

Ten trusts forked out £235 million on private ambulances



The fact ambulance trusts spent almost a quarter of a billion pounds on privatised emergency and non-emergency patient transport in just three years is a disgrace

Ten trusts in England forked out £235 million on private ambulances in just three years, a shock GMB study has found.

According to FOI requests sent by GMB, the 10 ambulance trusts in England stumped up almost a quarter of a billion pounds between them on both emergency and non-emergency patient transport.

[1]



South Central Ambulance Service spent almost a whopping £69 million between 2015 and 2018 on private providers such as UKSAS, ERS, Sites AS, Jigsaw, SSG UK and MEDI4. [Contact GMB press office for more details of providers].

South East Coast Ambulance trust spent more than £35 million, while North West ambulance Service spent almost £30 million.

| Trust | 15/16 | 16/17 | 17/18 | Total |
|--------|----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| SCAS | £19,200,603.00 | £21,147,951.00 | £29,264,869.00 | £69,613,423.00 |
| SECAMB | £13,626,000.00 | £11,176,000.00 | £10,725,000.00 | £35,527,000.00 |
| NWAS | £10,342,224.00 | £10,414,828.00 | £8,717,333.00 | £29,474,385.00 |
| LAS | £13,056,458.00 | £8,441,249.00 | £5,863,857.00 | £27,361,564.00 |
| EEAS | £5,577,987.66 | £12,843,072.79 | £3,017,925.08 | £21,438,985.53 |
| SWAS | £5,424,275.00 | £5,538,791.00 | £4,739,643.00 | £15,702,709.00 |
| YAS | £7,046,000.00 | £4,883,000.00 | £1,216,000.00 | £13,145,000.00 |
| EMAS | £6,602,000.00 | £740,000.00 | £4,156,000.00 | £11,498,000.00 |
| NEAS | £4,595,421.00 | £3,178,838.00 | £3,017,169.00 | £10,791,428.00 |
| WMAS | £602,123.00 | £447,890.30 | £308,143.20 | £1,358,156.50 |
| | | | | |
| Total | £86,073,091.66 | £78,811,620.09 | £71,025,939.28 | £235,910,651.03 |

Rachel Harrison, GMB National Officer, said:

“The fact ambulance trusts spent almost a quarter of a billion pounds on private ambulance services in just three years is a disgrace.

“This is cash used not just to transport patients, but to cover accidents and emergencies as well.

“This is money that could and should have been spent on recruitment and retention of staff and the purchase and operation of new vehicles to replace the ageing fleet in many trusts.



“People are not being recruited as fast as demand is rising, leading to a dependence on private providers.”

“GMB has members in these private companies and they tell us of underequipped ambulances, poorly maintained, staffed by over worked and underpaid, and sometimes untrained staff.

“We believe all ambulance services – including patient transport – should be delivered by properly trained and supported NHS professionals.

“GMB calls on Ambulance Trusts to stop giving contracts to private companies and to bring all out sourced work back in house.

“The UK public deserves the best of care, and NHS staff are best placed to deliver it.”

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