



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

Príomhoifigeach ECSP Ceantar 8  
Baile Átha Cliath & Lár Laighin  
Oifig an Cheantair  
Bóthar an Ardáin  
An Tulach Mhór  
Co Uíbh Fhailí

Chief Officer CHO Area 8  
HSE Area Office,  
Arden Road  
Tullamore  
Co. Offaly

PRÍOMHOIFIGEACH ECSP CEANTAR 8  
COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE ORGANISATION

t: 057 93 59787  
f: 057 93 15855  
e: [CHO8@hse.ie](mailto:CHO8@hse.ie)

t: 057 93 59787  
f: 057 93 15855  
e: [CHO8@hse.ie](mailto:CHO8@hse.ie)

13<sup>th</sup> December 2019

Shane Cassells, T.D.,  
Dail Eireann,  
Kildare St.,  
Dublin 2

**PQ ref 49693/19: To ask the Minister for Health the rationale for a June 2019 instruction to the home support team in County Meath that no home helps can be agreed unless it is an end of life circumstance; the position regarding the 402 persons on the County Meath waiting list that have been fully assessed and have had their hours approved but that are not end of life; when this instruction will be lifted in view of the fact that it has removed all flexibility from the approvals system and is increasing the waiting list on a daily basis; and if he will make a statement on the matter.**

Dear Deputy Cassells,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have examined the matter and outline the position as follows.

Home Support Services is a non-statutory scheme, the aim of which is to support an Older Person living at home. Access to services is via assessment by HSE professionals. The quantity of services is limited to available budget. Currently Midlands Louth Meath Community Healthcare Organisation are profiling our priority home support clients based on assessed needs and are working to provide services based on that priority profile. At this time our highest priority is the delivery of home support services to those clients receiving palliative care.

Home Support is also available through the winter planning process from the acute hospital. At the end of November 15 clients with a total of 130.5 hours from County Meath have been discharged home from an acute hospital with home support. A small number of home support hours are also available to the community through the winter action plan and to date 20 hours have been assigned to clients to reduce the waiting list through this initiative. A number of clients have also been taken from the waiting list as a number of HSE employed Health Care Support Assistants were working under their contract hours, so it was possible, on a cost neutral basis to take clients from the waiting list. The quantity of services is limited to available budget and the management and implementation of the service remains challenging.

As the end of October MLM CHO are continuing to provide home service to 1,256 clients in Co Meath with a total of 38,369 hours provided in September.

I trust the above is in order but please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any further queries in this regard.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pat Bennett". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'P' and 'B'.

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Pat Bennett  
Chief Officer  
Midlands Louth Meath Community Health Organisation