



## Yorkshire Ambulance Service

### Patient Story – Care and Compassion

In February 2011, a road traffic accident occurred when a car skidded on black ice and careered in to the path of an oncoming lorry. The car was being driven by a mother (Jill\*) with her teenage daughter in the passenger seat.

Upon arrival at the incident, the Yorkshire Ambulance Service ambulance clinicians quickly established that Jill's daughter had sustained fatal injuries and that Jill had sustained what appeared to be multiple serious injuries. YAS clinicians working on Yorkshire Air Ambulance (YAA) also arrived on scene and cared for Jill, helping to stabilise her condition and airlift her to hospital as safely and timely as was possible.

Recovery was slow and took several months in hospital. Jill has physically recovered and is now back at work.

Jill contacted YAS to find out more about what happened at the scene of the incident as she has no memory of this. She particularly wanted to understand about her daughter's condition and care, specifically if her daughter had died instantly in the crash. She expressed great confidence that the clinicians would have done their utmost to help.

The patient record showed that Jill's daughter had died in the crash. The YAS Quality Coordinator telephoned Jill to let her know that her daughter had already passed away when the clinicians arrived on scene. Jill was very grateful to receive this information and sent an email stating: *"it was so wonderful to speak with you on the phone today and I cannot begin to tell you how comforting it was for you to give me the information I had requested. The YAS crew must undoubtedly be given praise and my thanks for the care I was given. What they do for patients really does save lives, give them the best chance of recovery and then ultimately rebuild their lives."*

Jill also asked about her own care and wanted to thank and possibly meet the clinicians involved in both her and her daughters care. Three of the clinicians who attended this incident have been contacted, below are their comments:

YAS clinician: *"I am very humbled that the patient has got in touch to thank us. It was a very moving incident and it's wonderful to hear that the mother has recovered well. I would be happy to engage in a process which might help the mother in her grieving process."*

YAS clinician (working on YAA): *"It was quite early one morning when this request came in - I had just arrived for my 7am start on shift as part of the YAA crew at Leeds Bradford Airport. It was one of the saddest and touching incidents that I have been to. I was so pleased to hear about Jill's recovery. I would be pleased to meet Jill if it would help as part of the grieving process. I was just doing my job and it's heart-warming to hear that Jill has actively got in touch to thank us."*

YAS clinician (working on YAA): *"It's inspiring that Jill has*

*taken the time to get in touch with us to say thank you, I am so pleased to hear that we were able to help and to hear of Jill's recovery. It's great to hear this positive feedback and I would be happy to meet Jill if she feels this would be of benefit to her."*

*Jill responded: "It is so good to hear that the crew were pleased I got in touch. They should be proud of the excellent care they delivered and be an inspiration to all in the profession. The real task of saving lives begins with them! As does the sensitive care delivered when unfortunately lives are lost."*

*Jill also thanked the YAS Quality Coordinator: "Thank you personally for all your help, which is helping me piece things together. I at last feel that I am moving forward in my grief and can look to a happier future."*

*\*Patient's name has been changed to retain anonymity.*

### **Learning points**

- The inspiration and positive value of sharing positive feedback with our clinicians.
- The value of being open with patients and relatives to assist in the grieving and/or recovery process.