



Oifig Stiúrthóir na Seirbhíse Náisiúnta Otharcharranna,
An tSeirbhís Náisiúnta Otharcharranna,
Áras na hAbhann,
Crosbhóthar Thamhlachta,
Tamhlacht,
Baile Áth Cliath D24 XNP2.
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Mr. David Cullinane TD,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Dublin 2.

5th May 2021.

Re: PQ20258/21

To ask the Minister for Health the way in which staff within the National Ambulance Service are supported when diagnosed with PTSD; the policies and procedures in place to support them; the timeframe for same remaining in place; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

PQ20259/21

To ask the Minister for Health the extent to which the National Ambulance Service follow all recommendations set out by occupational health and doctors and consultants in relation to PTSD in employee policies; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

PQ20260/21

To ask the Minister for Health if the NAS retrain staff to different roles who can no longer continue in their substantial role due to employment-related PTSD; if the NAS support the retraining of and redeployment of staff within the NAS and HSE who can no longer fulfil original roles due to employment-related PTSD but could otherwise work within the NAS and HSE; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

PQ20261/21

To ask the Minister for Health if NAS staff are retrained to fill vacant substantial posts which can no longer be filled due to employment-related PTSD; if so, the policy for same; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Cullinane,

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

Since 1988, the NAS has operated an integrated Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) programme, managed and resourced by NAS staff as a peer support system with over 150 trained peer support workers of various grades and ranks within the organisation. CISM is an intervention protocol developed specifically for dealing with traumatic events.



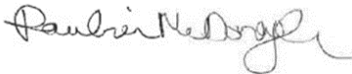
It is a formal, highly structured and professionally recognised process for helping those involved in a critical incident to share their experiences, vent emotions, learn about stress reactions and symptoms and given referral for further help if required by our CISM Clinical Psychologist.

Existing staff that are diagnosed with or potentially suffering from cognitive disorder, mental health or wellbeing concerns are afforded the full services of the HSE's support services such as Occupational Health and Employee Assistance Programme.

The National Ambulance Service relies on HSE Occupational Health to make recommendations to follow in assisting staff to return to work in a timely manner. Where redeployment is recommended, the Workplace Health and Wellbeing Unit seeks suitable vacant funded positions. At the outset, the skill set and qualifications of these employees is taken into consideration when seeking alternative roles within the wider HSE. In addition, Occupational Health must assess the employee to determine that any new potential role will not exacerbate existing health concerns and that the role is suitable for the employee.

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

Yours sincerely,



Pauline McDonagh - Senior Executive Officer.