



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

[www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)  
[@hselive](https://twitter.com/hselive)

Ref: RM/PQ49857-8/25

7 October 2025

Deputy Pádraig Rice  
Dáil Éireann  
Leinster House  
Dublin 2

**PQ49857/25**

*To ask the Minister for Health if she will immediately review the decision of the National Ambulance Service (NAS) to outsource the contract for non-emergency patient transport in the greater Dublin area to a private ambulance provider; if she will commit to strengthening and investing in NAS resources rather than diverting public funds into private services; if she will ensure that meaningful consultation with staff representatives is initiated; and if she will make a statement on the matter. - Pádraig Rice*

**PQ49858/25**

*To ask the Minister for Health the reason for outsourcing a contract for non-emergency patient transport in the greater Dublin area to a private ambulance provider, given that the National Ambulance Service already operates a well-established and fully staffed intermediate care vehicle (ICV) service; the justification for this decision being taken without any meaningful consultation with staff or their representatives; the steps she is taking to ensure that existing ICV service is protected; and if she will make a statement on the matter. - Pádraig Rice*

Dear Deputy Rice

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.

**PQ49857/25**

There is no plan to outsource the NAS Intermediate Care Service, who continue to do a fantastic job, both responding to the needs of our patients and supporting patient flow across our acute hospital network.

In stark contrast, the HSE's National Service Plan in 2025, has provided for 24 additional posts in this service to facilitate expansion in both the South West and Mid-West Regions this year. 22 new EMTs commenced induction and a period of adaptation on 3 June 2025 (unfortunately, 2 candidates have dropped out).

Separately, we have submitted a bid to the HSE Estimates process, for 42 further posts in 2026 to create six new seven-day ICS crews, one in each HSE Region. It will be a matter for decision makers to accept or reject our proposals, based on the budget assigned to the HSE by Government next year.





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

[www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)  
[@hselive](https://twitter.com/hselive)

We are proud of the work of all our staff in NAS and will continue to advocate for further increases in our directly employed workforce in our Intermediate Care Service.

In summary, we want to be clear, NAS is not proposing to outsource our Intermediate Care Service now or in the future. NAS remains fully committed to staffing and expanding the Intermediate Care Service and continuing to deploy this valuable service in line with the PHECC EMS Dispatch and Inter Facility Transfers Standards.

**PQ49858/25**

An industrial dispute arose in relation to a tender process undertaken by NAS, intended to support a pilot initiative to test alternative transport arrangements for patients accessing our services through 112/999, but who following clinical triage, did not require either an Emergency Ambulance or Intermediate Care Vehicle response.

This pilot initiative emerged in response to feedback from our staff in NAS about being dispatched to lower acuity incidents. A trial was envisaged whereby patients, after appropriate triage by the Clinical Hub at NEOC, could be potentially supported by referral to a taxi type mode of transport.

In the interests of patient safety, it was agreed between our Operations and Clinical Directorates that any trial period would require an EMT to “escort” any patient in the taxi type mode of transport. As no NAS staff were identified as available to support the trial, NAS engaged HSE Procurement to identify a suitable provider as a second alternative for the pilot.

The tender specification was not escalated to or cleared by the NAS Executive Team with no resultant sensitivity check on the text, or confirmation that the Information and Consultation obligations had been completed – there was considerable concern from trade union representatives when a private ambulance provider secured the tender to provide the taxi type mode of transport. This was seen as an attempt by the NAS and HSE to fully outsource the Intermediate Care Service (ICS). This is not the case.

Yours sincerely

Robert Morton  
Director  
National Ambulance Service

