

# Case study

## Strengthening employee resilience.

National Ambulance Resilience Unit

### Developing a recruitment and selection process to help NARU assess and select people able to operate in challenging circumstances.

The National Ambulance Resilience Unit (NARU) works with all NHS Ambulance Trusts in England to help strengthen employee resilience and improve patient outcomes in a variety of challenging scenarios.

It helps national Trusts to support the development of properly trained, equipped and prepared ambulance responders to deal with hazardous or difficult situations, particularly mass casualty incidents that represent a significant risk to public health.

Zeal Solutions has a long-standing relationship with NARU and has worked in partnership on several initiatives in that time. Zeal submitted a proposal to develop a recruitment and selection process designed to help NARU to assess and select paramedics who are able to operate most effectively in extremely challenging circumstances.

Known as HART, the Hazardous Area Response Team provides the first response to major and potentially catastrophic incidents. HART team members provide medical care to patients in the 'hot zone' of hazardous environments such as chemical, biological, radioactive incidents, collapsed buildings, water rescue or flooding, firearms incidents and explosions.

#### How Zeal approached recruitment and selection.

Zeal was tasked with developing a recruitment and selection process which could be rolled out nationally, to ensure that all HART team members across the UK have the core psychological competencies that are considered critical for effective performance.

Through research and assessment of the job role, Zeal identified the characteristics that the ideal candidates should possess. Using this information, they developed

a selection process designed to establish whether each candidate possessed the right psychological traits, assessing each individual in multiple ways to give recruiting officers the assurance that candidates were the right fit.

Zeal has also developed a validation process, which will give recruiters the ability to review the selection decisions being made to ensure the right people are being recruited into HART team roles.

As the solution is implemented, Zeal will provide practitioner training for all HART recruiters to ensure they understand the process, can carry out assessments and make selection decisions based upon insight.

## Chris Cooper, Head of Compliance at the National Ambulance Resilience Unit comments:

"We have worked in partnership with Zeal Solutions for many years, so their understanding of NARU, our objectives, and what we do mean they were uniquely placed to deliver this initiative for us.

The process Zeal has designed for us gives everybody involved a better understanding of what it takes to be a HART team member.

It gives us a better understanding of the psychological impact that responding to challenging incidents can have. This has helped us ensure we have the right people in place, who are equipped with the right skills and are prepared to deal with the emotional distress they are likely to face.

Long-term, this will make our people more resilient and reduce the amount of post-incident, stress-related illness that our staff can experience. In turn, it will help to improve our productivity and make us better prepared to deal with incidents more effectively in the future."

