organisationdata/.