



Oifig anStiúrthóir
An tSeirbhís Náisiúnta,

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

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Ref: RM/PQs/30312/30315/30316/30317/30327/30328/30329/24

Deputy David Cullinane
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Dublin 2

PQ30212/24

To ask the Minister for Health the expenditure on private ambulance services in 2023 and to date in 2024, by month, in tabular form

PQ 30315/24

To ask the Minister for Health the number of 999 calls received nationally, and by division, where the patient was deceased by the time an ambulance reached the scene, in each of the past ten years including to date in 2024, in tabular form.

PQ 30316/24

To ask the Minister for Health the average ambulance response time per region, per year, for each of the past ten years, in tabular form.

PQ 30317/24

To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons who have retired from the national ambulance service in each of the past five years, by staff grade; and the number of new persons employed by the national ambulance service in each of the past five years, in tabular form.

PQ30327/24

To ask the Minister for Health the percentage of incidents responded to by a patient - carrying vehicle in 18 minutes and 59 seconds or less, by clinical status nationally and by ambulance region, for each quarter of 2023 and to date in 2024, in tabular form.

PQ30328/24

To ask the Minister for Health the average length of ambulance response times nationally and by region for each quarter of 2023 and to date in 2024, in tabular form.

PQ 30329/24

To ask the Minister for Health average ambulance turnaround time at each emergency department for each quarter in 2023 and 2024, inclusive, in tabular form.

Dear Deputy Cullinane,

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.

PQ 30312/24

Most expenditure on private ambulance companies across the HSE is the responsibility of individual Hospital Groups and Hospitals, including S38 Hospitals.

In this context, the details set out in Table 1 below relates to the amounts spent by NAS on private ambulances in 2023 and to date 2024. Such expenditure is dependent on the allocation of specific funding for surge measures in line with the HSE' Urgent and Emergency Care Plan:

	2023	2024
	€m	€m
January	0.45	0.42
February	0.68	0.40





March	0.57	0.29
April	1.13	0.24
May	0.81	0.30
June	0.81	0.13
July	0.17	
August	0.18	
September	0.00	
October	0.05	
November	0.04	
December	0.25	
Total	€5.15m	€1.77m

PQ 30315/24

NAS is unable to speculate on the cause of death of patients who are not in cardiac arrest (clinical death) at the time of a 999 call but subsequently present to the arriving crew in cardiac arrest. For some patients, death may be expected (medical practitioner certifies death without a post-mortem). In contrast, for others, the nature and extent of their injuries are incompatible with life, e.g. blunt force trauma in a road traffic collision.

The only true correlation between whether a quicker ambulance response time MAY have prevented death, i.e. a preventable death, is where the Coroner makes such a determination. Given the very low numbers of such decisions, NAS does not generate such records as there is no operational imperative to do so and where such records may identify a family who has already experienced the trauma of a Coroner's Inquest.

PQ 30316/24

Please refer to response to PQ's 2657/23, 2909/23, 2910/23 & 2656/23, issued to you on 2nd February 2023. These responses provide the data on average response times per region for the years 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022.

In relation to 2023 and 2024, please note that the HSE National Service Plan (NSP) for 2023 and 2024 sets out the Key Performance Indicators (KPI) for each HSE service. In relation to NAS, there are two national aggregate KPI targets for emergency calls which apply to the following call categories only:

- PURPLE (life-threatening cardiac or respiratory arrest) – Target: Respond to 75% of such calls within 18 minutes and 59 seconds
- RED (life-threatening illness or injury, other than cardiac or respiratory arrest) - Target: Respond to 45% of such calls within 18 minutes and 59 seconds

These targets are national aggregate targets only and are not measured or reported on a county or regional basis. 999 calls which are not categorised as PURPLE or RED are not deemed to be emergency calls and therefore, there are no response times targets for such calls.

At the end of Month 5, 2024, NAS are currently achieving both targets as set out in the NSP 2024.





The specific records you have requested are not available as there is no service plan or operational reason for the collection of such information and there are no clerical administrative staff in place to facilitate the production of such reports.

PQ 30317/24

Year	Total No. of Retirements	Total No. of Starters
2019	15 Total 9 Paramedics 1 Intermediate Care Operative 1 Education & Competency Assurance Officer 1 Clerical Officer 1 Grade VII 1 Assistant Chief Ambulance Officer 1 Chief Ambulance Officer	170 Total 1 Assistant National Director 1 Driving Instructor 3 Grade VI 1 Grade VII 2 Clerical Officers 2 Clinical Hub Advisors 4 Ambulance Officers 1 Area Operations Manager 23 Intermediate Care Operatives 62 Paramedic Students 37 Emergency Medical Controllers 12 Paramedics 21 Paramedic Supervisors
2020	19 Total 13 Paramedics 1 Clerical Officer 1 Driver (Patients on public roads) 2 Education & Competency Assurance Officers 1 Grade VI 1 Emergency Medical Controller Team Leader	147 Total 3 Grade IV 2 Grade V 1 Grade VI 7 Clerical Officers 2 Grade VIII 6 Ambulance Officers 1 Assistant Chief Ambulance Officer 1 Chief Ambulance Officer 33 Intermediate Care Operatives 63 Paramedic Students 12 Emergency Medical Controllers 5 Emergency Medical Dispatchers 6 Paramedic 5 Paramedic Supervisors
2021	Total 16 1 Assistant National Director 1 Plumber 1 Chief Ambulance Officer 1 Emergency Medical Controller 8 Paramedics 3 Paramedic Supervisors 1 Emergency Medical Controller Team Leader	Total 195 1 General Manager 1 Grade IV 2 Grade V 4 Grade VI 1 Grade VII 6 Clerical Officers 1 Specialist Registrar 1 Director of Nursing 4 Ambulance Officers 25 Intermediate Care Operatives 135 Paramedic Students 6 Emergency Medical Controllers 6 Paramedics 2 Paramedic Supervisors
2022	Total 22 1 Emergency Medical Controller 1 Ambulance Officer 2 Drivers (Patients Public Roads) 2 Intermediate Care Operatives 2 Emergency Medical Controllers	Total 277 2 General Managers 3 Heads of Service 9 Grade IV 5 Grade V 2 Grade VI





