



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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Ref: RM/PQ/25/14721-2/2025/04/10

10 April 2025

Deputy Brian Brennan TD
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Dublin 2

PQ25/14721

**371. To ask the Minister for Health the reason no advanced paramedic has been trained since 2019; if there are plans in place to recommence this training; and if she will make a statement on the matter. — Brian Brennan. [14721/25]*

PQ25/14722

**372. To ask the Minister for Health when she expects to commence the implementation of the paramedic specialist grade for the National Ambulance Service; and if she will make a statement on the matter. — Brian Brennan. [14722/25]*

Dear Deputy Brennan,

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

PQ25/14721

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

Advanced Paramedic is a level of professional registration, regulated by the Pre Hospital Emergency Care Council (PHECC)

<https://www.phecit.ie/PHECC/Home/PHECC/Default.aspx?hkey=0f1809e6-e621-4dd2-aa1f-b956995802d7>

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

Over 400 HSE staff working in the NAS are registered as Advanced Paramedics with PHECC. Most of them have been educated through NAS.

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. The cost of Advanced Paramedic education is significant with the most recent graduates commencing in 2023.





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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, which has been underway for a considerable period of time.

Community Paramedics provide interventions not within the scope of practice of either Paramedics or Advanced Paramedics. In particular, the ability to make decision about treating patients at home and reducing the need for conveyance to an ED represents a small but growing contribution to the HSE's overall response to leveraging community resources to treat patients at home.

Therefore, noting the current capacity of NAS Educational resources, NAS has prioritised available investment in a MSc. in Specialist Paramedic Practice (Community), again run nationally in conjunction with UCC. In excess of 20 Students are expected to graduate in 2025 with up to 24 Students expected to commence in 2025. These opportunities are advertised nationally for all staff to apply for.

Pending the resolution of matters before the WRC, there was no provision within the HSE National Service Plan 2025 or available educational capacity, to commence a specific MSc. in Specialist Paramedic Practice (Advanced) programme in 2025.

Formal approval (Commissioning) is expected for new service development posts, funding for which is expected to take effect from July 2025 with a view to full-year funding effect in 2026. Some of these posts will enable NAS to expand educational capacity going into 2026 thus enabling NAS to run two MSc. programmes in the same year.

Progress on addressing the deployment of Advanced Paramedics remains dependent on progress on a number of pay related matters, which are currently the subject of a WRC Conciliation process.

Part-year funding in 2025 is expected to facilitate up to 24 places on an MSc. in Specialist Paramedic Practice (Community), commencing in September 2025.

Subject to the HSE National Service Plan 2026, full-year funding in 2026 is expected to facilitate up to 24 places on an MSc. in Specialist Paramedic Practice (Advanced) programme in 2026. Recruitment for this programme commenced on the 8 April 2025, however, a Collective Grievance was received on the 9 April 2025 (see attached).

PQ25/14722

The Specialist Paramedic grade was sanctioned by the Department of Health and introduced in NAS in 2023. The attached correspondence is self-explanatory.





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In January 2019, arising from a WRC facilitated process in December 2018, Terms of Reference for an independent review was agreed. The document ***“Review and Examination of current EMT, Paramedic and Advanced Paramedic roles in the National Ambulance Service”*** is the output of this work which was finalised by the authors on the 30 May 2020.

The outstanding recommendation to be implemented relates to *“Make recommendations on the appropriate grading structure including updated salary scales”*

The subsequent dispute is now comprehended within Section 4.4.2 of the Public Service Agreement 2024 – 2026 with significant engagement ongoing between the HSE and the relevant trade unions under the auspices of the WRC.

In line with public pay policy, any proposed increases to pay, terms and conditions that may emerge from this process remain subject to approval by the Minister for Health, following consent and sanction by the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform.

I hope you find this information helpful

Yours sincerely

Robert Morton
Director
National Ambulance Service



From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday 8 April 2025 21:45
To: NASER <NAS.ER@hse.ie>
Subject: Re: Collective Grievance Procedure

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organisation. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi [REDACTED]

Thanks for that.

IARC is representative of SIPTU and Unite, some of our members are not represented by those two unions, therefore IARC does not represent them. I have been nominated to be a representative of our group in order to avoid 43 individual emails back and forth.

Our members are of the view that our treatment is objectively different to that of our peers and is in clear breach of the CPSA code of practice, specifically under merit, transparency and consistency. A panel member who was placed at the bottom of the panel near 100, was offered and given a place on a national course ahead of colleagues who placed higher on order of merit by moving from County Dublin to County Louth.

