



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Oifig an Cheannaire Oibríochtaí,
Na Seirbhísí Míchumais/An Rannán Cúram Sóisialta,
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27th April 2018

Deputy Thomas P. Broughan,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
e-mail: tommy.broughan@oireachtas.ie

Dear Deputy Broughan,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the following parliamentary questions, which were submitted to this department for response.

PQ 16948/18

To ask the Minister for Health if his Department has undertaken a cost benefit analysis and plans to increase personal assistant hours for persons with disabilities; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -

PQ 16949/18

To ask the Minister for Health the cost of increasing personal assistance hours by 500,000 hours; his plans to improve the personal assistance service for persons with disabilities; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

HSE Response

Assisted Living Services

The HSE provides a range of assisted living services including Personal Assistant and Home Support services to support individuals to maximise their capacity to live full and independent lives. While the resources for the provision of assisted living services available are substantial they are finite.

PA Services

The role of a Personal Assistant (PA) is to assist a person with a disability to maximise their independence through supporting them to live in integrated settings and to access community facilities. The PA works on a one to one basis, in the home and /or in the community, with a person with a physical or sensory disability. A vital element of this personalised support is the full involvement of the individual (service user) in planning and agreeing the type and the times when support is provided to them, supporting independent living must enhance the person's control over their own life.

Services are accessed through an application process or through referrals from public health nurses or other community based staff. Individual's needs are evaluated against criteria for prioritisation for particular services and then decisions are made in relation to the allocation of resources. Resource

allocation is determined by the needs of the individual, compliance with prioritisation criteria, and the level of resources available. As with every service there is a limited resource available for the provision of Assisted Living services and while the resources available are substantial they are finite. In this context, services are discretionary and the number of hours granted are determined by other support services already provided to the person/family.

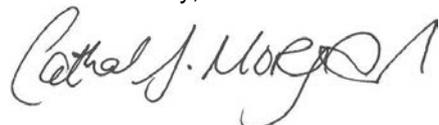
The HSE is committed to protecting the level of Personal Assistant (PA) available to persons with disabilities. The table below provides data for PA Services delivered to people with a disability in 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017. The HSE has consistently, year on year, increased the number of hours of PA Service delivered to people with a disability. The target for 2017 was 1.4 million hours, however, in excess of 100,000 additional hours was provided in 2017 to almost 2,500 people.

Figures for PA Services Delivered to People with a Disability

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
PA Services – Number of Hours	1,291,070	1,335,759	1,482,492	1,510,116	1,516,727
PA Services – No. People availing of service	2,057	2,224	2,369	2,427	2,470

The HSE has not undertaken a cost benefit analysis and no additional funding had been provided for these services to the HSE since 2008, however, the need for increased services is acknowledged and the HSE continues to work with agencies to explore various ways of responding to this need in line with the budget available. Additional funding of €12.5 million annually would result in the provision of 500,000 additional PA Hours. Based on the allocation of an average of 20 hours per week (1,040 per annum), this would result in 480 additional individuals being provided with a PA service.

Yours sincerely,



**Dr. Cathal Morgan,
Head of Operations - Disability Services,
Community Operations**