



National Director, Community Operations
Dr. Steevens Hospital, Dublin 8, DO8 W2A8
Tel: 01 6352596 Email: communityoperations@hse.ie

Stúirthóir Náisiúnta, Oibríochtaí Pobail
Ospidéal Dr. Steevens' Baile Atha Cliath 8, DO8 W2A8
T 01 6352596 R: communityoperations@hse.ie

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**Deputy Richard Boyd Barrett,
Dáil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.**

PQ 15740/19

To ask the Minister for Health his views on whether HSE care company carers should be trained in first aid; and his plans to make it compulsory in particular in circumstances in which the patient in their care is prone to having choking incidents.

-Richard Boyd Barrett

Dear Deputy Boyd Barrett,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted to the Minister for response.

There is no specific statutory requirements regards first aid training for unregulated care staff. For registered health and social care professionals however, the relevant regulatory body (Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland, CORU etc) specifies practice standards for the various disciplines

In the absence of regulation of the home support service sector, the HSE undertook Tender processes in 2012, 2016 and again in 2018, to identify approved providers who would provide home support services to HSE clients where HSE directly provided services are not available (funded through Services for Older People allocation) The Tender process requires providers to demonstrate their capacity to deliver care and to meet an agreed set of 23 quality specifications including requirements in relation to:

- Person Centred Care and Support
- Consent
- Policies and Procedures
- Quality Control
- Safeguarding
- Governance and Accountability
- Workforce Requirements
- Training and Development

- Supervision
- Health and Safety

Only those who can demonstrate this capacity and who meet pricing criteria are approved.

The Department of Health is currently engaged in a detailed process to determine what type of home care scheme is best for Ireland. This process will consider the future design of both the funding and regulation systems for these essential services.

The HSE has established a Governance Framework to cover funding relationships with all Non Statutory Agencies. It is the policy of the HSE that all funding arrangements with non-statutory agencies are formalised by signing a Service Arrangement (SA) or Grant Aid Agreement (GA). The Service Arrangements contain detailed information on the quantum and nature of the service provided and enables clear linkages to be made between funding provided and services delivered. The Service Level Arrangement also identifies the quality standards and best practice guidelines to be adhered to in the provision all services.

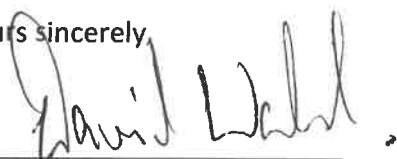
As part of the Service Arrangement process, service providers are expected to confirm that recruitment and selection practices comply with the principles set out in the relevant Codes of Practice issued by the Commission for Public Service Appointments (CPSA) and HSE HR policies on the recruitment, selection, clearance/ vetting and contracting processes required for new appointments and for promotions.

They should also confirm that the Agency only appoint staff who meet the relevant HSE declared qualifications and experience appropriate to the position being filled and that the qualifications have been validated by the relevant competent authority.

The HSE require approved providers to ensure that staff are competent to meet the care needs of the clients as set out in the individual care plan. All new entrants to the home care industry must have as a minimum obtained at least a QQI Level 5 in modules for Care Skills and Care of the Older Person. Unqualified existing Home Support Staff with greater than one year paid experience in the field must have at a minimum committed to obtaining this level 5 qualification within 11 months of first working on this HSE contract.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely



David Walsh,
National Director,
Community Operations