

# ParaTed proves his worth in emergency

## Charity-supplied teddies help paramedics get answers

By Alexander Robertson

TEDDY bears designed to help young children in distress have been delivered to paramedics in Mole Valley. The small teddies have been donated by the Leatherhead Lions Club and are dressed in paramedic uniform to be used by crews at the ambulance stations in Leatherhead and Dorking.

The paramedics will give the toys, called ParaTeds, to young children on emergency call-outs, to help calm them while their injuries are assessed.

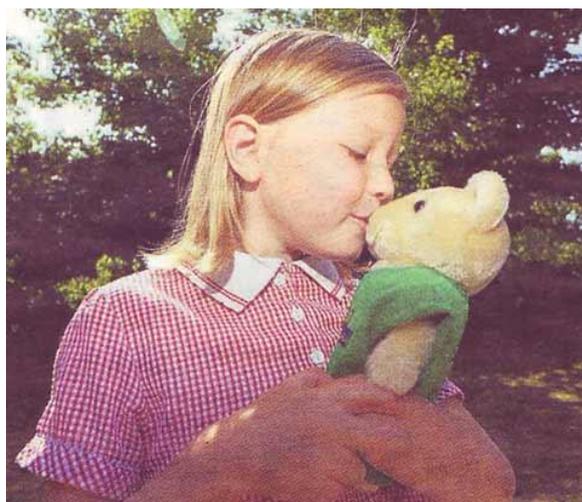
### Supply

Mark Hodsall, operations manager for South East Coast Ambulance Service, said: "We have been involved with the Leatherhead Lions for many years and their supply of ParaTeds has been invaluable.

"They are an excellent way of gaining a child's confidence when you need to carry out an examination, such as using a stethoscope, by showing what will happen on ParaTed first.



"We can show that ParaTed isn't worried and that they shouldn't be either," he added. "Sometimes we are dealing with a parent who is unwell and the child can hold ParaTed while we examine mum or dad, if they can't be parted.



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LOVING: Zara Bowyer, 6, with one of the ParaTeds

Photos by Liam McAvoy

"It provides a friendly focal point for a child's attention in the back of an ambulance, which can to some be a quite scary place to a youngster."

Paramedics have found most toys work well in calming down a child but distress is caused when they ask for the toy back - something that is avoided with ParaTeds. Mr Hodsall continued: "The child can hold ParaTed for the journey to hospital, but the great thing is, that they do not have to hand them back, as the Lions donate enough for us to give them away.

"This makes the whole experience much more relaxing and relieves their fears if they ever have to be in an ambulance again.

Some of the crew members have been so impressed they have passed on some of their experiences with ParaTed to other crews in the county

### Pleasing

Mike Rushby, spokesman for the Leatherhead Lions Club, said: "It really pleasing to know that the medical staff can obtain urgent medical information about a child's condition when the children are telling teddy how they feel.

"Any contributions towards the cost of further purchases would be most welcome, as the demand for the teddies is very constant." ■ For more information or to donate, visit [www.leatherheadlions.org.uk](http://www.leatherheadlions.org.uk)