



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  
Tallaght, Dublin, D24 XNP2

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t 01 4631624/6

Ref: CW/PQ's/230201

1 February 2023

Deputy Colm Burke TD  
Dáil Éireann  
Leinster House  
Dublin 2

**PQ 1742/23**

To ask the Minister for Health if consideration will be given to setting an annual qualified paramedic recruitment target that is filled by ranking all applicants and taking from the highest rank down until the target is reached, without omitting eligible candidates; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Colm Burke

**PQ 1743/23**

To ask the Minister for Health if he will confirm that a system will be put in place to ensure adequate capacity is in place in the National Ambulance Service College for successful candidates to the National Ambulance Service to commence any induction and training required within 90 days of the campaign closing, in order that no successful candidates are left waiting on the panel indefinitely; and if he will make a statement on the matter. - Colm Burke

**PQ 1744/23**

To ask the Minister for Health if consideration will be given to putting in place a time limit of 90 days for the time that successful candidates can be left on a panel before a formal job offer is made in the National Ambulance Service; and if he will make a statement on the matter. - Colm Burke

**PQ 1745/23**

To ask the Minister for Health the support that is given to new-entry qualified paramedics as per the National Ambulance Service workforce support policy, education and competency assurance framework; if there are any plans to update this framework; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Colm Burke

**PQ 1747/23**

To ask the Minister for Health the reason that the National Ambulance Service uses an induction programme in lieu of competency assessments for Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council-registered EMTs and does not apply a similar process to PHECC-registered paramedics; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Colm Burke

**PQ 1748/23**

To ask the Minister for Health the reason that the National Ambulance Service does not accept Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council-qualified paramedics onto an induction programme where any policy or educational gaps can be addressed; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Colm Burke





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**PQ 1749/23**

**To ask the Minister for Health if consideration will be given to instructing the National Ambulance Service to undertake an independent review of the bank of questions used as part of the MCQ assessment, given the low success rates in campaigns; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Colm Burke**

Dear Deputy Burke,

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 Health for response.

**PQ 1742/23**

Qualification as a Paramedic is one part of the public service employment recruitment process. A number of applicants from both EU and non EU jurisdictions have secured professional registration through PHECC. There is no examination process to determine the competency of the applicant, rather, eligibility for registration is for the most part determined by a review of qualifications, educational transcripts and clinical experience. Each registered paramedic working on behalf of the HSE must be individual privileged by the NAS Clinical Director (a PHECC requirement) to practice and treat patients.

Hence, as a responsible authority for patient safety and in response to the publication of the PHECC Training and Education Standards in 2014, the HSE introduced a competency assessment for all applicants for registered Paramedic positions to confirm that any successful applicant is suitable for privileging.

We recognise that not passing an assessment for an applicant is upsetting. However, the HSE has a responsibility to ensure that any staff member who is engaged in under supervised practice is competent, as well as licensed to practice.

**PQ 1743/23**

The National Ambulance Service College (NASC) arranges a new induction process when there is a critical mass of candidates whom the HSE's National Recruitment Service has confirmed are ready to proceed to contracting stage, i.e. all reference checks, Garda Vetting and Occupational Health Service stages are complete. Such arrangements also need to align to the NASC/UCC academic cycle. In general terms, there is normally a critical mass of successful candidates (at least 10) available once a year whom will normally be scheduled for October when the Student Paramedic groups have started to move to various clinical placements. The draft NAS Strategy proposes to expand the number of NAS Campuses from three to six between 2023 and the end of 2025, subject the funding assigned to NAS in each of those years and the availability of Paramedicine Tutors.





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### **PQ 1744/23**

The National Ambulance Service College (NASC) arranges a new induction process when there is a critical mass of candidates whom the HSE's National Recruitment Service has confirmed are ready to proceed to contracting stage, i.e. all reference checks, Garda Vetting and Occupational Health Service stages are complete. Such arrangements also need to align to the NASC/UCC academic cycle. In general terms, there is normally a critical mass of successful candidates (at least 10) available once a year whom will normally be scheduled for October when the Student Paramedic groups have started to move to various clinical placements. In this context, it is not practically possible to say that there will always be vacancies or induction places available within 90 days. Separately, but related, candidates placed on a recruitment panel still need to receive a job offer, undergo all reference checks, Garda Vetting and Occupational Health Service before a contract is issued. This element of the HSE's recruitment process alone invariably takes longer than 90 days.

### **PQ 1745/23**

Current frameworks are reviewed following any change to national training and education standards or the outcome of Governance Validation Framework assessments.

### **PQ 1747/23**

Each registered paramedic working on behalf of the HSE must be individually privileged by the NAS Clinical Director (a PHECC requirement) to practice and treat patients.

Hence, as a responsible authority for patient safety and in response to the publication of the PHECC Training and Education Standards in 2014, the HSE introduced a competency assessment for all applicants for registered Paramedic positions to confirm that any successful applicant is suitable for privileging.

### **PQ 1748/23**

We recognise that some individuals could achieve a satisfactory level of paramedic practice with some level of internship support so with this in mind, we are likely to introduce a part qualified type of recruitment in 2023 to try recruit those individuals where they meet all of the other requirements for public service employment.

### **PQ 1749/23**

Each registered paramedic working on behalf of the HSE must be individually privileged by the NAS Clinical Director (a PHECC requirement) to practice and treat patients.

Hence, the competency assessment required to provide the associated assurance is a matter for the HSE to decide as the employer.

I hope this information is helpful.

Yours sincerely





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*Robert Munn*

Director  
National Ambulance Service

