



SAN FRANCISCO FIRE DEPARTMENT
Public Information Office

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Press Release

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**San Francisco Fire EMS and England EMS
Participate in Paramedic Exchange**

(San Francisco, Thursday, November 5, 2009) – Two Paramedics, separated, physically, by “the pond”, but connected closely by their professions and a blog, have spearheaded a Paramedic Exchange in an effort to comprehensively compare the challenges faced by EMS providers around the world.

In 2008, while recovering from an injury caused by a ceiling collapse, San Francisco Firefighter Paramedic Justin Schorr stumbled into the blogosphere, sharing his experiences online, and quickly realized that hundreds of other professionals from around the world, looking for an outlet and a place to find a commonality, were doing the same thing.

Justin started a blog, <http://happymedic.com/>, and discovered not only the commonalities but the differences in medical response worldwide. Justin took a special interest in one of his readers and fellow blogger (www.999medic.com), Paramedic Mark Glencorse, from Newcastle upon Tyne in England. “He told some of the same stories but wrote about how he handled the situations differently”. Working two different EMS Systems, the U.S. fire based private transport EMS model and the North East Ambulance Service (NEAS) Pathways system, sparked the curiosity of each to experience it first-hand, hoping to learn and share.

“Mark Glencorse and I have been in close contact as this project blossomed from a simple meeting of friends into a possibility to share our experiences with the rest of the world”, said FF/PM Schorr. Paramedic Team Leader Glencorse adds, “After finding and reading his blog, it very quickly became evident that we both held the same hopes for our profession and were both very keen to develop personally and professionally.”

On November 9th, Mark will arrive in San Francisco to begin his exchange in the U.S. On November 18th, Justin will travel to Newcastle, England where Mark has arranged an in-depth exchange schedule for Justin. The two Paramedics will work side-by-side, sharing their adventures online, in blogs, on Twitter, Facebook and even daily video logs chronicling what they are learning while visiting the other.

Fire Chief Joanne Hayes-White said, “We look forward to hosting Paramedic Glencorse and sharing our capabilities and techniques with him. In the same light, we look forward to hearing and seeing how the UK’s new Pathways system is working for NEAS. The exchange is an excellent way to glean best practices from around the world.”

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