

## Appendix 2

# Addendum to the NHS Constitution



**THE NHS**  
**CONSTITUTION**  
the NHS belongs to us all

## ADDENDUM TO

### THE HANDBOOK TO THE NHS CONSTITUTION FOR ENGLAND, PUBLISHED ON 27 JULY 2015

Page 33 of the Handbook relates to the pledge:

“The NHS commits to provide convenient, easy access to services within the waiting times set out in this Handbook to the NHS Constitution”.

It includes the following **explanatory text** that sets out the ambulance waiting times covered by this pledge:

All ambulance trusts to respond to 75 per cent of Category A calls within eight minutes and to respond to 95 per cent of Category A calls within 19 minutes of a request being made for a fully equipped ambulance vehicle (care or ambulance) able to transport the patient in a clinically safe manner.

On 13 July 2017, the Secretary of State for Health accepted NHS England’s recommendation to implement new ambulance performance standards. These standards are focused on patients’ clinical needs, and will help to ensure consistent, rapid responses to those who genuinely need them, reduce long waits for ambulance responses, and bring all 999 calls under a consistent national framework.

These new standards have already been successfully piloted in three areas of England and clinical experts agree that they will improve patient outcomes. They are now being progressively rolled out across the rest of England so that all patients can benefit from them.

In areas of England where the new standards<sup>1</sup> have been introduced, the following is substituted for the explanatory text highlighted above:

“All ambulance trusts to:

- Respond to Category 1 calls in 7 minutes on average, and respond to 90% of Category 1 calls in 15 minutes.
- Respond to Category 2 calls in 18 minutes on average, and respond to 90% of Category 2 calls in 40 minutes.
- Respond to 90% of Category 3 calls in 120 minutes.
- Respond to 90% of Category 4 calls in 180 minutes.”

It is intended that a consolidated version of the Handbook will be published in 2018.

Department of Health  
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<sup>1</sup> Further detail about the standards can be found here: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/urgent-emergency-care/arp/>