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EXCLUSIVE

Ambulance whistleblower shares emails to NHS England

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Exclusive by Gavin Havery @gavinhaveryecho Chief Reporter - County Durham



NEAS whistleblower Paul Calvert. Picture: SARAH CALDECOTT

Leaked emails from an ambulance whistleblower reveal how he flagged up serious concerns with NHS England, the organisation tasked with investigating the paramedic 'cover-up' scandal, almost a year ago.

Paul Calvert believes his previous exchanges mean the health body is not fit to independently review North East Ambulance Service, amid claims staff have doctored official reports where patients have died to mask medical failings.

He, and relatives of those who have died, have called for a public inquiry and fear the 'review' ordered by Health Secretary Sajid Javid will be 'a whitewash' as it would highlight a failure to fully investigate his claims.

Read more: [North East Ambulance Service to be subjected to NHS review](#)

Mr Calvert said: "If they were to find anything negative, then they are also going to have to admit that they have not done their own investigation.

"So, I don't believe they will find anything. I think it will take a long time.

"Like Grenfell, it goes on and on and then the public move on to something else.

"With this, we don't know how many families are involved and there are people whose loved ones have passed away and it has been covered up.

"It is important and unless there is a proper public inquiry those families will never know and the truth will never come out."

The Northern Echo has been supplied with copies of emails Mr Calvert, a former police officer employed as a coroners' officer with NEAS, wrote to NHS England between July and September last year.

In his first approach to a "Freedom to Speak Up" casework manager at NHS England, Mr Calvert wrote: "I have a reasonably held belief that the North East Ambulance Service have caused harm, to members of the general public, by concealing, altering and destroying relevant information that should have been supplied to HM Coroner.

"The trust's patient safety department does not have the necessary policies and processes in place, in order to ensure the trust meets its statutory obligations as prescribed by law.

"For the past year, myself and colleagues have continued to raise our concerns, with the relevant individuals.

"We are aware that these concerns not only failed to be addressed, but are constantly 'pushed under the carpet'."

Mr Calvert, who is from Peterlee, told the case worker he had already raised his concerns with his MP, Grahame Morris, who represents Easington and subsequently discussed the matter in Parliament.

Mr Calvert has said is he aware of 90 cases where changes have been made to medical reports at inquests to hide mistakes by ambulance crews where someone has died.

They include the case of 17-year-old Quinn Beadle, from Shildon, who died by suicide in 2018.

Key details omitted from the report to coroner in the hearing the establish the circumstances surrounding her death.

Read more: Mum 'horrified' at scale of North East ambulance 'cover ups'

In his email last July, Mr Calvert said: “The North East Ambulance Service are continuing to fail members of the public and putting lives at risk by failing to address these very issues.

“I am of the opinion that these matters require urgent attention to prevent the public suffering any further harm.”

Mr Calvert, who claims he has been the victim of bullying and is unable to work due to ill health, said NHS England did "little to nothing" regarding his concerns and merely passed his information to the Care Quality Commission.

He said: “The trust continues to ignore that there is a problem and is unwilling to listen or consider the concerns being raised or acknowledge the supporting evidence regarding this.

“The trust also continues to bully and harass the members of staff who are attempting to raise the concerns, taking punitive action against the people speaking up, whilst the parties responsible for the failings are afforded complete impunity.

“However, the mechanisms for raising concerns within the trust are entirely ineffective, being used to cover up and delay matters, rather than investigate and address the concerns raised.”

North East ambulance whistleblower offered £41k to stay silent

After the review was announced North East Ambulance Service said the thoughts of the organisation "remain with those affected" by issues raised by Mr Calvert and independent scrutiny would be "welcome".

Ann Ford, CQC's Director of Operations Network North, said additional information from the trust was assessed, which showed the improvements had made to the coronial reporting systems and there was no indication of any risk to patient safety.

She also said services provided by North East Ambulance Service Trust were subject to "ongoing monitoring".

NHS England was asked for a comment about Mr Calvert's concern over the how independent the review would be, but The Northern Echo was referred to the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC).

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A spokesperson for the DHSC said: "Further details of the review will be shared in due course.

"The terms of the review are still being determined, and we will work to ensure they enable a full and independent review of the concerns."
