



An tSeirbhís Náisiúnta Otharcharranna,
Áras na hAbhann,
Crosbhóthar Thamhlachta,
Tamhlacht,
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Ref: WM/PQ/211202

2nd December 2021

Deputy Pat Buckley TD
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Dublin 2

PQ51238/21

To ask the Minister for Health his plans for capacity planning and reform within the National Ambulance Service. - Pat Buckley

PQ52306/21

To ask the Minister for Health the average response time of ambulances in east County Cork; the number of ambulances ordinarily based at each location; and if he will make a statement on the matter. - Pat Buckley

PQ52307/21

To ask the Minister for Health the number of paramedics assigned to ambulance services in east County Cork; and the optimum number of paramedics that should serve that area. - Pat Buckley

Dear Deputy Buckley,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) 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 response.

A 2015 Baseline Capacity Review of the National Ambulance Service (NAS) found that a significant number of additional staff would be required over the coming years to support the service.

Since 2015 the NAS has increased its staff numbers each year. However, each year the level of demand for NAS services is also growing.

The surge in demand has come at a time when staff are also working hard to support COVID related swabbing and vaccinations. At this time, the level of demand now exceeds the levels experienced in 2019, i.e. pre pandemic.

As of 1 October 2021, NAS have commenced redeployment of up to 45 Paramedics from COVID related work to emergency ambulance duty and a further 80 Paramedics are due to graduate



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from the college at year end. NAS are also working with trade union partners to develop temporary alterations to the current deployment model to minimise the impact of the capacity challenges on staff. There is no intention to return to a geographically limited model which would re-introduce inherent patient safety risk.

In 2021, a further capacity analysis is now underway to inform future workforce planning. A key target in the HSE's National Service Plan 2021 is that the majority of ambulance calls to life threatening incidents (ECHO and DELTA calls) are responded to in 18 minutes and 59 seconds or less. This target was reached in the majority of calls last year. The National Ambulance Service expects to respond to a total of 360,000 call outs this year.

The HSE National Service Plan 2022 is expected to support the commencement of an Organisational Re-design of the National Ambulance Service (NAS) which is expected to be implemented over a 3-year period. The Organisational Re-design is a key objective of the draft NAS Strategy 2022-2026. The Organisational Re-Design process emerged from a detailed Information and Consultation process which concluded in August 2021 and involved representative groups and trade unions of all of those potentially affected.



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Average Response times Jan to Sep 21 by Region – South – Category 1 calls

2019	00:20
2020	00:21
2021 (Jan – Sept)	00:25

East Cork Resources	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Days	9	8	8	8	9	6	6
Nights	4	4 + RRV	4 + RRV	4 + RRV	5	5	5
Total Resources	13	13	13	13	14	11	11

South by staff group

Sep 2021 (Dec 2020 figure: 495)	WTE Aug 2021	WTE Sep 2021	WTE change since Aug 21	% change since Aug 21	WTE change since Dec 20	WTE change since Sep 20
Overall	475	476	+1	+0.2%	-19	-17
SHO/ Interns	1	1			+1	+1
Medical & Dental	1	1			+1	+1
Administrative/ Supervisory (V to VII)	3	4	+1	+25.9%	+2	-0
Clerical (III & IV)	8	8			-0	+1
Management & Administrative	11	12	+1	+7.6%	+2	+1
Support	1	1				
Maintenance/ Technical	1	1				
General Support	2	2				
Ambulance Staff	461	461	+0	+0.1%	-22	-19
Patient & Client Care	461	461	+0	+0.1%	-22	-19

*Data extrapolated from Strategic Workforce planning and intelligence reports from the HSE

I hope this information is helpful.

Yours sincerely

William Merriman
 Deputy Director
 National Ambulance Service

