

Winter 2015

Working Together

Staff magazine of the National Ambulance Service



**Aero Medical
Service Marks
its 1000th
Mission**

**Our Strategic
Plan VISION 2020**

**Around the
Country**

Patient Update



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Aero Medical Service Marks its 1,000th Mission



Staff Feedback Story



National Director Overview

I wish to thank all the National Ambulance Service staff that I have met to date since I commenced in February 2015. It is my intention to visit all of our areas to meet as many staff as possible and hear your views on our service and how we can continue to improve it.

This is the first edition of a quarterly staff magazine to keep staff informed of performance, developments and feedback from patients and the public. It is just one part of a wider communications strategy that is being developed for the National Ambulance Service to ensure we improve engagement with the various people and organisations we work with and for, including our own staff. This magazine was developed taking the annual staff survey into account. Your manager can brief you on the key findings from both the HSE and NAS survey results and we will cover those in more detail in the next issue. The key findings in the NAS survey results were the pride that staff have in their profession and service but that we need to provide much clearer

direction and work much harder to connect all parts of our service together.

We have put in place a communications steering group and a communications working group to help improve the communications within NAS. This working group has representation from all areas, so that all staff can contribute.

I also want to acknowledge the small group that have been involved in putting this newsletter together which will be one of many ways in which we want improve engagement within and between staff in the National Ambulance Service.

Damien McCallion
HSE National Director

New People and Appointments

- Graham Finley, HR General Manager - Graham is with us since mid 2015 and is actively working with National Recruitment on a recruitment campaign for additional NAS staff. He works closely with Nicky Glynn and HR.
- Ann Marie Oglesby - Ann Marie took up her new role as the General Manager for Quality and Patient Safety within NAS on 6th July 2015. She joined NAS from the State Claims Agency and has worked with NAS to introduce the new National Incident Management System (NIMS). Ann Marie's role has been introduced to strengthen our quality and patient safety systems and to support the various changes underway within the service.



- The Minister for Health, Leo Varadkar TD officially opened the National Ambulance Service Headquarters, Rivers Building, Tallaght on Friday 3rd July 2015.

Paramedics on TV3

The 'Paramedics' programme which was first aired on Thursday 16th April 2015 on TV3 reflected the wonderful work carried out everyday by each and every staff member within the service. There were many people involved in the production process, from staff to managers, over the many months of filming and their time and input was very much appreciated. It is great to see the positive reaction of viewers to the programme and indeed the positive comments on social media.



- NAS Paramedics from Dublin pictured with the Minister for Health awaiting their flu vaccine, October 2015.

Director NAS Overview

Martin Dunne, Director, NAS



In this the first publication, it is only fair and right to acknowledge all the good work and positive results achieved as an eventful and extremely busy year for our service has passed and a new one has commenced. I would like to extend my thanks for your utmost efforts regarding our service during 2015.

The NAS has made great advances and a range of service improvements were delivered, in 2015, with others at various stages of delivery. In September 2015, the reconfiguration of command and control from multiple centres to a modern National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC), Tallaght and Ballyshannon, on full digital systems was completed. This allows for the nearest available resource to be dispatched in the shortest possible time to each emergency request. The national Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system went live that month. The ONE LIFE Project is an unprecedented initiative undertaken by the NAS with the clear aim of increasing Out-of-Hospital Cardiac Arrest (OHCA) survival rates in Ireland. This project also further enhances the service's commitment to be at the forefront of innovation and continuous improvement in patient-focused pre hospital care. A joint Emergency Aero Medical Service between the NAS and the Irish Air Corps continues. On Thursday June 9th 2015, Minister for Health Leo Varadkar and Minister for Defence Simon Coveney marked the 1,000th 'air ambulance' mission with a special event at Casement Aerodrome, Baldonnel. This was a major milestone for the air ambulance service. In 2016, a series of programmes called 'Paramedics' was aired giving an insight into the normal day to day working of the NAS and reflected the range and scale of the calls received and attended on a daily basis. The NAS works with the Community First Responder (CFR) schemes nationally and greatly values the contribution that these voluntary schemes make.

