



10th July 2019

Deputy Bernard J Durkan, TD
Dáil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

Dear Deputy Durkan,

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 27942/19

To ask the Minister for Health the extent to which homecare packages are being made available to persons that might otherwise need hospitalisation; the number approved in each of the regions for the past three years to date, the extent of the funding required or pending; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

The 2019 National Service Plan 2019 provides for;

- 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 Home Support Service is funded by Government to deliver a volume of service each year as approved in the HSE National Service Plan. It is a non-statutory service and access to the current service is based on assessment of the person's needs by the HSE and having regard to the available resources and the competing demands for the services from those people with assessed needs. 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.

Home Support Services are an important component of the provision of service to older people with assessed needs and to support them in their choice of living in their own home and community. The HSE, working within its available resources, has sought to maintain and when possible to expand the range and volume of services available to support people to remain in their own homes, to prevent early admission to long term residential care and to support people to return to their homes following an acute hospital admission. The Home Support resource is used to its maximum effect as part of each individual recipient's care plan.

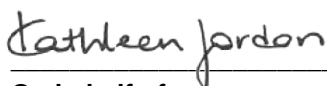
Preliminary data currently available reflects the period to the end of May 2019. As of this date, 7,157,942 home support hours were delivered nationally to 52,382 people while 6,819 people were waiting for funding to be allocated.

Of those waiting, 1,871 are already in receipt of home support service, however require additional support. Since January 1st 2019, 7,200 new clients have commenced their home support service. (See Table 1 below for a breakdown per CHO over the past three years to date, where available).

In relation to the cost of meeting the outstanding demand for home support services to year end, the estimated full year cost to address those assessed and waiting for funding for home support, based on average of 6.5hrs home support per client per week, would be in the region of €56m.

The Department is currently engaged in a detailed process to develop a new stand-alone, statutory scheme for the financing and regulation of home support services. Developing a new statutory scheme will be an important step in ensuring that the system operates in a consistent and fair manner for all those who need home support services. The Sláintecare Implementation Strategy commits to the introduction of the new scheme in 2021.

Yours sincerely



On behalf of:

Sandra Tuohy

Assistant National Director

Older Persons Services – Operations

Table 1 – Home Support New Clients: May 2019 YTD (Preliminary Data) & Prior Years

CHO	Home Support - New Clients			
	New Home Support Clients May 2019 YTD	New Home Support Clients Dec 2018	New HCP Clients Dec 2017	New HCP Clients Dec 2016
CHO 1	429	1,163	668	756
CHO 2	703	1,760	1,461	677
CHO 3	650	2,201	668	573
CHO 4	1,136	2,625	577	447
CHO 5	1,058	2,523	706	716
CHO 6	602	1,594	1,152	906
CHO 7	895	1,207	1,351	829
CHO 8	1,013	2,624	1,190	950
CHO 9	714	2,094	2,043	1,860
National Total	7,200	17,791	9,816	7,714

*** Note 1:** The HCP and Homehelp Hours system was changed with effect from 1st January 2018. This change amalgamated both the HCP & Homehelp Hours system into one new service, the Home Support Service.

**** Note 2:** Data in respect of 'New Clients' (Homehelp Hours) was not collected under that system. Data was only collected in respect of 'New HCP Clients' for years up to 2017 (inclusive).