



The Regulation and
Quality Improvement
Authority

press release

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Department of Health accepts RQIA's Recommendation to Place the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service Trust on Special Measures

Statement from RQIA

"In July 2017, RQIA conducted unannounced inspections at Broadway and Bangor ambulance stations. RQIA identified serious concerns in relation to infection prevention and control and associated governance arrangements. During follow up inspections in September 2017, RQIA found that insufficient improvements were evidenced to address these concerns, and RQIA issued improvement notices in respect of these services.

On 8 February 2018, during an unannounced inspection at Craigavon Ambulance Station, RQIA identified similar concerns to those identified at Broadway and Bangor, relating to infection prevention and control and governance. As a result RQIA took further enforcement action.

On 22 February 2018, RQIA conducted fact finding visits to 21 ambulance stations across Northern Ireland. A good standard of hygiene and cleanliness was evident in a number of stations and vehicles. However, RQIA found that a number of stations and vehicles were of an unacceptable standard with regard to infection prevention and control, hygiene and cleanliness.

As a result of RQIA's findings on 22 February 2018, and evidence of limited progress to address issues previously identified at Bangor, Broadway and Craigavon ambulance stations and vehicles, on 26 February 2018, RQIA recommended that the Department of Health implement a special measure to support NIAS.

We recommended the secondment into NIAS of a senior practitioner with experience in infection prevention and control, governance and assurance.

The Department of Health has accepted RQIA's recommendation, and has advised NIAS to proceed with this special measure. This secondment should be for a period of three months in the first instance to support NIAS in its improvement work related to infection prevention and control, hygiene and cleanliness.

The safety and wellbeing of everyone using ambulance services across Northern Ireland is of paramount importance to RQIA. We believe this additional support will assist NIAS to deliver and assure the required improvement to its services.”

ENDS

Full details of RQIA's current enforcement in respect of Bangor, Broadway (Belfast) and Craigavon Ambulance stations are available at: <https://www.rqia.org.uk/inspections/enforcement-activity/current-enforcement-activity/>

Copies of RQIA's inspection reports for Bangor and Broadway stations are available at: [https://www.rqia.org.uk/inspections/view-inspections-as/map/northern-ireland-ambulance-service-\(nias\)/](https://www.rqia.org.uk/inspections/view-inspections-as/map/northern-ireland-ambulance-service-(nias)/)

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