In line with legislative requirements the National Service Plan (NSP) 2016 sets out the type and volume of services, which will be provided within the funding allocated by Government over the course of this year. In relation to the NAS the budget allocation in 2016 is €151.4m (a 5% increase from last year). A total of €5.2m was allocated to sustain our existing level of



service which will assist in funding current payroll, equipment cost pressures and ongoing service deliverables. While staffing numbers remain a concern this funding will help support the spend in order to minimise the impact on service levels, while more staff are recruited and trained. Development priorities will be phased in during 2016, with a cost of €2m and a full year cost of €3.6m. This funding will be utilised to address staff deficits and implementing improved response times through increasing the training intake of paramedics, implementing mobile terminal data terminals in emergency ambulances, initiating the first phase of an alternative care pathway 'Hear and Treat', expanding the Community First Responder Schemes and assisting in the delivery of a children's ambulance service.

An allocation of €3m was made available for Information and Communication technology investment funding. This funding will be utilised to assist in the implementation of Electronic Patient Care Record (EPCR), ambulance arrival screens and mobile data terminals, etc. An allocated fleet budget of €18m has been made available to the NAS for fleet replacement in 2016. This budget will secure the purchase of approximately 50 new emergency ambulances and 35 emergency ambulance remounts, 10 intermediate care vehicles and one rapid response vehicle. To accelerate the purchase process a small portion of this amount was allocated and drawn down in 2015. The NAS welcomes its increase in its budget allocation for 2016 and the NAS, as always, will pursue all opportunities to achieve increased value and efficiency across its services and will continue to implement cost containment and cost reduction programmes wherever practicable.

For your information some of the highlights (up until the last published reporting period i.e. November 2015) are as cited below:

Quarterly Performance Care for Patients

In October 2015, the total number of AS1^[1] and AS2^[2] calls received was 25,884; activity is ↑4% (1,062) compared to the same month last year and ↑4% (8,495) year to date. ECHO calls (life-threatening cardiac or respiratory arrest) were ↑19% (62), compared to the same month last year. ECHO activity year to date is ↑19% (483). ECHO incidents responded to within the target timeframe of 18 minutes and 59 seconds was 76% (↓1% from last month). Nationally, there was an 11% (1,049) increase in DELTA call (life-threatening illness or injury, other than cardiac or respiratory arrest) activity compared to same month last year. DELTA activity is ↑9% (6,769) year to date. DELTA incidents responded to within the target timeframe of 18 minutes and 59 seconds was 62% (⇒static with last month).

Return of spontaneous circulation (ROSC) at hospital in bystander witnessed out of hospital cardiac arrest with initial shockable rhythm, using the Utstein comparator group calculation – Q2 2015 = 40% (↑3% from last reporting period and on target). Reporting on this indicator represents a significant development for NAS in that this is the first time in pre hospital care in Ireland that a clinical outcome indicator has been introduced and publically reported

379 Emergency Aero Medical Service calls completed YTD.

364 Irish Coast Guard calls completed YTD / 97 Air Ambulance calls completed YTD / 67 adult transplant patient transfers YTD.

534 Neonatal Retrieval Transfers YTD / 71 Paediatric Retrieval Transfers YTD / 89 Mobile Intensive Care Transfers YTD / 65 transfers via the Children's Ambulance Service.

^[3]In October 2015, 88% (↑5% on last month and ñ18% to target) of the inter hospital transfers, previously carried out by ambulances were handled by the Intermediate Care Service.

62% (↑1% from last month) of vehicles were released and had their crews and vehicles available to respond to further calls within 30 minutes or less. (⇒95% static with last month) of calls had crews and vehicles clear and available within 60 minutes.

^[4]In October 2015, 90% (↑3% with last month and ↑50% since start of the year) of delays were escalated where crews were not cleared nationally in 60 minutes; in line with the process / flow path in the ambulance turnaround framework.

131 (⇒static with last month and ↑20 since January 2015) Community First Responder Groups in 18 counties nationally. CFR engagements 131 (↑7 from last month) CFR engagements (1,547 YTD). 39% (↑3% from last month and ↓7% since January 2015) of the total number of ECHO calls arrived at scene had CFR engagement, last month – response time data one month in arrears.

All control centres carried out the Advanced Quality Assurance Audit (AQuA) - 100% compliant with activity target.

29 Emergency Ambulances (new build) will be operational before the end of Q4 2015. The total number of new vehicles for NAS in 2015 will be 64.

