

1 in 4 ambulance workers witness death due to delays



One in four ambulance workers has witnessed a death due to delays in the past three years.

The poll of almost 3,000 ambulance workers across the UK found that:

- 24.4 per cent of ambulance workers had witnessed a death due to delays during the past three years
- A further third (31 per cent) know of a case where this has happened
- Almost half (43 per cent) spent an entire shift waiting outside A&E in past three years



- 82 per cent have suffered verbal abuse in the past three years, with 33 per cent suffering physical attacks

- 70 per cent have considered leaving the service in the past year

The survey, completed by ambulance workers, control centre workers and 999 and 111 call handlers, included harrowing testimony from the front line of emergency healthcare.

One worker described being first on the scene at a cardiac arrest, which had been coded 'yellow' for ten hours, to find the patient dead, in rigor mortis with the phone ringing in his hands.



Other workers describe patients 'regularly' dying in hospital corridors, patients being left for 'days' outside in ambulances and patients being told it would be quicker for them to make their own way to hospital, and then dying on route. [See Notes to Editors for selected ambulance workers testimony]

The results will be discussed at GMB's annual congress in Bournemouth, where ambulance workers will take to the stage today.

Rachel Harrison, GMB National Secretary, said:

"These terrible, harrowing stories from our ambulance workers members lay bare the horrifying state of our NHS.

"Fourteen years of the Conservative's disastrous austerity experiment, rocketing demand and ambulance workers draining away from the profession has left a service barely able to cope.

"Whoever wins the election next month, we need to properly invest in our NHS if we want to keep it alive – and that starts first and foremost by investing in the workers themselves."



Press office

07958 156846

press.office@gmb.org.uk

Member requiring help?

Click to contact your local GMB Region

info@gmb.org.uk

