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"Nothing has helped me more in my career than my first ten years as a healthcare assistant."

Ed started life as a healthcare assistant before qualifying as a paramedic [1] and working his way up in the ambulance service.

Ed Green

Regional clinical coordinator and paramedic

Employer or university

East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust

Salary range

£35k-£45k



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**How I got into
the role**

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I started work in the NHS at the age of 17 as a healthcare assistant at Bedford Hospital. I worked there for many years in various patient care roles before deciding to move to the ambulance service.

I started my technician course 14 years ago and worked up to paramedic [1] whilst at Luton Ambulance Station.

I took on several managerial roles before moving into ambulance control as a clinical manager. Although it meant moving away from a patient-facing role which I've always loved, I felt that with this role I could have a greater effect on how we use our resources and ensure we treat more patients appropriately.

I have developed in many areas through the years. I've completed courses in mentorship and leadership, as well as keeping my paramedic registration up to date. I don't class myself as an academic at all, so gaining the paramedic registration was my greatest career achievement.

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What I do

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I have a very challenging and highly demanding job. I am based in one of the trust's three control rooms but manage regionally, focusing mainly on ensuring the patients without an ambulance allocated are kept safe.

I also manage our team of paramedics and nurses who perform telephone triage on those patients with low priority symptoms. And I cover a clinical advice line for staff attending difficult incidents and needing support on how to proceed with their care.

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The best bits and challenges

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The best bits of the job are being able to reassure patients who are waiting for a response, triaging patients so they get the most appropriate care, and managing and supporting the team.

The challenges include the usual frustrations of not having enough resources to provide the service we all want to. But the trust is committed to the recruitment of new staff as well as retaining those already dedicated to what we want to achieve. There's not much I'd change about my role.

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Life outside work

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My wife works in the same role as me and we work separate shifts so we can take care of our two young children. Since we've had kids, I've been looking after myself a lot more and am now in training for my second triathlon.

And I have an Instagram blog (@sporty_parameddie) where I try to show that you can work in the NHS as a shift worker with a family and still get regular exercise. I'm looking for more followers!

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Career plans and top tips for others

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Nothing has helped me more in my career than my first ten years as a healthcare assistant. There I learnt how to communicate with staff, patients and relatives. I worked in different specialities – everything from care of the elderly to medical and surgical wards to paediatrics and A&E.

Being able to communicate is key. You can be straight out of university with the highest marks, but if you don't know how to talk to or relate to those you are trying to treat and care for, you won't gain their trust and providing care will become more of a challenge.

I think it's important to get some life skills and experiences so you can relate to different people. And always show compassion, humour and sympathy.

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[1] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/ambulance-service-team/roles-ambulance-service/paramedic>