^[1] AS1 - 112/ 999 emergency and urgent calls

^[2] AS2 - Urgent calls received from a general practitioner or other medical sources

^[3] ICS activity data one month in arrears

^[4] Escalation activity one month in arrears



Update from the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC):

The NEOC has been busy during the year with lots of ongoing projects. Some of the projects include the following:

Training and Development:

In recent months, a number of Emergency Call Takers with relevant experience undertook the PHECC Education and Training Standards Emergency Medical Service Dispatcher course, this course takes 60 hours in total followed on by mentoring by current experience controllers and a final exam. This course was run at the training school based in NEOC – Tallaght.

Running parallel to this course is the PHECC Education and Training Standards Emergency Medical Service Emergency Call Taker Course. Currently we have students in both centres being assisted by current call takers before they sit their final exams in a few weeks. This course was run at the training school based in the NEOC – Tallaght.

Control Supervisors in both centres (Tallaght and Ballyshannon) have commenced a "Management Training Program", which will run over the next six months, this course has been compiled and made site specific to NAS by the training and development department.

Migration of the Regional Ambulance Control Centre (Wexford) to the NEOC – Tallaght, in late August, has been one of the final stages in the NAS migration. We welcomed four members in the NEOC Tallaght and are starting to educate current dispatchers in Tallaght of the geographical area.

New CAD System:

NAS welcomed a CAD system in late September last. MIS C3 was the company awarded the contract to supply same. Training of all staff members took place prior to the "go live" date, where trainers were all in house. This proved to be a very successful CAD "go live" project – well done to all involved.

There is also a new priority medical dispatch system replacing the PROQA system. We now have the Paramount system which is working well and is a change for the better.

Aeromedical:

This desk is operated from the Tallaght NEOC, and with the introduction of the new CAD system this has also provided additional training for all aeromedical dispatchers and users alike.

ICS:

Migration of the RACC Wexford to the NEOC also welcomed the ICS service of the South East. This incorporates the counties of Wexford, Waterford, Carlow, Kilkenny and South Tipperary. This is a very large area and NEOC now manages all the ICS requests for that National Ambulance Service.



CAD system



Patient Experiences

On Monday 27th April whilst in a chip/fish restaurant in Carrick-on-Shannon, Co. Leitrim, a 77 year old gentleman suffered a cardiac arrest.



The staff of the restaurant were not native English speakers, so whilst one person was attempting to ring 999/112, another person went in to the fishing tackle shop next door to get help from staff there, one of whom was able to communicate on the 999/112 call.

CPR was commenced by staff present, as instructed by NAS Call Taker, in the meantime a girl (aged 17) was spotted in a nearby shop, it was known that she was a lifeguard and she was summoned to help with CPR.

In addition, a call was made to the local hotel (Bush Hotel) as it was known they had an AED in their reception area. One of the family owners of the hotel answered the phone and when she

realised the problem, she grabbed the AED, and brought the hotel receptionist who was AED trained, with her. They ran out onto the street, and flagged down a passing vehicle. The driver of the vehicle drove them to the restaurant premises. On arrival they delivered three shocks to the collapsed man.

When the ambulance arrived the patient had a pulse and he was brought to Sligo General Hospital (with Garda escort), where he was ventilated and then transferred to the Cath Lab in Galway University Hospital. He was in ICU for a number of days.

He has made a full recovery and was discharged home. Well done to all involved in this emergency.

Baby on Board

Helen McNamara said she was eternally grateful to the NAS crew that helped deliver her son Oliver Thomas.

Andy Wilson and Noel O'Reilly were the two paramedics called to the scene, where a crew from Dublin Fire Brigade was already in attendance. Helen admitted that her unexpected home birth was a 'surreal experience'. She had been experiencing Braxton Hicks pains earlier that night but had no reason to believe she was in labour for real. When she started timing her contractions she realised they were only two minutes apart, so her husband Johnny called 999. Dublin Fire Brigade fire crew arrived and quickly attended to Helen with the NAS crew arriving moments later. From that moment it was 'let's deliver this baby'. Helen and Johnny wanted to thank both the DFB and NAS crews for helping them welcome their son into the world.





Jimmy Owes Life to this Pair

Retired farmer, Jimmy Flood, from Co Louth, met ambulance crew Alan Thompson and John Byrne to express his gratitude to them. Jimmy and his family were delighted to get the opportunity to welcome Alan and John back into their home to express their gratitude.

Less than a month before, the same two paramedics were arriving at the rural home in an altogether different set of circumstances. The two crew members, based in nearby Drogheda, were back to see how Jimmy was doing after they had brought him back from death while en route to the Mater, on the side of the M1 motorway.

