



Oifig an Stiúrthóra Oibríochtaí
An tSeirbhís Náisiúnta
Bloc 4, Lárionad Gnó,
Tulach Mhór,
Co. Uíbh Fhailí, R35 FH59

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3rd March 2025

Deputy John Paul O Shea
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Dublin 2

PQ 6177/25

To ask the Minister for Health the number of advanced paramedics working in the HSE National Ambulance Service; the number of vacant posts in the service currently; the plans in place to continue staffing the service into the future; and if she will make a statement on the matter. -John Paul O'Shea

Dear Deputy O Shea,

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.

There is no specific employment grade within the HSE called Advanced Paramedic and hence, a variety of grades of staff may be registered as an Advanced Paramedic with PHECC and be privileged to practice on behalf of the HSE.

There are currently over 400 HSE staff working in the NAS who are currently registered as an Advanced Paramedic with PHECC. Most of these have been educated through NAS, however, a growing number are direct entry staff who already hold PHECC registration as an Advanced Paramedic. In January 2025 there were 417 confirmed for Internal Audit of payment of Advanced Paramedic allowance. As the grade of Advanced Paramedic does not exist there are no vacancies at this level.

In relation to Advanced Paramedic training, the MSc. in Specialist Paramedic Practice (Advanced) is run nationally in conjunction with University College Cork (UCC). Please note that Advanced Paramedic is a level of clinical practice, i.e. registered as an Advanced Paramedic with the Pre Hospital Emergency Care Council (PHECC).

Most of this cohort have been educated through NAS, however, a number recruited already held PHECC registration as an Advanced Paramedic.

A recent analysis of Advanced Paramedic deployment has identified that while the number of patient contacts has increased, the level of patient benefit is not commensurate with the level of investment.





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The cost of Advanced Paramedic education is significant with staff historically receiving an allowance equivalent in excess of 20% additional pay, resulting in considerable competition for course places.

The HSE has informed the representative trade unions that there is a need to strengthen the deployment of existing staff with specialist skills to match patient requirements before any consideration can be given to increasing the number of staff with such training.

The work to do this is encompassed within a broader pay dispute, which is the subject of a WRC facilitated conciliation process, currently underway.

In the meantime, NAS has prioritised investment in an MSc. in Specialist Paramedic Practice (Community), again run nationally in conjunction with UCC. In excess of 20 Students in situ in 2025 with up to 24 Students expected to commence the course in 2025.

Where the HSE National Service Plan 2026 makes provision for an MSc. in Specialist Paramedic Practice (Advanced) programme, advertisement would only occur in 2026 with any start date expected to commence in September 2026.

I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

William Merriman
Director of Operations
National Ambulance Service

