



Oifig an Stiúirthóra Oibríochtaí  
An tSeirbhís Náisiúnta  
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01 February 2023

Deputy Willie O'Dea,  
Dáil Éireann  
Leinster House  
Dublin 2

**PQ 63162/22**

**To ask the Minister for Health his views on whether it is appropriate that ambulances are coming from as far away as Rathkeale in response to emergency calls from patients in Limerick city; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Willie O'Dea**

Dear Deputy,

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.

The call taking/dispatch function is operated by the National Ambulance Service National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC), which operates across two sites, Dublin and Ballyshannon. NEOC utilises Advanced Medical Priority Dispatch System (AMPDS) using international standards in triaging and prioritising emergency calls. NEOC dynamically deploys resources to areas where cover is required or to respond to incidents as they arise to ensure the nearest available resource responds to emergencies. All 112/999 calls are clinically triaged based on the patient's condition and the nature and location of other 112/999 calls in the area are understandably not apparent to callers when they call 112/999. The nearest available and most appropriate response is dispatched, with the most urgent calls prioritised.

The ambulance service operates on a national basis and mobilises responses to calls for assistance based on patient needs, ambulances may travel to and be dispatched from various locations irrespective of their base as they are not confined to work in geographical areas. This means that an ambulance based in Killarney may be dispatched to a call in Cork if it has just handed over a patient in Cork University Hospital and it is the nearest available ambulance to the incident. The current deployment model is designed around international best practice and has eliminated previous practices where the nearest ambulance was not always dispatched due to former legacy boundaries.

Yours sincerely

William Merriman  
Deputy Director  
National Ambulance Service