Jimmy's wife, Teresa, contacted the emergency services when she suspected that her husband was having a heart attack, despite his insistence that all would be cured with a quick lie down in his bed. She knew something was wrong, he had been working in the fields, and had to call home to get someone to help him back to the house, as he was not feeling well. The NAS crew knew instantly that Jimmy was in the middle of a chronic coronary incident and headed straight to the Mater Hospital. Just before the toll booth on the M1, Jimmy suddenly went into cardiac arrest, and the ambulance had to stop while both paramedics worked

to revive him. His heart stopped beating for six minutes before he was finally resuscitated and stabilised. Thanks to the skills of Andy and John, with the assistance of a second crew, Susie Ogelsby and Paul Kelly, all worked well for Jimmy. Within five hours of the 999 call being made, Jimmy had survived the heart attack, was treated with surgery to insert a stent for the blocked artery in the Mater Hospital and was sitting up in bed in 'brilliant shape' back in Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital, Drogheda.



Fashion Show

The National Ambulance Service along with the Fire Brigade, Gardaí and others participated in a Fashion Show in aid of Irish Cancer Society and Breakthrough Cancer Research in November 2015. The paramedics involved were Ger O'Dea, Peter Lane, David O'Donoghue, James Mooney and Colin O'Leary, and proudly represented the NAS South in this fundraising event. Well done to all involved.

Well done to the NAS crew from Wicklow, who assisted with the delivery of a baby while on route to a Dublin Maternity Hospital. Mother and baby are said to be doing well.



Blarney CFR Group are one of over 130 Community First Responder schemes alerted and dispatched by The National Ambulance Service nationwide.





Aero Medical Service Marks its 1,000th Mission



Minister for Health Leo Varadkar and Minister for Defence Simon Coveney marked the 1,000th 'air ambulance' mission with a special event at Casement Aerodrome, Baldonnel. The pilot Emergency Aeromedical Support Service (EAS) provides dedicated aeromedical support to the National Ambulance Service (NAS), particularly for patients in the west where land ambulance transit times would not be clinically appropriate.

It was set up as a pilot project between the NAS and the Air Corps and receives additional support from the Irish Coast Guard. A working group was established to look at options for the future delivery of the service. The group has recommended that a service be made permanent. Both Ministers have agreed to seek the endorsement of Government for this proposal and commit to an ongoing review of the operation, so as to sustain a quality service into the future.

Minister Varadkar said: "I congratulate the staff of the Irish Air Corps, the National Ambulance Service, and the Irish Coast Guard for completing 1,000 missions on the 26th May last. This is a great example of what can be achieved by Government Departments working in partnership. This service has been a great step forward in providing access to specialised emergency treatment for patients living in remoter areas. It is also of significance that one third of the missions have been in response to STEMI heart attacks, and have allowed these patients to be treated in a specialist setting within 90 minutes of diagnosis."

Welcoming the fact that a Department of Health led working group, provided a positive assessment of the quality of the service that has been provided by the Air Corps, Minister Coveney commented, "Whilst the Air Corps has certainly set the benchmark during the pilot phase, and will continue to provide the service at its current level, as would be expected in implementing the report we must and indeed are obliged to keep an open mind as to the many different ways of providing the

service and to keep all options under consideration in the context of ensuring a sustainable long term arrangement."

The role of the Emergency Aeromedical Support Service is to deliver advanced life support to patients at the scene, by the Advanced Paramedic and the attending NAS ground crew. It also provides rapid transport for patients to the most appropriate hospital that meets the clinical need of the patient.

The service is currently operated jointly by the Irish Air Corps and the National Ambulance Service, with back-up provided by the Irish Coast Guard. It was set up on a pilot basis, to see if there was a need for a dedicated emergency aeromedical service on a permanent basis. It operates alongside the Air Corps' inter-hospital transfer service which was introduced in 1964 and carries out approximately 100 missions each year.

The Air Corps provide the crews from 'Number 3 Operations Wing' to fly and maintain an Agusta Westland AW139 helicopter, which is based at Custume Barracks in Athlone. The National Ambulance Service provides the onboard Advanced Paramedic.

