



5th February 2019

Deputy Stanley, TD
Dáil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

Dear Deputy Stanley,

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

PQ 3610/19

To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons who have been granted home help hours; and the number still on the waiting list that have not received hours to date.

From 1st January 2018, with the approval of the Department of Health, the funding for both the former Home Help Service and the Home Care Package Scheme has been combined into a single service now known as the Home Support Service for Older People. With effect from the same date, home support activity reflects the total hours and clients across the Home Support Service for Older People, being the totality of the amalgamated former Home Help Service and Home Care Package Scheme. Intensive Home Care Packages remain separate.

The 2018 HSE National Service Plan provided for:

- 17,094m home support hours to be delivered to 50,500 people at any time
- Intensive Home Care Packages to be delivered to approximately 235 people at any time and deliver approximately 360,000 hours in the full year
- A further 156,000 hours to an additional 324 people, relating to adverse weather funding were provided from Spring 2018
- An additional 300 home support packages have been allocated Q4 under Winter Initiative 2018/2019

The 2019 National Service Plan 2019 provides for approx. €440m of funding for Home Support Services for mainly older people relating to:

- 17.9m home support hours to be delivered to 53,000 people inclusive of 410,000 hours/550 home support packages funded under the Winter Initiative 2018/2019
- Intensive Home Care Packages delivered to approximately 235 people with approximately 360,000 hours delivered in the full year

The number of people in receipt of home support at any time will vary having regard to the value of the individual home supports approved and as clients cease and new clients with different value home support are approved and commenced. From January 1st 2018 to December 31st 2018, **53,016 people** were in receipt of home support (details per CHO at Appendix 1).

Nationally, at the end of December 2018, **6,120 people** were waiting for funding for new or additional home support services (preliminary data) (details per CHO at Appendix 2). The numbers on the waiting list reflect a point in time and those people who are on the waiting list are reviewed, as funding becomes available, to ensure that individual cases continue to be dealt with on a priority basis within the available resources and as determined by local front line staff who know and understand the clients' needs, and who undertake regular reviews of those care needs to ensure that the services being provided remain appropriate.



Oifig an Cheannasaí Oibríochtaí & Feabhsúcháin Seirbhíse
Seirbhísí do Dhaoine Scothaosta
T: 066 7199711 F: 066 7195609
Email: olderpeople.socialcare@hse.ie

Office of the Head of Operations & Service Improvement
Services for Older People
Tel: 066 7199711 Fax: 066 7195609
Email: olderpeople.socialcare@hse.ie

While the resources for the provision of home support are substantial, they are finite. The aim is to be as responsive as possible to all applications; however, given the changing demographics and limitation of the resource, delays can occur. In this context, those clients who are assessed and approved for home support, and who are not being provided immediately with a service, are risk assessed and placed on a waiting list for a resource as it becomes available. In addition, people being discharged from acute hospitals, who are in a position to return home with supports, are prioritised.

People who are on the waiting list are reviewed, as funding becomes available, to ensure that individual cases continue to be dealt with on a priority basis within the available resources. Priority is determined by local front line staff who know and understand the clients' needs, and who undertake regular reviews of those care needs to ensure that the services being provided remain appropriate. The number taken off the list is dependent upon the numbers of persons ceasing to need the service, the value of that service becoming available for recycling; the value of the service required by the new client and on any new funding that might be allocated. Waiting times will vary as some clients are dealt with in a significantly shorter time as a priority and others may wait longer depending on individual circumstances, risk assessment and urgency of services required.

The HSE is in the process of implementing a standard national approach to assessment of care needs of older people. This new approach will assist over time in ensuring a more consistent approach to assessment processes and will help to ensure that waiting list data is aligned across the CHOs. As the population of older people continues to increase, the level of resources for home support services also needs to continue to grow or waiting lists will expand.

The Department 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 crucial services.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathleen Jordan".

Kathleen Jordan
Interim GM Home Support Services

Appendix 1 – Number of Home Support Clients Supported in 2018
(31st December 2018, Preliminary Data)

Home Support Clients Supported 2018	
CHO	Activity YTD
CHO 1	4,437
CHO 2	5,983
CHO 3	4,760
CHO 4	8,994
CHO 5	6,077
CHO 6	4,353
CHO 7	6,137
CHO 8	5,600
CHO 9	6,675
National Total	53,016

Appendix 2 – Number of People Waiting for Home Support
(31st December 2018, Preliminary Data)

Waiting List - December 2018	
CHO	Total
CHO 1	521
CHO 2	968
CHO 3	361
CHO 4	152
CHO 5	648
CHO 6	177
CHO 7	1,163
CHO 8	462
CHO 9	1,668
National	6,120