



Dear primary care colleagues,

London Ambulance Service (LAS) is expanding our First Contact Practitioner (FCP) Paramedic Programme. This is a collaborative scheme where trainee FCP paramedics rotate between **Primary Care Networks (PCNs)** and the ambulance service, delivering care and sharing experience and expertise between the primary care and ambulance settings.

Paramedics have expertise in assessing and treating undifferentiated and undiagnosed patients within the ambulance service, with many skills transferable to primary care. Trainee FCPs undertake postgraduate education to meet the requirements of the Health Education England/NHS England '[Roadmap to Practice](#)' and spend 50% of their time within a PCN to consolidate their learning and gain experience in assessing and treating patients, with clinical supervision to support their development.

As the FCP paramedics gain confidence with the transition to work in primary care, they become an integral part of multi-disciplinary teams and are able to undertake acute illness clinics, home visits and long term condition reviews. Having completed their formal education, FCP paramedics are able to work autonomously, with clinical support to enable ongoing development.

More patients are now presenting to ambulance services with chronic and lower acuity conditions, often with complex comorbidities. The experience and skills gained by FCP paramedics enable our service to better meet the needs of these patients, deliver care in the community and reduce demands on general practice and emergency departments.

We are currently looking for expressions of interest from PCNs across all London boroughs. Please find attached a brochure which provides more details. If your PCN is interested in finding out more about this opportunity for collaborative working, please email - londamb.las-fcpexternal@nhs.net and our team will reply to arrange a meeting.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Andrew Hichisson

Clinical Practice Development Manager
and Advanced Paramedic Practitioner
(Urgent Care)

Dr Ruth Tinson

Assistant Medical Director and GP





First Contact Practitioner Paramedic Programme

Rotational
model

Collaborative
working

Clinical
skills

FCP
perspective

PCN
perspective

Find out
more





First Contact Practitioner (FCP) Paramedic Programme

LAS First Contact Practitioner Paramedic Programme

London Ambulance Service (LAS) recognises the importance and benefits that collaborative working brings to patients, staff and services. The Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme (ARRS) has provided LAS with the opportunity to support primary care networks (PCN) and enable a closer working relationship across the NHS.

The FCP-Paramedic programme supports the LAS strategy of providing the right care in the right place; offering an individualised clinical response to our patients; and development of rotational working for our clinicians.

Since 2020, LAS has been working with PCNs across London on a rotational model that enables paramedics to practice 50% of their time with LAS and 50% of their time within a PCN. LAS has worked with PCNs and partner universities to provide supervision and formal education, which supports the development of paramedics in primary care. The formal education provided follows the [NHS Health Education England Roadmap to becoming an FCP in primary care](#). This has been with the support of a clinical supervisor in the PCN.

A clinical supervisor is required for each trainee FCP-Paramedic whilst working within a PCN. The supervisor must provide regular contact and supervision throughout the training period; please see page 6 of this document for an outline of requirements and please get in contact for further details. The named supervisor does not need to be present every day the trainee FCP Paramedic works at the PCN. However, there needs to be a daily named supervisor the trainee FCP Paramedic can contact for support for each day they are working at the PCN. On successful completion of the university course, the paramedic will gain a nationally accredited FCP qualification.

As of January 2024 there are 42 Paramedics working within the programme in PCNs across the five London Intergrated Care Board (ICB) areas.

Rotational working

Paramedics work a split rota with 50% of their time in LAS and 50% within the PCN. Therefore, each paramedic working in a PCN will be a 0.5 whole time equivalent (WTE). Ideally two paramedics will rotate to provide continuous cover in the PCN in one WTE post. After qualification it is anticipated the paramedics will continue in the rotation with their training PCN. ARRS funding is available for FCP Paramedics.



First Contact Practitioner role in a PCN

The work a FCP Paramedic undertakes in a PCN varies from practice to practice. Possible options include:

- Acute home visiting service
- Care home ward rounds
- One the day clinics for acute conditions
- Advance care planning conversations
- Long term condition reviews
- COPD/ asthma reviews
- Phlebotomy
- ECGs, BP checks
- Diabetic clinical reviews and foot checks
- Learning disability, dementia health checks
- Visiting house-bound or vulnerable patients
- And much more





The PCN perspective on FCP Paramedics

“They are an excellent addition to the team.

“They help with GP workload by seeing patients of all ages with acute respiratory illnesses, injuries, acute skin infections, acute abdominal pain etc.

“Patients are typically triaged to FCP-Paramedics with acute problems where they undertake a competent history and examination. Diagnosis and management of the patient is then discussed with a GP before confirming with a patient - if the GP needs to provide additional input they will do so immediately.”

Dr Vinay Patel – Springfield PCN

“I have found them to be a brilliant asset to the team.

“They can confidently and competently manage most acute illness, and risk stratify patients effectively. They are experts in assessing patients at home and often their skills in this area are greater than GPs.

“I have found their practice to be extremely safe. They know their limits of competence and ask for advice appropriately. We've had really good feedback from patients about their care.

“I'm so thankful to the PCN for providing us with such fabulous paramedics which so beautifully complement our team and our ability to offer our patients first rate care.”