The Emergency Service is tasked by the National Aeromedical Coordination Centre which is based in the National Emergency Operation Centre in Tallaght. The NAS operates a permanent support team for the EAS including a dedicated air medical liaison officer, education and training officer and a number of aeromedical advanced paramedics who crew the aircraft on a rotation basis.



UPDATE FROM MEDICAL DIRECTORATE

In the past number of years, the NAS Medical Directorate has supported the development of Clinical Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) which specifically target and measure the quality of care provided to each patient by our frontline practitioners.

Our principal project on enhancing patient outcomes is called The One Life Project. Over the past two years, the NAS Medical Directorate has engaged with both the country's leading resuscitation experts and our international counterparts in a collaborative project focused on systematically improving outcomes for patients who suffer an out of hospital cardiac arrest in Ireland. The One Life Project not only represents our commitment to improve standards of care it also represents our commitment to measure and publicly report on clinical outcomes of patients. The Implementation Strategy is broken into four Strategic Pillars.

- Build community resilience by developing complementary models of OHCA response and Community First Responder (CFR) Schemes. Expand the National Ambulance Services role in public health promotion and education.
- Refine call taking, resource allocation and dispatcher assisted CPR of OHCA cases by the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) and promote the vital role they play in outcomes of the OHCA patient.
- Enhance the quality of care delivered by Emergency Medical Services at the scene and cultivate a coordinated approach to Return Of Spontaneous Circulation (ROSC) Care.
- Refine the process and quality of data management, clinical audit and research for OHCA and improve feedback to all stakeholders.



The One Life Project has developed a number of supporting materials for NAS staff, the wider health service and the public. The publications and videos can be found on the HSE webpage <http://www.hse.ie/nas/onelife>.

With ongoing improved systems of clinical audit and the introduction of electronic PCR systems the NAS will have a greater ability to improve service delivery to the STEMI patient, stroke patient and major trauma patient in the future.

The role of the NAS Medical Directorate is to oversee clinical quality of care and patient safety, we will be publishing quarterly updates on clinical aspects of care within the NAS and future clinical developments to enhance the overall quality of patient care.

UPDATE FROM COLLEGE

Shane Knox, Assistant Chief Ambulance Officer – Education Manager with the National Ambulance Service College recently graduated from the Graduate Entry Medical School, University of Limerick with a Doctorate of Philosophy. This graduation represents the first PhD within the National Ambulance Service and is the first PhD in Ireland for a registered pre-hospital practitioner.

The subject for his studies was 'A model of Continuous Professional Development for registered pre-hospital practitioners in Ireland'. As part of his programme Shane worked closely with the Regulatory body, the Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council (PHECC) and commenced a wide consultation process with practitioners at every level. As a consequence, the first guidelines for Emergency Medical

Technicians (EMTs) were published in November 2013 by the Regulator making EMTs the first pre-hospital practitioners compelled to provide evidence of CPD to ensure annual registration.

A number of papers relating to the study were published in peer-reviewed journals and Shane was invited to present at conferences in Nevada and Hong Kong. The final publication related to the study involved discussion fora with EMTs from the Civil Defence. These groups gave feedback on the CPD process and system and raised some interesting considerations for the future implementation of CPD to other PHECC registrants.

Shane defended his thesis earlier in the year to a panel of university professors from Ireland and the USA. The expertise of the University and the guidance and support offered by his supervisor Professor Colum Dunne, were exceptional, according to Shane. However, the untimely passing of his external supervisor and former

Director of the Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council, Dr. Geoff King (RIP) was a tragic loss to all.

Shane wishes to thank all those pre-hospital professionals and registrants (EMTs, Paramedics and Advanced Paramedics) who participated in the study, for their interaction and support. Shane added that without the support of his own manager Macartan Hughes, work colleagues in the NAS College, NAS staff, PHECC staff and of course, the tolerance and patience of his wife and children the commitment to this four-year programme would not have been possible.





UPDATE FROM AREA OPERATIONS WEST

The two major service developments in the west were the opening and staffing of new ambulance bases in Tuam, Co. Galway and Mulranney, Co. Mayo. Both of these stations became operational in April 2015 and have already made a positive impact across the counties of Galway, Mayo and Roscommon. The development of these stations highlights the progressive nature of the service and the respective challenges faced across the West. Tuam will impact on a population catchment area of 25,000 people in North Galway, south Mayo and west Roscommon. Mulranney while serving a smaller population cohort demonstrated the ambulance commitment to the more rural and isolated areas.

