



Wendy: Here in the UK people like this are saving lives every hour of every day. [Paramedic speaking.] The Ambulance Service receives thousands of emergency calls. It is part of the National Health Service, which provides free health care, paid for out of taxation.

When someone's reported a serious accident or emergency, ambulance crews get there as fast as they can. Their speed and medical education make the difference between life and death.

I'm spending a day with paramedics in Brighton, on the south coast of England.

These student medics are training at the University of Brighton. Most study for three years to pass the required exams. Their tutors watch and give feedback from a control room. [Student medics speaking.]

These emergencies are made to look as realistic as possible, so don't worry – this accident is just pretend.

Emily Skinner is one of the students.

Wendy: What sort of person makes a good paramedic?

Emily: I think someone that can communicate well, who works well in a team, has leadership skills.

Wendy: What sort of emergencies do you prepare for?

Emily: Well, we could go to a huge range of emergencies: asthma, chest pain, people who've had injuries, trauma like in road traffic collisions.

Wendy: After passing their exams, the students can work in an ambulance like this. It is packed with the latest technology to help save lives.

Carl Walton is one of the paramedics in Brighton.

Wendy: Being a paramedic – is it the toughest

job in the world?

Carl: It can be very challenging, can be very challenging. You know, we're answering treble-nine calls, upwards of 8 to 12 a day, so that can be particularly stressful, very tiring, but trauma jobs are very challenging. There's a lot going on and you have to – it's a time-critical job. You've got to be on-scene for a very limited amount of time and get them to the trauma unit or hospital as fast as you can. It's hard work but very rewarding.

Wendy: Carl normally works on his own and can get to a patient first in the ambulance car.

This is kind of a compact version of what you might expect an ambulance to be, so what have you got in it?

Carl: This is, I would say, the most important thing that we carry. This is a heart start machine. We use this if someone's in cardiac arrest and we need to... an electric shock to restart their heart. And it's nice and compact, it's very portable and very easy to use compared to the ones that are carried on a lot of the ambulances, which are quite cumbersome and heavy.

Wendy: While we were talking to Carl, an emergency call comes in. This is a real one, this is it.

Carl: Yeah. Go, yeah.

Wendy: With blue lights on and sirens wailing, Carl gets to the incident as quickly as possible. Thanks, Carl. Good luck!

Fortunately, this time no-one was seriously hurt. It was just one of the many calls that crews from this station respond to every day. For Carl, it's back to the station - until the next call out.