



Oifig anStiúrthóir  
An tSeirbhís Náisiúnta,

Foirgneamh Aibhneacha, Crosbhóthar  
Thamhlachta, Tamhlacht,  
Baile Átha Cliath D24 XNP2

Office of the Director  
National Ambulance Service

Rivers Building, Tallaght Cross  
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Ref: WM/PQ's/220303

Deputy John McGuinness TD  
Dáil Éireann,  
Leinster House  
Dublin 2

3<sup>rd</sup> March 2022

PQ1026/22 - *To ask the Minister for Health if, arising from recent complaints aired through the media and in Dáil Éireann, he plans to carry out a review and audit of the National Ambulance Service relative to the protocols observed in the dispatching of ambulances, the general efficiency or otherwise of the service, the operational costs, human resources management, the promotions process and the general training of staff throughout the organisation; the level of funding allocated in each of the past five years to operate the service; if the service is operating with the full complement of staff and management required; the positions that are currently vacant in the service; and if he will make a statement on the matter. - John McGuinness*

Dear Deputy McGuinness,

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

The capacity of the NAS was last reviewed in 2014 and since then, over 500 staff have been recruited. However, recruitment to the NAS is being outpaced by demand for our services.

It is worth noting that there is no ready supply of Paramedics in Ireland and NAS for the most part must educate their own workforce in their own college. The Paramedic programme is degree level, i.e. four academic years undertaken over three calendar years. There are currently over 100 Student Paramedics at different stages of the programme right now. At this time, NAS estimate a requirement for an additional 90 emergency ambulances on duty every day which reflects a requirement for approx. 1,100 extra staff. The pace of predicted growth in demand might suggest 2,000 extra staff are required by 2028.

The HSE NAS regularly hold open recruitment campaigns and these campaigns are run within the HSE National Recruitment Service process in line with the recruitment licence and code of practice. The recruitment process clearly outlines the entry criteria. The standards for the training and education of paramedics are established and their implementation overseen by the Pre Hospital Emergency Care Council. These standards outline where, if any, recognition for previous relevant experience can be considered by the educational provider of the paramedic programme. The NAS paramedic programme is a level 8 Bachelor of Science (Honours) degree spanning over four academic years.

As part of the NAS commitment to patient safety all new staff who hold qualifications obtained within or outside the state must demonstrate clinical competency prior to entering practice on behalf of the NAS. The process utilises the clinical competency assessments that NAS College students must successfully complete, prior to entering their internship year.



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The outcome of the National Demand and Capacity Analysis is expected by the end of Q1 2022 and will then inform the development of a Workforce Plan in Q2 2022 which will inform the estimates submission for new development funding in the National Service Plan 2023 and each year thereafter.

NAS has developed a 5 year Strategy to inform service development and investment priorities over the next 5 years. This draft Strategy is now being considered by the HSE and high level indicative costings are in development. Where approved, the Strategy will be submitted to the Minister for Health for consideration. Such a strategy will inform submissions to the annual estimates process each year, starting in 2023, the submissions process for which commences in Q3 2022.

I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

William Merriman  
Deputy Director  
National Ambulance Service



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## NAS Annual Budget 2017 - 2021

Excludes COVID Funding	Annual Budget					Increase since 2017	
	2017 €0.00m	2018 €0.00m	2019 €0.00m	2020 * €0.00m	2021 €0.00m	€0.00m	%
Total Pay	117.524	124.385	127.523	132.250	143.082	25.558	22%
Total Non Pay	38.895	40.559	43.358	42.968	45.245	6.350	16%
Total Income	-0.160	-0.150	-0.150	-0.148	-0.148	0.012	-8%
Total Budget	156.579	164.794	170.730	175.070	188.179	31.920	20%
Budget Increase		8.215	5.936	4.340	13.109		
% increase		5.2%	3.6%	2.5%	7.5%		