	13 Paramedics 1 Paramedic Supervisor	2 Grade VII 6 Clerical Officer 4 Grade VIII 1 Director of Nursing 1 Ambulance Officer 2 Ambulance Service Tactical Manager, Senior 51 Intermediate Care Operatives 161 Paramedic Students 21 Emergency Medical Controllers 5 Paramedics 2 Paramedic Supervisors
2023	Total 19 1 General Manager 1 Grade IV 1 Ambulance Officer 2 Drivers (Patients Public Roads) 1 Emergency Medical Controller 1 Emergency Medical Controller Sup. 10 Paramedics 1 Paramedic Supervisor 1 Emergency Medical Controller Team Leader	Total 272 6 General Manager 10 Grade IV 5 Grade V 6 Grade VI 12 Grade VII 8 Clerical Officer 2 Grade VIII 2 Paramedicine Tutor 5 Ambulance Service Shift Manager 36 Intermediate Care Operative 94 Paramedic Student 51 Emergency Medical Controller 2 Emergency Medical Controller 33 Paramedic

PQ 30327/24

In relation to 2023 and 2024, please note that the HSE National Service Plan (NSP) for 2023 and 2024 sets out the Key Performance Indicators (KPI) for each HSE service. In relation to NAS, there are two national aggregate KPI targets for emergency calls which apply to the following call categories only:

- PURPLE (life-threatening cardiac or respiratory arrest) – Target: Respond to 75% of such calls within 18 minutes and 59 seconds
- RED (life-threatening illness or injury, other than cardiac or respiratory arrest) - Target: Respond to 45% of such calls within 18 minutes and 59 seconds

These targets are national aggregate targets only and are not measured or reported on a county or regional basis. 999 calls which are not categorised as PURPLE or RED are not deemed to be emergency calls and therefore, there are no response times targets for such calls.

In this context, Table 4 below details the % of Clinical Status 1 PURPLE incidents responded to by a patient - carrying vehicle in 18 minutes and 59 seconds or less by quarter for 2023 and up to May 2024.

	Jan-Mar 2023	Apr-Jun 2023	Jul-Sep 2023	Oct-Dec 2023	Jan-Mar 2024	Apr-May 2024
National	74%	71%	70%	72%	76%	76%





Table 5 below details the % of Clinical Status 1 RED incidents responded to by a patient carrying vehicle in 18 minutes and 59 seconds or less by quarter for 2023 and up to May 2024.

	Jan-Mar 2023	Apr-Jun 2023	Jul-Sep 2023	Oct-Dec 2023	Jan-Mar 2024	Apr-May 2024
National	47%	46%	44%	44%	48%	48%

PQ 30328/24

Please refer to response to PQ's 2657/23, 2909/23, 2910/23 & 2656/23, issued to you on 2 February 2023. These responses provide the data on average response times per region for the years 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022.

In relation to 2023 and 2024, the specific records you have requested are not available as there is no service plan or operational reason for the collection of such information and there are no clerical administrative staff in place to facilitate the production of such reports.

PQ 30329/24

Please refer to response to PQ 49744/23 in relation to hospital turnaround times for 2023. For 2024, the HSE National Service Plan sets out two Key Performance Indicators as follows:

Responsibility of the receiving acute hospital - Patient Arrival at ED to Patient Handover

% of patients arriving by ambulance at ED to physical and clinical handover within 25 minutes of arrival – Target is 80%

Responsibility of NAS - Patient Handover at ED to Clear

% of ambulance crews who are ready and mobile to receive another 999 call within 20 minutes of clinically and physically handing over their patient at an ED or hospital – Target is 75%

These KPIs are in the process of being rolled out across all acute hospitals. The previous metric of "Arrival to Clear" or "Turnaround Time" is no longer being reported and in this regard, I regret to advise we are unable to answer this part of your question.

In relation to "*% of ambulance crews who are ready and mobile to receive another 999 / 112 call within 20 minutes of clinically and physically handing over their patient at an ED or hospital*", Table 6 below details the % of crews cleared within 20 mins of arrival:

	Percentage %
Jan-24	41%
Feb-24	44%
Mar-24	48%
Apr-24	50%
May-24	52%

I hope this information is helpful

Yours sincerely

Robert Morton
Director
National Ambulance Service

