

Sussex patient transport 'moving closer to crisis'



Once again hard-working staff and GMB members are made to suffer for Sussex Commissioners dithering

As yet another Sussex Patient Transport Service provider has gone bust in Sussex, as Regional Clinical commissioners remain non-committal towards the future of Patient transport services in the county.

Medi 1 are the latest Sussex Private PTS provider to go to the wall after getting into financial difficulties leaving around 30 staff and GMB members unpaid and without work, when staff found themselves being notified that the company had gone into receivership late on Friday 31st.



GMB the union for Patient transport services continue to campaign and press commissioners to commit to NHS Provider South Central Ambulance service (SCAS) and the patients of Sussex by awarding the NHS provider the security of a 5 year minimum contract

The provider will be able to continue with developing a full in-house NHS model of provision and not the current hybrid model where SCAS have to manage the expectations and profit driven desires of private shareholders alongside the needs of patients and the staff who deliver the service.



paramedic

Gary Palmer, GMB Regional Organiser said:

“Medi 1 has now become the latest in a long line of failed private contractors working on the CCG’s hybrid model of Non-emergency patient transport services being delivered across Sussex.

“As before staff and their families now have to endure the brunt of profit driven business failures and need to find new work immediately, whilst struggling without the money they are owed and desperately need to get by on while they do so.

“GMB of course are back out doing what it does best, when private profiteers shut up shop and leave staff without assistance here in Sussex by supporting those who need us, as we press other providers to get involved and help.

“Our concern is that they Medi 1 just like others who have failed before, will simply re-present itself to the market in another form and just expect to pick up and secure work from ill-informed commissioners keen to tick boxes by cutting further finances from an already squeezed sector.

“What is also shocking is that the CCG’s, Adam Doyle the Chief Executive Officer for the eight CCGs in Sussex and East Surrey and his complex commissioning team learn absolutely nothing every time another failure happens within the contracts private sector, as Medi 1 are added to the roll call of other failed providers such as Coperforma, Docklands, Langfords and Thames Ambulance amongst others whilst the contract has been in their charge.



Paramedic

“The only PTS constant remains SCAS and thank heavens for that but Sussex Patient Transport Services is moving closer towards a crisis point.

“GMB’s real concern is that will the CCG’s lack of commitment and grip on finding the right solution in securing full NHS provision through South Central continuing in their role long term mean, should SCAS suddenly seek to end their association with PTS services here in the county – and the indecision of the CCG’s in Sussex means I wouldn’t be surprised if they eventually have had enough – leaves the GMB



adamant that we can't allow that to happen, it wouldn't be good for staff and our members and it would be a disaster for Patients who currently are seeing some of the best service levels in the history of PTS in Sussex, and it would be possibly mean the end of NHS provision for ever in Sussex.

"We could no matter how hard it might seem to be to believe it, find ourselves in a worse position than the Coperforma days, and they were about as awful as anyone could imagine.

"The CCG's must back the GMB in putting all doubts around this at times ill-fated contract to an end joining us in saying to those seeking to make money from Sussex NHS services, disregarding both high standard service levels and staff welfare by saying you no longer welcome here, this is an wholly in House NHS provision only, for the benefit of the patients and not profits.

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