



Seirbhís Náisiúnta Otharcharranna
Gnóthaí Corparáideacha & Cumarsáid
Teach Dara, Ascaill an Crann Teile
Páirc na Mílaoise
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National Ambulance Service
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12th February 2019

Ms Louise O'Reilly TD
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Dublin 2

Re: PQ 6442/19: To ask the Minister for Health the level of emergency ambulance provision in the Dungarvan and Lismore municipal district or closest corresponding HSE area of operations; if a needs assessment has been carried out; the way in which the allocation corresponds to need; and if he will make a statement on the matter

Dear Deputy O'Reilly,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

The National Ambulance Service is the statutory pre-hospital emergency and intermediate care provider for the State. In the Dublin metropolitan area, ambulance services are provided by the NAS and Dublin Fire Brigade via a funding arrangement with the HSE. The National Ambulance Service Operations Areas; North Leinster, South and West operate from 100 locations across the country. The call taking and dispatch function is operated by the NAS National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) which operates across two sites, Dublin and Ballyshannon. All NAS resources are dispatched to calls across the country by the NEOC on a nearest available (to the incident) basis and not on a county boundary basis.

NEOC utilises an Advanced Medical Priority Dispatch System (AMPDS) which utilises international standards in triaging and prioritising emergency calls. This system ensures that life threatening calls receive an immediate and appropriate response, while lower acuity calls may have to wait until an emergency resource becomes available. The NAS has established a Clinical Hub to implement the 'Hear and Treat' alternative care pathway for low acuity calls that don't require the dispatch of an emergency ambulance.

At a local level, the NAS is also supported by 210 Community First Responder schemes, responding to particular types of medical emergencies (i.e. cardiac arrest, respiratory arrest,



chest pain, choking and stroke) across the country, where it is essential for the patient to receive immediate life-saving care whilst an emergency response vehicle is en route to the patient. Currently there are 5 Community First Responder Groups operating in County Waterford

The NAS operates an Intermediate Care Service (ICS) to provide transport of non ambulatory patients to and from the Acute Hospital network and to prioritise the discharge of patients from acute hospitals in order to provide beds for patients awaiting admission in the emergency departments. ICS resources are also utilised to support emergency resources by responding to life threatening emergencies

The NAS in conjunction with the Irish Air Corps operates an Emergency Aero Medical Service based at Custume Barracks in Athlone. A second Emergency Aero Medical service will operate in conjunction between the NAS and the Irish Community Rapid Response charity from the Cork area in the coming weeks. Additional helicopter support is provided by the Irish Coast Guard.

The National Ambulance Service operates from the following locations in County Waterford: Waterford City and Dungarvan. NAS resources from surrounding ambulance stations also respond in the Waterford area such as New Ross, Kilkenny, Clonmel, Youghal and Fermoy The NAS operates on a national and area basis as opposed to a local or county basis and resources are dispatched the nearest available to the incident basis.

The tables below outline the rostered resources in County Waterford

Waterford	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
EA Day	3	4	4	4	4	3	2
EA Night	2	2	2	2	2	2	2

Dungarvan	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
EA Day	2 ¹	2 ¹	2 ¹	2 ¹	2 ¹	2 ¹	2 ²
EA Night	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

¹Two EA crews to 00.00hrs during the day

²0800-2000hrs and 1600-0000hrs

The NAS National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) dynamically deploys resources to areas where cover is required or to respond to incidents as they arise to ensure the nearest available resource responds to emergencies. Care begins immediately the emergency call is received, where lifesaving pre-arrival assistance is given by the emergency call takers directly to the patient or any third party that is available to assist. This pre-arrival care includes the delivery of medications, CPR, use of defibrillator, haemorrhage control, childbirth and many other emergencies that present.

This care is then transferred to the arriving paramedics where it is followed through to the safe transportation and handover of the patient to the clinical team at the receiving hospital.

The first ever Capacity Review was carried out by the National Ambulance Service in 2015 and its findings were published in 2016. This review advises that additional staff are needed in order for NAS to meet targets set out by HIQA. The National Ambulance Service intends through the Service Planning process to fill these posts over the next four years.

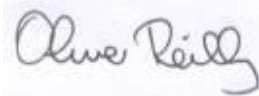
The Capacity Review also examined overall ambulance resource levels and distribution against demand and activity. Implementation of the recommendations made in the capacity

review will require a multi-annual programme of phased investment in ambulance manpower, vehicles and technology. The Capacity Review also indicated that another practical way to improve first response times in rural areas was through community first responder (CFR) schemes. The NAS has appointed a Community Engagement Officer in its three operational areas; West, South and North Leinster to promote and support CFR groups and assist with the establishment of new groups across the country.

While ambulance response times are helpful for performance measurement, it should be recognised that a sole reliance on response times does not provide a comprehensive picture of modern ambulance service performance. Response time performance is being globally reviewed in terms of whether it is the only appropriate measure of patient care. While rapid deployment and timely arrival are accepted, patient outcome indicators are being viewed as a more appropriate measure of patient care and experience.

I trust this information is of assistance to you and should you require further information please contact me

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Oliver Reilly". The signature is written in a cursive style with a light blue background behind the text.

Oliver Reilly
Asst Chief Ambulance Officer