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Dear colleague

## Being the Best update

I am writing to update you on our Being the Best improvement plans (approved at our Board meeting in March 2013).

### Background

You will recall our plans are to implement 108 community ambulance stations (CAS), 18 ambulance stations and nine hubs across the East Midlands. The aim, to provide a better service for patients by improving clinical standards and performance, and providing better facilities, communications, engagement and support for frontline colleagues. The changes to our estate (bricks and mortar) will allow us to achieve this and provide strategically located premises to improve our operational performance.

### Twinning of stations

The September EMAS Trust Board meeting will see members discuss the further twinning of stations – an interim measure which involves staff using one station as a base rather than two.

This means when crews are moved from one station and twinned with another, they will start their shift by picking up their emergency ambulance vehicle from the station they are moved to. They will then either respond to a 999 call received at the start of their shift or move to a strategic stand-by point (as they often do now) which, as they are introduced, will include the use of community ambulance stations, and await the next 999 call.

Two station twinings have already taken place in Nottinghamshire with no derogation of local ambulance service or provision; West Bridgford crews now start and end their shift at Wilford station and Arnold crews now start and end at Carlton station and the crews continue to respond to emergency calls in the local area.

The March 2013 meeting paper referred to this interim twinning solution and confirmed that the full benefits of Being the Best would only be achieved when implementing the preferred option i.e. when the 108 CAS, 18 ambulance stations and nine hubs are in place.

### What difference does 'twinning' make to local people?

There will be no difference to local people and no derogation of local ambulance service or provision. Twinning is an interim measure which helps us deliver the aims of Being the Best. We continue to respond to local 999 calls as we do now i.e. by getting the nearest available ambulance resource to them as quickly as possible.

### What difference does 'twinning' make to frontline staff?

Stations not being twinned: The only difference these colleagues will experience is the potential to have more access to a divisional manager. Less stations means we can reduce the time our team leaders and locality



managers spend travelling from site to site. The increase in access to a manager for frontline crews has always been part of our Being the Best plans to improve staff welfare and support.

Stations receiving additional crews: These colleagues will clearly experience an increase in people who are based with them (bearing in mind not all colleagues are on duty at the same time). Work is in progress to ensure these stations are in a fit state to accommodate the additional numbers eg there are enough lockers and toilet facilities. There will be no overcrowding though as most of our stations are empty most of the time i.e. crews spend the vast majority of their shift 'on the road'.

Stations to be vacated: These colleagues will clearly be affected the most; they will continue to respond to emergency 999 calls in fast response cars and double crewed ambulances that operate in their local area, however they will start and end their shift at a different location.

We understand that change is never easy and at EMAS we are experiencing significant developments in all areas of our service. We are supporting our colleagues through this by providing opportunities to attend station engagement meetings and to have a one-to-one meeting with a member of their local management team.

### Which stations are being twinned?

The Estate Strategy update will be reviewed by our Trust Board at its meeting on Monday 30 September. The meeting paper will be available on our website – [www.emas.nhs.uk](http://www.emas.nhs.uk) - from Tuesday 24 September and will include stations to be twinned.

We will continue to keep you informed as plans progress and hope that you have found this latest update useful.

Yours sincerely

Jon Sargeant  
**Acting Chief Executive**