We have also undertaken a major focus on Community First Responder Group to support NAS. We have been working with the community to develop the Community First Responder groups in County Galway. New groups have been developed in Maam, Leenane and Turloughmore. We are continuing to work with communities in Castleblakeny, Kinvara and Creagh to develop

their groups. Croíline Cois Fharráige (Spiddal) continues to grow and have nearly 60 volunteers. They are considering the possibility of separating the large group into five separate entities under the one umbrella group (Spiddal East, Spiddal West, Inverin, Tully and Rossaveal). All of the above have given the service in the West a solid base to expand the CFR groups across the western seaboard.



UPDATE FROM AREA OPERATIONS SOUTH

Well done to all involved in the migration of the Wexford Control Centre to the National Emergency Operational Centre and we wish to thank the Emergency Medical Controllers for the years of dedication within this role. This was the final centre to migrate. We have also expanded our Community First Responder schemes and we congratulate Killarney for the Community First Responder Scheme which went live in August 2015. We also congratulate Ms. Grainne Ryan, Clonmel who has successfully passed her Advanced Paramedic Course in March 2015.

We continue to develop our Intermediate Care Operatives. The HSE South Ambulance Service would like to welcome three additional Intermediate Care Service team members to the West Cork Group, Keith Walsh, Stephen Murphy and Diarmuid Comer who commenced on the 4th August 2015.

Finally, we wish to mark the 10th Anniversary of our work colleague, Mr. John O'Mahony, Paramedic Supervisor, Clonakilty Ambulance Base who died during the course of duty in September 2005.

We also wish to express their deepest condolences to the family of our work colleague, Mr. Paul Murphy, Paramedic – Cork City who passed away and is sadly missed by his friends and work colleagues in the South.





UPDATE FROM AREA OPERATIONS NORTH LEINSTER



Staff members from North Leinster and the NEOC at the Emergency Services Parade which was held in Dublin this month.



Darryl Coen, Operations Resource Manager, Drogheda/Dundalk meeting Ban Ki Moon at the 70th anniversary of the United Nations as well as Ireland's 60th year as a UN member.



Paramedic Supervisors from the North East receiving their certificates on completion of the paramedic supervisors development programme, undertaken by performance and development.

NAS attend to ill passenger after US bound flight diverts to Shannon

A US bound flight had to return to Shannon Airport on Thursday 1st October, after a 71 year old passenger suffered a heart attack about 90 minutes after takeoff and subsequently went into cardiac arrest. Airline staff and two doctors who were on board commenced CPR and a defibrillator was deployed. The National Ambulance Service (NAS) were alerted of the medical emergency on board the flight and dispatched two Paramedics and an Advanced Paramedic to meet the plane in Shannon.

It later emerged that the passenger was New York Mets baseball legend Rusty Staub. Mr Staub was taken to University Hospital, Limerick and is said to be making a good recovering. Mr Staub does not remember much of the ordeal but wanted to thank the airline staff and doctors on board the flight, the NAS crew and hospital staff who were involved in his recovery. He said he was feeling great and that he was grateful for all the elements to come together to enable him to feel so well only four days after having such an event. The NAS crew got a chance to check in on Rusty yesterday evening (four days after his emergency) to see how he was recovering.



Mr Rusty Staub, New York Mets baseball legend, pictured in University Hospital, Limerick with NAS crew Geraldine Meehan, Graeme Henebury and Shane Houlahan.



DEVELOPING A HUMAN RESOURCE STRATEGY FOR THE NATIONAL AMBULANCE SERVICE

Graham Finlay
HR General Manager NAS

One of the most important assets of the National Ambulance Service is our people. All of the various reviews and plans require us to have a clear and coherent strategy around how we continue to develop our people, given the changing nature of our service. As a result we have contracted with a company, Mazars, to support us in the development of a Human Resource and Organisation Design for the National Ambulance Service.

The strategy will be set in the context of the HSE's new people strategy but with a very specific focus on the needs of the National Ambulance Service and our staff. It will consider the impact of the various reviews including the HIQA report, Capacity Review and the review of the Provision of Emergency Ambulance Service in Dublin City and County. It is supported by the HSE's National Human Resource Director and the project is being overseen by a small steering group chaired by the National Director.

