

Bringing the hospital to patients by boats!

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The Land of the Arctic Circle



National guidelines for acute and emergency services outside the hospital

- The ambulance service shall be manned by 2 ambulance personnel/paramedics
- There are strict regulations on response times
- There are skills and educational regulations for staffing in the ambulance service.
- The Ambulance boats service are equally regarded in all aspects as the ambulance car service

The Acute and Emergency team

- GP (Out of Hours GP— employed by the municipality)
- Ambulance staffing (employed by the hospital)
- There are challenges of cooperations
- Challenges due to sustainability of the health service especially GPs
- Challenges due to the quality of care in the prehospital acute services because of the low volume of activity



Cooperations

- There are an established educational- and training concept for both ambulance personnel and general practitioners together



Helgeland Acute Hospital Trust

- The trust have responsibility for a population of 77 000 people in the North of Norway.
- Some of he people live on 40 different islands along a costline of 200 kilometers
- 20 000 people are dependent on boats to get to the nearest acute hospital.
- 10 000 people have to travel > 2 hours to get to the nearest hospital
- The regional hospital (Tromsø) is 700 kilometers away.



- 5000 people live on islands without any acute medical service/staff.
- There are from 15 to 2500 people on these islands
- The area is covered by 7 ambulanceboats.



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- In addition to being ambulance boats, the boats also serve other purposes/functions like GP surgeries, community health nurses and fireworks stations
- The area can also be reached by an ambulance helicopter which due to the climate and weather conditions have less regularity during the winter season



Our boats

- 2 maritime staffing (captain and sailor)
- Doctor and paramedics
- Speed: 40 km/h
- Length : Appr. 20 meter
- Poor comfort for clinical and maritime staffing
- Difficult to move the patient (wheelchair/strecher etc)





Funding

- The boats are partly owned by private shipowner or the municipality
- The boats day to day activities are jointly funded by the Trust (75%) and the Municipality (25%). In Norway the municipalities are responsible for primary health care.
- The annual budget for running the boats are approximately £ 400 000 (4 million Norwegian kroner)

The Future

- We have plans for investing in 3 new boat which will enable us to take 5 of the old boats out of service (profit of efficiency) because of:
 - better comfort
 - better ergonomomy
 - faster boats (80 km/h)







