



**Scottish
Ambulance
Service**

University National NHS Board



Freedom of Information Request

23rd December 2024

Question

Can you provide: Details on how the mental health strategy budget (£1.6M) from the Scottish Government has been spent since 2019. • What were/are the aims of the programme, and have these been met? • Has the mental health response cars been deemed successful and if so, what are your measurements? • Do you have full staffing of the mental health response cars? • Since 2019, how many mental health response car shifts have been without a mental health nurse? o In a total amount with a coverage %. o Can this be split into the different areas. • If there is no mental health nurse, what 999 calls do the paramedics attend during these shifts on their own? • Do they remain mental health response cars or are they used as paramedic response units?

Answer

What were/are the aims of the programme, and have these been met?

Funding is received from Scottish Government for the continuing development of the Emergency Mental Health Pathway between each of the constituent partners which are Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS), NHS 24 and Police Scotland. In the case of SAS, specific objectives focus on the continuing delivery of the Mental Health Triage Car pilot projects within the staffing numbers agreed as well as alignment with the national mental health strategy and delivery plan. SAS has its own mental health strategy which is published on our website detailing our aims and ambitions ([Mental Health Strategy](#)). The pathway has won the Care of Mental Health Award at the recent Scottish Health Awards.

Has the mental health response cars been deemed successful and if so, what are your measurements?

Early indications are the response cars have been successful due to the initial car expanding to three areas in Scotland. There are on-going evaluations involving those using the vehicles, number of conveyances as well as looking at experiences of people who have required the services. Once these reports have concluded, we will have a better understanding of the impact.



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Do you have full staffing of the mental health response cars?

We utilise our full funding complement of staff for the cars, there are fluctuations as in any service with staff turnover, but we aim to recruit to posts as soon as a vacancy arises.

Since 2019, how many mental health response car shifts have been without a mental health nurse?

Not all models have a mental health nurse dedicated to the car, there is access to a mental health nurse.

In a total amount with a coverage %. Can this be split into the different areas.

We do not have the data to report on this, it is for this reason we have applied section 17 of the Freedom of Information Scotland Act 2002, as information not held.

If there is no mental health nurse, what 999 calls do the paramedics attend during these shifts on their own?

A decision would be made prior to attending if a nurse is required. Often discussion is prior to attending with access to advice from a nurse during attendance at an incident.

Do they remain mental health response cars or are they used as paramedic response units?

The models vary over the three areas within the Scottish Ambulance Service; but mental health response cars can also respond to non-mental health emergencies.