We face many challenges in our service including the requirement to recruit more staff, improve our retention rate in some parts of our service, ensure a funded workforce plan, meet our performance targets for the service and address increasing demands as we develop new models of care in our service, such as for example a hear and treat service in the national emergency operations centre. In addition the recent staff survey highlighted significant scope for improvement in how we engage with staff at all levels in the organisation. This magazine is just one small step to improve that.

The strategy will set out a clear direction for the National Ambulance Service in key areas such as Workforce Planning, Employee Relations, Recruitment and

Retention of Staff, Learning and Education, Health, Safety and Well Being of Staff, Communication and Staff Engagement, Performance Management, our HR Information Systems and the Organisation Development including the optimal organisation structure for the National Ambulance Service.

I will be providing you with regular updates on the process through your line managers and there will be opportunities for all staff to feedback during the process. Further information will follow in the coming weeks.



Our Strategic Plan VISION 2020

In recent years, the National Ambulance Service (NAS) has embarked on a strategic investment programme to develop a modern, quality service that is safe, responsive and fit for purpose. The service is implementing a significant reform agenda which mirrors many of the strategic changes underway in ambulance services internationally as they strive for higher performance, efficiency and cope with a continuously increasing demand on services. This is in line with the recommendations of the Department of Health's (DoH) strategic framework, Future Health, A Strategic Framework for Reform of the Health Service 2012 – 2015 to ensure a clinically driven, nationally co-ordinated system, supported by improved technology. Central to this reform is service improvement, quality and patient care with the NAS continuously striving to ensure that each patient's experience is not only safe and of a high quality but also caring and compassionate.

Major reviews of the service were undertaken or commissioned during 2014. Two of these reports are currently nearing completion. The outputs of these important reviews, namely: HIQA Report (2014) published on the 2nd December 2014, the National Ambulance Service Capacity Review (2014), the Provision of Emergency Ambulance Service in Dublin City and County (2015), will inform the strategic planning process which will shape the development of ambulance services in the coming years. The findings will be co-ordinated to ensure that there is a comprehensive and coherent response that utilises NAS resources most effectively.

The NAS will ensure the development of a Strategic Plan, with timelines, to realise a new vision for the ambulance service, in Ireland. Reflecting on lessons learnt to date the NAS will foster a service devoted to a culture of continuous learning and improvement; putting patients' needs first and striving to ensure that the value of patient centred care is communicated and understood by all staff. We are calling this vision 2020.

The strategic plan will be cognisant of emerging trends in pre-hospital emergency care and work underway in the clinical programme. This includes trends such as the development of new protocols to enable calls to be triaged and discharged, treatment on scene and discharge, community first responder schemes, new hospital protocols, exploration of extended scope of practice for existing and future practitioners and improved use of technology.

Given the changing nature of healthcare, increasing demands and the age profile of our population, we are likely to see a continued growth in demand for ambulance services. This needs to be considered in finalising a strategic plan for the service.

The National Ambulance Service (NAS) is implementing a significant reform agenda which mirrors many of the strategic changes underway in ambulance services internationally as they strive for high performance and efficiency whilst coping with a continuously increasing demand on their services. This is in line with the recommendations of the Department of Health's (DoH) strategic framework, Future Health, A Strategic Framework for Reform of the Health Service 2012 – 2015, to ensure a clinically driven, nationally co-ordinated system, supported by improved technology.

A single cohesive strategic plan is being developed called Vision 2020. This will set out all the actions necessary to implement recommendations from regulatory and other review bodies, and to address the range of other demands and changes facing the ambulance service over the next five years.

The development of Vision 2020 is being overseen by a steering group comprising of representatives from each division including Ambulance Services, Hospital Care division, Health and Wellbeing division, Primary Care division, Quality Improvement division and the HSE's System Reform Programme. Through Vision 2020, we will develop a service delivery model that provides care in the most appropriate place and where our performance is measured to a greater extent on the quality and clinical outcome of care received by our patients.

Vision 2020 will be managed in line with the HSE System Reform Group methodology and tools to ensure that it integrates with the changes being undertaken in the other divisions within the HSE. For more information please visit www.hse.ie/nas

Information is available on <http://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/3/nas/vision>





Social Media

Tweets...



Leo Varadkar @campaignforleo June 11

Really want to pay tribute to the great job that the National Ambulance Service does on the air ambulance @HSElive

#Paramedics @ParamedicsTV3 May 12

"We're a team, for the only person that matters..the patient"
#Paramedics Thu 9pm on @TV3Ireland #Firefighters #Garda

ECRR @EastCorkRR 19 Dec 2013

ECRR Doctor worked alongside @AmbulanceNAS
@CorkCityFire @GardaTraffic at Kent Station, Cork yesterday.

