

AMBEX 2006
Wednesday 28 – Friday 30 June
Harrogate International Centre, Harrogate, UK
www.ambex.net

AMBEX 2006: A superb learning experience

AMBEX, the annual conference and exhibition in Harrogate for all professionals working in pre-hospital and emergency care saw a new format for the event that focused on the choices, challenges and changes facing the sector. For the first time, the exhibition took place during the business week from Wednesday 28th to Friday 30th June while the AMBEX conference, organised by the Ambulance Service Association and the 999 EMS Research Forum and supported by the Department of Health, took place as a full 2-day programme on the Thursday and Friday.

Over 100 leading suppliers of emergency care equipment and out-of-hospital services took part with 51 new exhibitors including Masimo, VidaCare and Bound Tree Medical. Products being showcased included life support solutions, medical supplies, lightbars, patient handling and patient safety equipment, patient transport solutions, breathing apparatus products, burn treatment products, protective clothing, portable emergency structures, resuscitation equipment, secure storage solutions, training equipment, vehicles and warning systems to name but a few.

Pacific Helmets (PH) were delighted to report on the order of over one thousand new CAD designed F7A helmets for East Midlands Ambulance Service (EMAS). EMAS had originally approached PH at AMBEX 2005 on the possibility of upgrading the spec of their current helmet to a more lightweight, customised and acoustically improved personalised model. With its fully retractable interracial visor and increased side and rear neck coverage, the new helmet gives ambulance crews greater protection. Anthony Maloney, managing director of Pacific Helmets said *'PH would like to take this opportunity to thank EMAS for choosing a Pacific product and wish them all the best for the future with their new helmet'*.

On the Thursday, outside the main entrance to Halls A and M, Jones and Bartlett Publishers demonstrated a typical scenario from the Paediatric Education for Pre-hospital Professionals (PEPP) course. The scenario involved a young child and a car and was designed to help paramedics in the next situation they encountered involving an injured child. Active participation in the demonstration was acceptable to the CPD portfolio through the British Paramedic Association (BPA).

A brand new free seminar programme was on offer to all visitors to the exhibition in the presentation theatre in Hall M involving CPD accredited sessions by the BPA and demonstrations such as the application of prosthetic wounds. Attendees received advice on how on to manage their CPD portfolio and practice in producing a personal profile. Many sessions encouraged visitors to participate in the debate on topics such as Clinical Accountability, Paramedics Prescribing and the way forward for delivery of healthcare to patients out of hospital.

Simulaid's organised for NHS Ambulance staff to refresh their skills by practicing external jugular vein cannulation, airway management using LMA, auscultation and intraosseous needle insertion on training manikins in an Emergency Hospital Shelter provided by Blue-Med. Tutors from East Midlands Ambulance Service and Lancashire Teaching Hospital were on hand to advise and instruct.

'A superb learning experience once again' said visitor Dr Rosanne Wrench, general practitioner from Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire.

The National Patient Safety Agency in collaboration with the Ambulance Service Association and with support from the Helen Hamlyn Trust have initiated a research and consultation programme to identify key issues and map out design criteria for ambulance of the future. The Agency presented the findings of the project so far at AMBEX and visitors were encouraged to give their input to help guide the development of future ambulances.

A poster exhibition in Hall C brought together a collection of poster presentations that demonstrated aspects of high quality or innovative patient care, policy and practice through the UK and further a field. This also included posters from the Ambulance Service Association and the 999 EMS Research Forum, which aims to encourage, promote and disseminate research and evidence based policy in practice in 999 healthcare.

AMBEX TV, a new feature for AMBEX 2006, was broadcast on plasma screens around the exhibition and also in the local hotels. This incorporated up to the minute policy and issue-based programmes on what really matters for the future of the ambulance service.

Yorkshire Air Ambulance's new generation twin engine MD902 helicopter could also be seen on operation for the first time this year from The Stray during each day of the exhibition.

The AMBEX Conference this year was jointly organised by the Ambulance Service Association and the 999 EMS Research Forum with a flexible registration system and related pricing structures to allow delegates to attend on particular days and for specific sessions. Key speakers included Sir Ian Curruthers, Interim Chief Executive of the NHS, Professor Roger Boyle CBE, National Clinical Director for Heart Disease, Department of Health, Andrew Lansley CBE, MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Health, Lord Warner of Brockley, Minister of State for Reform and Peter Bradley CBE, Chief Executive of the London Ambulance Service NHS Trust and National Ambulance Advisor to the Department of Health.

The full two day conference programme included seminars on the Statutory Regulation for ECPs, the Development of a Curriculum Framework for a National Qualification and the Modernisation of Children's Healthcare Services and the Role of the Ambulance Service.

With the development and implementation of the recommendations and proposals set out in 'Taking Healthcare to the Patient – Transforming Ambulance Services' (Department of Health, June 2005) and the NHS Ambulance Service undergoing a radical transformation of the way it works and services it delivers, AMBEX 2006 provided a vital forum in which to hear more about and debate the changes and developments taking place. AMBEX is a unique meeting place for people involved at all levels in the pre-hospital and emergency healthcare sector and is a major focus for learning, information exchange, debate and networking.

Richard Diment, Chief Executive of the Ambulance Service Association commented 'AMBEX 2006 was a great success. The feedback from conference delegates, visitors, speakers and exhibitors has all been very positive. The timing, on the three days preceding, the biggest ever re-organisation of NHS ambulance services in England was perfect. It meant that all the key stakeholders were together at the

crucial moment. AMBEX left them enthused and eager to deliver the new vision of ambulance services taking healthcare to the patient.'

-ends-

Notes to Editor:

AMBEX 2006 and the ASA Annual Conference took place at Harrogate International Centre, Harrogate, North Yorkshire, UK from 28-30 June. AMBEX 2007 will take place from 27-29 June 2007 in Harrogate.

For enquiries regarding the ASA Annual Conference, please contact the Ambulance Service Association on 020 7928 9620.

For enquiries regarding the exhibition, please contact Jude Coverdale at Brintex on 020 7973 6671 or by email at j.coverdale@hgluk.com

Enc. AMBEX 2006 logo + images