

For the Record – Press Statements

Publication	Express and Star
Date of article	Monday 8 th January 2014
Reporter	Tim Spiers
Headline	What is going on at your A&E?
First paragraph/s of article	The worst it's ever been – that's the message from health bosses today as A&E units reach crisis point
Paragraphs relating to The Dudley Group	<p>Page 1 Russells Hall Hospital in Dudley has endured its 'worst few days ever'.</p> <p>At Russells Hall Hospital staff have endured their 'worst days ever'.</p> <p>Chief executive Paula Clark said the trust was the only one in the Midlands to meet the target of seeing 95 per cent of patients within four hours before Christmas</p> <p>But she added: "Since the new year we've had our worst few days ever. We've found the target really challenging and staff are under immense pressure. In just one day we saw 135 ambulances against the predicted 90. The number of patients over the age of 80 continues to rise."</p> <p>Page 6 At Russells Hall Hospital, which was one of the best-performing in the country in December, chief executive Paula Clark paid tribute to staff.</p> <p>She said: "My hat goes off to our staff; everybody is rolling up their sleeves and doing their bit to help. In the last week I, myself, have been pushing patients on trolleys and so have many other managers. It's been a real team effort."</p>
Press enquiry	<p>The Express and Star contacted the Trust about the winter pressures facing our emergency services.</p> <p>The Express and Star asked the following:</p>

- Has there been an increase in the number of people visiting A&E in December compared with the same period in 2013?
- How have we coped with these attendances
- What advice would we give to people considering A&E?

Trust response

COMMENT FROM PAULA CLARK, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, THE DUDLEY GROUP NHS FOUNDATION TRUST

I would like to pay tribute to our hardworking nurses, doctors, managers and ancillary staff who have worked tirelessly together to help the Trust achieve the four-hour A&E target for quarter 3 (October – December 2014).

By pulling together and treating weekends as weekdays, we met the 95 per cent target despite seeing the highest number of ambulances in December ever (3,089 ambulances compared to the average in the previous 12 months of 2,611 which is a massive 18 per cent increase). We were the only Trust in the Midlands to meet the target, and we were in the top 12 of district general hospitals nationally.

However, since the New Year we have had our worst few days ever. We have found the target really challenging and our staff have been put under immense pressure. In just one day we saw 135 ambulances against the predicted 90, and the number patients over the age of 80 with multiple and complex conditions continue to rise.

In common with many trusts across the country we have cancelled some planned operations to free up beds for emergency patients and to take the strain off A&E. My hat goes off to our staff; everybody is rolling up their sleeves and doing their bit to help. In the last week I, myself, have been pushing patients on trolleys and so have many other managers. It's been a real team effort.

We have used some of our £2.4 million winter funding to pay for a GP to work in the department to triage and treat patients with less urgent needs, keeping A&E free for those who really need it.

We hope these measures, along with the tremendous hard work of our committed staff, will help us get back on an even keel. We would ask patients to do their bit as well and only attend A&E if they have a real emergency or are facing a life-threatening condition. They should think twice before coming to Russells Hall Hospital and consider other options such as their GP, local pharmacist or walk-in centre.

December 2014	Comparison to December 2013
Week ending 7 th Dec 2014 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2007 attendances • 96.1% seen, treated, admitted or discharged within 4 hours • Joint 8th best performing nationally 	Week ending 8 th Dec 2013 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1779 attendances • 228 more attendances in 2014 compared to 2013
Week ending 14 th Dec 2014 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1998 attendances • 94.8% seen, treated, admitted or discharged within 4 hours • 7th best performing nationally (only six Trusts met the target this week) 	Week ending 15 th Dec 2013 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1877 attendances • 121 more attendances in 2014 compared to 2013
Week ending 21 st Dec 2014 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2148 attendances • 95.9% seen, treated, admitted or discharged within 4 hours • 6th best performing nationally 	Week ending 22 nd Dec 2013 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1848 attendances • 300 more attendances in 2014 compared to 2013
Week ending 28 th Dec 2014 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1858 attendances • 96.4% seen, treated, admitted or discharged within 4 hours • Joint 4th best performing nationally 	Week ending 29 th Dec 2013 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1737 attendances • 121 more attendances in 2014 compared to 2013

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