NHS and ambulance

East of England Ambulance Service cuts 21 frontline ambulances

GMB Union has seen a letter from the East of England Ambulance Service Trust (EEAST) confirming it has axed 21 front line emergency ambulances from the front line, with no plans to replace them.

Patient safety has again been put at risk following a decision by EEAST to scale back their contract with Medicare EMS – a provider of ambulances and ambulance staff – due to cost.

As a result, 41 members of frontline ambulance staff were made redundant on the 1 April, with EEAST only giving Medicare EMS 6 weeks to comply and inform the staff affected.

This decision comes after EEAST was issued a notice by the CQC for failing to meet its Category 2 targets, which relate to 999 calls for incidents such as strokes, chest pains, and suspected sepsis.

The redundant staff, who have in some cases worked on behalf of EEAST for years, have been encouraged to apply for other roles in the Trust, which would see them start as day one employees.

Donna Thomas, GMB Regional Organiser, said:

“EEAST has demonstrated once again a blatant disregard for patient safety.

“Their decision to remove ambulances and staff from the frontline could put lives at risk.

“These specially trained ambulance staff have been responding to over 2000 calls every month on EEAST behalf for the last 2 years.

“They should have been offered the opportunity to transfer elsewhere in the Trust, without the delay of having to apply externally for vacancies which can take a significant amount of time.”

Press office

07958 156846

press.office@gmb.org.uk

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info@gmb.org.uk