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**Deputy Barry Cowen, TD**  
**Dáil Eireann,**  
**Leinster House,**  
**Kildare Street,**  
**Dublin 2.**

Dear Deputy Cowen,

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 26047/19**

**To ask the Minister for Health the amount the HSE requested in relation to home help hours; the amount it received for 2019; the amount of the funding which was for extra hours; the amount for mileage; and if he will make a statement on the matter.**

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.

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 HSE's National Service Plan sets out the targets which the HSE must meet throughout the year. 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

Funding for home support has a defined budget as set out in the service plan, for the current year, the home support budget amounts to €445.7m. Of the approximate €29m in additional funding allocated in 2019 a total of €10m relates to Winter Initiative with the balance relating to ELS costs, and a significant portion of the this funding is available to address the cost implications of the revised contract for HCSAs.

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 essential services.

Yours sincerely



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**Sandra Tuohy**  
**Assistant National Director**  
**Older Persons Services - Operations**