

Emma Pratt

Emma is based at Yorkshire Ambulance Services, read below Emma's case study.

My role as an ambulance support worker is essential to provide the patient with a thorough, positive patient experience from the pre-hospital setting and initial point of patient contact right through to the handing over of the patient into ongoing hospital care. I assist the paramedic in managing medical conditions and trauma and provide basic life support and defibrillation where required. Having a support worker on hand allows the paramedic to manage the patient in a time-effective way which can avoid unnecessary delays which in turn could have an effect on the patient's potential outcome. We assist in safe and prompt moving and handling of patient's and conveyance of patients to hospital under blue light road conditions.

As a support worker, we are trained to assess and monitor a patient's condition and recognise any deterioration, communicating this to the paramedic as soon as possible. This allows for any necessary interventions that may be needed for improved outcome. The support we provide overall improves the quality of care to the patient and allows paramedics to feel supported in their delivery of emergency care.

I grew up wanting to be a paramedic but was told when at school I would never achieve this with my predicted grades. I went on to do various health care roles and always had the desire to join the ambulance service. I met a dispatcher who advised me that there were call taking jobs available, so I applied. I did this for two years and got more insight into road life. As soon as the opportunity came up to join as an emergency care assistant (ECA), I applied. At the time, the new ambulance apprenticeship had been introduced with a view of a progression route which eventually would mean you can gain paramedic status through ongoing training. This appealed to me straight away. I have a mortgage and two children and the opportunity to progress whilst being employed means that I can still gain the position I have wanted to do since my school days. I am just awaiting the AAP interview opportunity which is currently delayed due to the pandemic but I am hoping this will be something I can go for as soon as I am able to.

The training I have undergone has given me some sound underpinning knowledge that is needed to be able to provide the care to the patient that we do. It also has helped prepare me for the academic side of things when I eventually apply to university.

The proudest thing about my role is that I know I can make a huge difference in someone's life. This can be something as serious as cardiac arrest and providing effective life support to the patient, the variety of situations we attend means that no matter what we can always make a huge difference to their lives.

The advice I would give to others applying is that it's a really good way of being introduced to emergency care. It gives the individual opportunity to learn and develop whilst being supported by experienced mentors and paramedics. It also identifies people who are really interested in developing their career further to those who are happy to continue in a supportive role.