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Ref: WM/PQ/221222

Deputy Violet Anne Wynne,  
Dáil Éireann,  
Leinster House,  
Dublin 2

22 December 2022

**PQ 61404/22**

**To ask the Minister for Health if the pathfinder programme from the National Ambulance Service in Limerick will also cover County Clare; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Violet-Anne Wynne**

Dear Deputy Wynne,

The National Ambulance Service (NAS) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question which you submitted to the Minister for response.

The referred to Pathfinder service, is a collaboration between the National Ambulance Service (NAS) and University Hospital Limerick, and aims to safely treat older people, who have phoned 112/999, (from their own home), by providing pre-hospital assessment at home, and when appropriate, initiating an alternative care pathway rather than transporting them to the Emergency Department (ED).

The Pathfinder Service will respond as directed by the National Emergency Operations Centre to low acuity calls in patients over 65 years within the Limerick, Clare and Tipperary area who would normally have been transported to the University Hospital Limerick.

The Pathfinder Team operates two services:

- The 'Rapid Response Team' consists of an Advanced Paramedic (AP), Physiotherapist (PT) (Clinical Specialist or Senior) or Occupational Therapist (OT) (Clinical Specialist or Senior). The 'Rapid Response Team' respond to 112/999 calls in the Pathfinder Rapid Response vehicle.
- The 'Follow-Up Team' consists of PT (Clinical Specialist and/or Senior) and OT (Clinical Specialist and/or Senior) staffing. This team can provide an immediate and intensive short period of intervention, including case-management, rehabilitation, and equipment provision, at home for the older person.

**All patients will receive an appropriate NAS response when using the 112/999 system determined by the clinical needs of the patient.**

I trust that this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

William Merriman  
Director of Operations  
National Ambulance Service