The previous panel was in existence and used in 2023 when formed in 2017. A staff member who went through the recruitment process in 2017 was given a place on an MSc Specialist Paramedic Practice - Advanced course with UCC in January 2023 - ahead of those who were recruited in 2021. This is a complete contradiction to the justification given by HR today in the IARC meeting that the panel must be disbanded after three years. Our panel members are clearly being treated differently as the precedent of the January 2023 class having a staff member from a panel that was six years old, exceeds the current age of our panel which is under four years old. This has professionally and financially disadvantaged all remaining members of the panel [REDACTED] is on record as saying the HSE has never disbanded a training panel before.

In 2023 staff voted to reject the introduction of this new grade code with associated terms and conditions. No new vote has taken place and the union issued a statement that new grade recruitment should cease.

Existing panel members are entitled to reapply to any new campaign, but due to management decision to not conduct training since 2023, which our panel members repeatedly highlighted as a cause of several issues, we are now severely disadvantaged by the volume of candidates we would be competing against.

[REDACTED], in writing told us that our place and order of merit on the panel would be kept in September 2024, the panel would not be disbanded and we would be offered a training course place when and if training resumed.

As a result, several members had a legitimate expectation as assured by a [REDACTED], that they would be given a place on any upcoming courses and as a result made life decisions based on this expectation.

In the letter from [REDACTED], she references that candidates would be appointed from the new panel to grade code 3188 with a new contract, making it promotional in nature and therefore requiring a campaign that allows fair access to all eligible candidates.

Again, our panel members are being objectively treated differently as several of our colleagues who were working with the aeromedical service, community paramedics etc. prior to the existence of the grade codes introduction, were not made to reapply with the rest of the staff body who were eligible for these jobs, they were just offered the grade code 3188 contract - which apparently is a promotion - without taking part in the recruitment campaign.

Our panel feel we are being objectively victimised as a result of consistently and repeatedly highlighting the issues around the lack of ALS to management through grievances, NIMS etc over the last number of years due to the above clear differences in treatment compared to our peers.

As each panel member has been individually affected by this in their own ways eg. skipped for rostered lines, financial loss, skipped on order of merit etc. several individual grievances have been filed.

Due to what we feel is clearly different treatment to that of our peers, we have submitted a complaint to the WRC.

We also request a formal review of the decision under the CPSA code of practice.

Representatives of our group remain open and willing to engage with management in the meantime to resolve this outside of the formal processes of the WRC and grievance policy.

Regards,

[REDACTED]

On Behalf of MSc Specialist Paramedic Practice - Advanced Panel



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Ref: RM/SF/NSD/20230124

12 September 2023

Ted Kenny
Sectoral Organiser
SIPTU

Brian Hewitt
Regional Officer
UNITE

Greg Lyons
Chair
IARC

By Email tedkenny@siptu.ie brian.hewitt@unitetheunion.org lyonsg@priority.ie

Re: Service Developments 2023

Colleagues,

I refer to our correspondence dated 24 January 2023 last, in particular in relation to the introduction of Specialist Paramedics in 2023. By way of update, I am pleased to confirm the following planned developments in the coming months:

September 2023	MSc. Specialist Practice	12 Students
October 2023	NEOC Clinical Hub	7 Specialist Paramedics (Clinical Hub)
January 2024	MSc. Specialist Practice	12 Students
January 2024	MSc. Critical Care	3 Students

I can also confirm that the Department of Health has conveyed sanction for the formal creation of the role of Specialist Paramedic, including the salary, terms and conditions, eligibility criteria and job specification, as follows and attached:

Title:	Specialist Paramedic
Grade Code:	3188
Pay Scale:	€44,966 - €45,901 - €47,117 - €48,308 - €49,705 - €51,305 - €53,105 - €55,305 - €58,105 (LSI) (1 March 2023)
Staff Category:	Health and Social Care Professionals

I attach a copy of the Departmental Sanction for your information.

For any queries on this correspondence, please contact Emily Mahon, General Manager, Employee Relations.

Yours Sincerely,

Robert Morton
Director
National Ambulance Service



Health Division

SIPTU,
Liberty Hall, Dublin 1
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Mobile: (087) 2842899 Email: tedkenny@siptu.ie

23rd of October 2023

Mr Robert Morton
Director
National Ambulance Service
Tullamore
Co. Offaly

Re: Specialist Paramedic Positions

Dear Mr Morton,

Having consulted with our membership and the fact that our members rejected the Pay and Modernisation proposal, we now wish to advise that we have no agreement on the introduction of the Specialist Paramedic positions and therefore the role out of these positions must cease immediately.

We cannot have a situation whereby our membership rejects a proposal and management ignore this decision and try and plough ahead and still implement the positions.

If the role out of the Specialist Paramedic positions continues then our Union will have no other option but to ballot our membership for industrial action up to and including strike action.

Yours Sincerely.

Ted Kenny

Sector Organiser,
SIPTU Ambulance Sector.
SIPTU Health Division