\*2020 Budget figure Excludes a budget allocation of €12.6m for Covid in 2020

### Longitudinal Employment Levels by Service - Dec 2016 to Sep 2021

Sep 2021 (Dec 2015 figure: 1,694)	WTE Dec 2016	WTE Dec 2017	WTE Dec 2018	WTE Dec 2019	WTE Dec 2020	WTE Sep 2021	WTE change since Dec 16	WTE change since Dec 17	WTE change since Dec 18	WTE change since Dec 19	WTE change since Dec 20	WTE change since Aug 21
Overall	1,734	1,843	1,887	1,933	1,990	2,027	+293	+184	+140	+94	+37	-3
North Leinster	497	543	565	563	585	594	+97	+50	+28	+31	+9	-4
South	445	469	473	487	495	476	+31	+7	+3	-11	-19	+1
West	502	546	557	582	589	607	+106	+61	+51	+25	+18	+10
Ambulance Services	1,444	1,559	1,595	1,631	1,669	1,677	+233	+118	+82	+45	+8	+7
Ambulance Headquarters	6	24	38	41	42	51	+45	+27	+13	+9	+9	+5
NASC	167	123	120	103	117	147	-20	+24	+27	+43	+30	-12
NEOC	117	138	135	157	161	153	+35	+15	+18	-4	-9	-3

Source: Health Service Personnel Census



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### Staff Breakdown by Grade

	2021 (30.11.2021)	2020	2019	2018	2017
0509 AND	2	2	2	1	2
0041 General Manager	6	6	5	2	2
1628 Registrar, Specialist	1	0	0	0	0
169T Consultant in Emergency Medicine	1	1	1	1	1
2910 Director of Nursing 1, Assistant	1	0	0	0	0
0655 Grade VIII	6	8	6	5	4
0582 Grade VII	13	11	5	6	5
0574 Grade VI	16	8	11	5	7
0566 Grade V	20	14	14	10	9
0558 Grade IV	13	15	10	13	12
0609 Clerical Officer	34	33	36	45	39
6125 Ambulance Officer, Chief	3	5	4	5	7
6123 Ambulance Officer, Asst. Chief	13	14	12	13	12
6122 Ambulance Officer	71	68	62	62	62
2119 Clinical Nurse Manager 2	1	1	1	1	1
2135 Staff Nurse General	0	1	1	0	1
6455 Emergency Medical Controller	112	117	114	100	107
6456 Emergency Medical Dispatcher	38	42	41	34	41
6457 Emergency Medical Control Supervisor	16	18	17	17	15
6931 Emergency Medical Controller, Team Leader	7	9	10	11	11
4734 Driver, Minibus	2	2	2	10	10
6015 Multi-Task Attendant	1	2	2	3	3
6133 Intermediate Care Operative	161	170	164	155	149
6132 Driver (Patient/Clients on Public Rds)	13	15	15	7	7
6453 Emergency Medical Technician, Student	259	137	162	184	184
6463 Emergency Medical Technician	1141	1154	1120	1102	1052
6464 Emergency Medical Technician, Leading	211	213	194	153	158
4327 Work Placement (Support Services)	1	1	1	1	1
3395 Dietician, Senior	0	1	1	1	1
5096 Electrician	0	1	1	1	1
5134 Plumber	1	1	1	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,164</b>	<b>2,070</b>	<b>2,015</b>	<b>1,949</b>	<b>1,905</b>



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Grade	No. Vacancies
Ambulance Officer	1
Assistant Chief Ambulance Officer	2
Business Information Data Analysis GVI	1
Chief Ambulance Officer	1
Clerical Officer	9
Clinical Hub Advisor	5
Community Paramedics	8
Driving instructor	1
Education & Competency Assurance Officer	0
Emergency Medical Controllers	15
Emergency Medical Dispatcher	17
Emergency Medical Technician, Lead	13
Emergency Planning Manager GVII	1
Fleet Informatics and Finance GVII	1
Fleet Maintenance Controller Fleet and Equipment GVI	1
General Manager HR/IR	1
Grade V	3
Grade VI	1
Grade VII	1
Grade VII NEOC Manager	1
Grade VIII – Stakeholder Lead and Engagement Officer	1
Grade VIII Project Manager	1
Health and Safety Advisor GVII	1
Intermediate Care Operative	34
Paramedics	TBC
Principal Medical Officer	1
Research Officer GVII	1
Senior Medical Officer	8
Team Leader Emergency Medical Controller	2