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13/08/2019

Deputy Bobby Aylward,  
Dáil Éireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.

**PQ 30274/19 - To ask the Minister for Health the ratio of coordinators and HCSA leads to general staff and HCSA workers within the home help sector for the nine Health Service Executive CHO areas; and if he will make a statement on the matter**

**-Bobby Aylward**

Dear Deputy Aylward,

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.

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 National Service Plan for 2019 provides for the following;

- 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

Home Support services for older people are provided either by directly employed staff or by voluntary and private providers who have formal tender arrangements with the HSE to deliver the services. The type of support provided includes personal care and, where appropriate, essential household duties relating to the client's assessed needs. Home support staff who are directly employed by the HSE have traditionally been, and remain, mainly part-time workers due to the nature and flexibility of the work involved and the care needs of clients that must be attended to within specific time frames during any day. The HSE keeps under review the position regarding the number of staff employed having regard to the hours available and the hours worked by existing staff in the local area

The HSE has a long history of very close working relationships with voluntary providers of home support services particularly in the Greater Dublin area, Wicklow and Clare (historically there is no tradition of directly employed home support staff). In the remaining areas the Home Support Service for older people is delivered by directly employed HSE staff with external service provision being used when required.

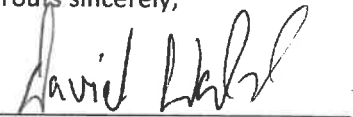
In the 7 CHOs with HSE directly employed HCSAs there was a total of 5,943 HCSA staff (headcount) employed by the HSE in July 2019. There were 103 Home Support Co-Ordinators/Home Support Organisers (headcount) which is an average of approximately 58 HSCAs per Home Support Co-ordinator/Organiser.

The HSE is currently implementing revised contracts for its directly employed HCSA staff which will offer improved levels of contracted hours, and is working to enhance the overall structure of the Home Support Service to improve and streamline governance arrangements of this very valuable and expanding service.

Furthermore the Department is currently engaged in a detailed process to develop a new 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.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Walsh", written over a horizontal line.

David Walsh,  
National Director,  
Community Operations