Facebook...



National Ambulance Service (NAS)

May 21

Tracey Hayden introduces her baby Cillian to the Paramedics who helped deliver him, Andy O'Toole and Katrina Sheerin. Tracey recognised the two Paramedics after seeing them feature on TV3's Paramedics and got in touch.

Paramedics, the series finale, airs tonight at 9pm on TV3
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6KHd7WmOuxA&feature=youtu.be>

National Ambulance Service (NAS)

April 28

NAS responded to a multi vehicle road traffic accident this morning on the M18 outside Ennis, both carriageways. (999 call received at 11.22) 12 resources on scene, 11 patients were dealt with. The time from arrival of first resource to departure of last resource was 43 minutes. 8 patients were treated on the scene and 3 transported to hospital. Thankfully no serious injuries.

STAFF FEEDBACK STORY

Shame Knox

"I recently attended a call for an elderly lady in cardiac arrest, I was supervising two AP interns and another crew were also in attendance. I was wondering if you could pass on my compliments to the call taker and dispatcher who were involved in this call. The information from the caller was initially inaccurate and with a steady persistence and organised approach Will Fay managed to get us to the right location. This was most appreciated.

However, when we arrived into the lady's home we observed one of her sons carrying out, what could only be described as, effective CPR. He was being directed by Jennifer (Walsh) over the phone. I understand that directing a relative over the phone is not an easy task and for this, Call Takers should be recognised as one of the most important links in the chain of survival for all cardiac arrest patients.

I wanted to let Jennifer and Will know that we managed to achieve a return of spontaneous circulation (ROSC) with this lady and maintained this until our arrival at University Hospital Limerick. Unfortunately the lady did succumb some time later. The point

being though that without their joint interventions this lady may not have ever been given the best chance of being resuscitated. It is important to remember that without the Call Taker's directions to the relatives, and the Dispatcher's directions to us, no matter what paramedics, EMTs or APs do on scene, the positive impact on patient care and improved potential for recovery is reduced.

This call exemplified the benefits of a co-ordinated team effort approach to patient care and I wish to thank and commend Jennifer and Will for their efforts.

While our efforts on scene are usually acknowledged by family and relatives few comments are forwarded to Call Takers and Dispatchers. I would appreciate if you could pass on my thoughts."



Major Emergency Exercise



The National Ambulance Service participated in a Major Emergency Exercise at the Ireland West Airport, Knock, County Mayo last week.

NAS members from across the western counties attended as part of the Health Service Executives (HSE) response to a Major Emergency. Our crews worked with Mayo Fire and Rescue, An Garda Síochána, Airport Authorities and Civil Defence at the scene.

Each agency were able to test their own response plans and onsite coordination while also strengthen interagency collaboration. Well done to all involved.

Bravery award for man who saved boy

Greystones man, Alastair Jones, received a bravery certificate for saving a three-year-old boy from drowning.



Ceann Comhairle Sean Barrett with Alister Jones and Cathaoirleach of Seanad Eireann Senator Paddy Burke at Farmleigh House.

Welcomed Visit



Loughlinstown Ambulance Station had a welcomed visit from a patient, Baby Rían, who was born pre-hospital this August bank holiday weekend!

Baby Rían was joined by his Mum Amy, Dad Michael and Brother Shane. The family had an opportunity to meet with some of the Paramedics & Advanced Paramedics who assisted with Baby Rían's delivery!

Major Incident Exercise

NAS crews from the South East pictured yesterday at Waterford Airport. Our crews along with An Garda Síochána, Waterford City Fire Service, Waterford County and Waterford Airport Fire Services all attended a Major Incident Exercise. In a simulated incident involving an aircraft and multiple casualties, NAS along with the other services were able to test it responses and plans for such events. Well done to all involved.



(Photos Courtesy of Clive O'Regan)



WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR AREA



Tell us, the Communications Working Group

NAS has formed a communications working group, and we want to hear what's happening in your area. We want to promote the great work of staff in the National Ambulance Service and create an effective mechanism for distributing news and communicating with all staff. For more information, comments or suggestions contact your rep on the communications working group, contact details below.

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Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive