



Oifig Stiúrthóir na Seirbhíse Náisiúnta Otharcharranna,
An tSeirbhís Náisiúnta Otharcharranna,
Áras na hAbhann,
Crosbhóthar Thamhlachta,
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30th June 2020.

Ms. Rose Conway-Walsh TD,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Dublin 2.

Re: PQ 11082/20: To ask the Minister for Health the number of times it has taken an ambulance more than 20, 40 minutes and more than one hour to reach patients that made emergency calls in County Mayo; the longest ambulance response time logged in County Mayo; and if he will make a statement on the matter..

Dear Deputy Conway-Walsh,

The HSE National Ambulance has been requested to reply directly to you in relation to the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

The call taking and dispatch function is operated by the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) which operates across two sites, Dublin and Ballyshannon. All National Ambulance Service (NAS) resources are dispatched to calls across the country from the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) on a nearest available (to the incident) basis and not on a county boundary basis.

The National Emergency Operations Centre (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 National Ambulance Service (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.

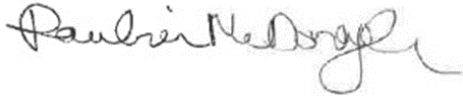
The National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) dynamically deploys resources to areas where cover is required or to respond to incidents as they arise to ensure the nearest available resource responds to emergencies. Care begins immediately the emergency call is received, where lifesaving pre-arrival 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.

Between January and April 2020, there were 1,031 emergency calls where an emergency ambulance was dispatched to a scene in County Mayo. By eighteen (18) minutes and fifty-nine (59) seconds, there were four-hundred and twenty-nine (429) patient carrying vehicle on scene representing forty-one point six percent (41.6%). By fifty-nine (59 minutes) and fifty-nine (59) seconds, this had increased to ninety-eight point two-five percent (98.25%) or one thousand and thirteen ambulances (1,013) at scenes.

The remaining eighteen (18) calls outside the period of one hour were Delta calls and were related to a number of different factors such as weather, road conditions, day/night driving, rurality of the patient's address and the deep cleansing of emergency ambulances following the transport of patients with confirmed/suspected cases of COVID-19 etc. In addition, NAS call takers may stay on the line with the caller or patient to provide 'Pre-arrival instructions'. This includes medical advice and counselling until the patient carrying resource arrives. Also there may be other medical assistance such as a General Practitioner or NAS Advanced Paramedics/Paramedics at the scene before the ambulance arrives. The longest response call was one hour, twenty-nine minutes and thirty-three seconds (1:29:33). The context for this Delta call was that while two resources were originally assigned they were diverted to Echo calls which take precedence and distance (location) of the scene.

I trust this information is of assistance to you and should you require additional information or clarification please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Pauline McDonagh,
Senior Executive Officer.