Dr Jacob Opat – Springfield PCN

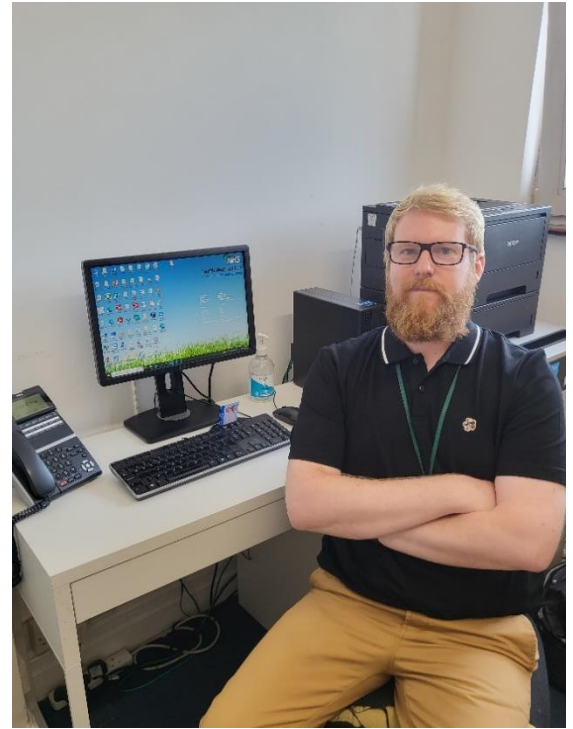
The FCP perspective

Christopher West, Trainee FCP

“I absolutely love my role as a trainee FCP Paramedic.

“Not only does it allow me a greater work-life balance, but I feel that my clinical practice has developed significantly over the last year. Wider knowledge and skill has been so helpful, including but not limited to urinalysis, otoscopy and venepuncture.

“I work within a supportive team to primarily deliver a home visiting service for frail, vulnerable and immobile patients. I find being able to follow a patient’s journey from initial consultation to diagnosis and treatment incredibly rewarding.”



Ben Thackwell, Qualified FCP

“I have found the new role a challenging but positive experience and have benefited from an improved perspective of primary care and a balance in the type of work I do. Working jointly with the LAS has been a good move for me as I have maintained the skills I have worked hard to achieve, whilst being able to find my way in another role.

“The experience gained as a Paramedic is put to good use straight away in Primary Care and will only be built on as you find what you can bring to the role. We are the perfect clinicians to work through acute conditions (lower respiratory tract infections, ear infections, rashes) and manage longer term conditions. This is a developing role and it's great to be helping shape the future of Paramedics in Primary Care”.





Supervision requirements

- By nature of their role, Paramedics have limited primary care experience. Whilst their skills are transferrable, as with any change in role, it will take time for them to transition. When they start their rotation the trainee FCP Paramedic will need a greater amount of clinical supervision. This will decrease as they gain more knowledge and confidence.
- Individual requirements will vary and learning needs should be documented as they are identified.
- LAS currently works with the University of Cumbria to provide the educational provision. Their requirements are that a trainee FCP Paramedic will require **50 hours of formally documented supervision** by the PCN during a 12-month period which includes the completion of Clinical Observation Tools (COTs) and Clinical Examination & Procedural Skills (CEPS).
 - This can include debriefs post patient assessment and consultation, case-based discussions, tutorials, direct observation in clinic or on home visits.
- Although the paramedics have at least five years ambulance service experience, they are new to primary care and will require a suitable induction period.
 - An induction guide can be provided on request.
- Who can provide supervision?
 - The University of Cumbria requires the trainee FCP Paramedic to be supervised by a GP or an Advanced Care Practitioner with an MSc.

Study Leave

- Whilst the trainee FCP Paramedic undertakes their formal education programme, paid study leave is provided by the **PCN (70 hours) and LAS (140 hours)**.





Contracts

- One-year contracts
- Rotational working
- Working patterns
 - Each Paramedic will work 50% with LAS and 50% with a PCN on a rotational basis (e.g. 3 weeks rotations / 1 week PCN then 1 week LAS)
 - 1 Paramedic = 0.5WTE
- LAS can only provide contracts to legal entities, e.g. limited corporations
- FCP Paramedics are not to provide or administer medications or vaccinations. This can incur VAT which the PCN will be liable for

Costing

- Subject to Agenda for Change with an additional 10% management fee
- Trainee FCP Paramedic – Band 6, intermediate step point +
- Qualified FCP Paramedic – Band 7, entry step point +
 - Also subject to inner and outer London costing
- Please [click here](#) for agenda for change banding
- [ARRS funding available](#)
- E-bikes available for FCP Paramedics subject to cost and storage suitability





Want to know more?

This is an exciting opportunity for your PCN to work collaboratively with LAS to improve patient outcomes, develop professional relationships and support your workforce.

If your PCN is interested in employing a trainee or qualified FCP Paramedic, then get in contact via: londamb.las-fcpexternal@nhs.net

Our team will get in contact to provide more information and organise a meeting as required.

Paramedics are part of your general practice team

They can help by:

- Assessing and treating certain health conditions
- Attending home visits
- Ordering tests and interpreting results



Our
Values &
Behaviours

We have sought to embed our values of **caring, respect and teamwork** into the FCP team. We seek to be a welcoming and inclusive team that reflects the city we serve.

Contact us: londamb.las-fcpexternal@nhs.net