



Seirbhís Náisiúnta Otharcharranna
Teach Dara, Ascaill an Crann Teile
Páirc na Mílaoise
Nás na Rí, Co. Chill Dara W91 KDC2

National Ambulance Service
Oak House, Millennium Park
Naas, Co. Kildare W91 KDC2
Tel/Fón: 045 882579
Fax/Facs: 1890 252 125
Email/Riomhphost: oliver.reilly@hse.ie

31st October 2019

Mr Thomas Byrne TD
Dáil Eireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

Re: PQ 44380/19: “To ask the Minister for Health his plans for an ambulance service centre to be based in south County Meath”

Dear Deputy Byrne,

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 recently 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 244 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 16 Community First Responder Groups operating in County Meath



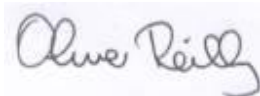
The National Ambulance Service operates from the following locations in County Meath; Navan, Dunshaughlin and Trim and from adjoining ambulance stations such as Drogheda, Ardee, Virginia, Mullingar, Maynooth and Swords. The NAS operates on a national and area basis as opposed to a local or county basis. The NAS will dispatch the nearest available resource to incidents as they arise.

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 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.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Oliver Reilly". The signature is written in a cursive style and is contained within a light blue rectangular box.

Oliver Reilly
Asst Chief Ambulance Officer
Corporate Affairs & Communications