



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

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DC/PQ24054/25

27th May 2025

Deputy Peadar Tobin TD
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Dublin 2

PQ24054/25

To ask the Minister for Health the average ambulance response time in County Meath in each of the past ten years; and the steps she is taking to decrease ambulance response time in the region.
-Peadar Tóibín

Dear Deputy Tobin

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 response.

NAS is one of the State's Principal Emergency Services (PES) serving the population of Ireland, i.e., over five million people. An independent demand and capacity analysis conducted in 2022, projected 999 activity to increase by up to 107% over the 10-year period from 2017 to 2027.

Demand via the 999 service has increased by 25% since 2019, with growth in 2024 up by 9% on 2023. The need for additional capacity is a matter of public record https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/committee_of_public_accounts/2021-09-23/3/, whereby it was confirmed by the HSE (CEO and COO) in September 2021, that NAS had a then capacity deficit of 90 emergency ambulance crews daily (1,080 WTE).

The matter was the subject of further public record in February 2023 https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/33/joint_committee_on_health/submissions/2023/2023-02-22_opening-statement-robert-morton-director-national-ambulance-service-nas_en.pdf following the finalisation of a NAS Workforce Plan 2022-2028 in June 2022, underpinned by an independent demand and capacity analysis, which identified the





need for considerable growth in the workforce across the country, both now and into the future (2,579 additional WTE by 2028).

The HSE Pay and Numbers Strategy for 2024 set the WTE Ceiling for NAS at 2,321 WTE which represents a growth of almost 300 WTE since 2019.

In comparison to NAS, the Welsh Ambulance Service NHS Trust has 4,079 WTE <https://senedd.wales/media/kradakae/gen-ld16576-e.pdf> to serve 3.1m people (2021 Census), while the Scottish Ambulance Service has 5,837 WTE

<https://www.scottishambulance.com/publications/annual-report-and-accounts/> to serve 5.4m people (2022 Census).

In 2025, the HSE National Service Plan set national aggregate Key Performance Indicator (KPI) targets for emergency calls as follows:

- PURPLE (Echo, life-threatening cardiac or respiratory arrest) (75% in 18 minutes, 59 seconds)
- RED (Delta, life-threatening illness or injury, other than cardiac or respiratory arrest) (45% in 18 minutes, 59 seconds)

As NAS response targets are national aggregate targets rather than locally based, reporting records on response performance are national level only.

The table below outlines national performance against these targets for 2023 and 2024:

YEA R	MONTH	TARGET	NATIONAL PURPLE RESPONSE	NTH LEINSTER RESPONSE	TARGET	NATIONAL RED RESPONSE	NTH LEINSTER RESPONSE
2023	January	80%	77%	80%	50%	48%	51%
	February	80%	73%	78%	50%	49%	47%
	March	80%	73%	75%	50%	45%	43%
	April	75%	73%	76%	45%	47%	50%
	May	75%	71%	75%	45%	46%	48%
	June	75%	69%	72%	45%	44%	42%
	July	75%	71%	77%	45%	44%	40%
	August	75%	71%	82%	45%	43%	46%
	September	75%	67%	72%	45%	45%	51%
	October	75%	73%	80%	45%	45%	46%
	November	75%	72%	76%	45%	47%	48%
	December	75%	72%	74%	45%	41%	33%
2024	January	75%	74%	83%	45%	48%	50%
	February	75%	77%	77%	45%	48%	48%
	March	75%	77%	80%	45%	48%	48%
	April	75%	79%	80%	45%	49%	50%
	May	75%	73%	74%	45%	47%	48%
	June	75%	74%	79%	45%	45%	47%
	July	75%	71%	79%	45%	47%	50%





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August	75%	72%	76%	45%	47%	49%
September	75%	73%	80%	45%	47%	48%
October	75%	72%	74%	45%	46%	48%
November	75%	73%	76%	45%	45%	46%
December	75%	66%	75%	45%	40%	41%

Table 1: National Response times and targets 2023 & 2024

There are no response times targets for low acuity calls originating through 999 and hence during busy periods, patients triaged as non-life threatening can experience delays in our response which while regrettable, remains beyond our control due to the significant gap between rapidly rising demand and the level of capacity available.

Since January 2025, data is being recorded per Regional Health Area (RHA). Table 2 gives the response times for Dublin & North East, which includes Co. Meath, and includes national performance data:

MONTH	TARGET	NATIONAL PURPLE RESPONSE	DNE RESPONSE	TARGET	NATIONAL RED RESPONSE	DNE RESPONSE
January	75%	73%	79%	45%	43%	44%
February	75%	73%	75%	45%	47%	51%
March	75%	72%	72%	45%	47%	52%
April	75%	71%	80%	45%	47%	54%

Table 2: RHA A Response times 2025

I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely,

David Clarke
Head of Service
Integrated Service Operations East
National Ambulance Service

