



10th July 2019

Deputy Stephen S Donnelly, TD
Dáil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

Dear Deputy Donnelly,

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 27324/19

To ask the Minister for Health if it is within the scope of the role of home carers provided through State funding to assist with household chores on behalf of the person they are caring for; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

The Home Support Service is funded by Government to deliver a volume of service each year as approved in the HSE National Service Plan. 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 HSE provides its home support services through both directly employed home help staff and through arrangements with voluntary (not for profit) providers, mainly in the Greater Dublin Area, Wicklow and Clare (where HSE direct home help service provision was never a feature) and also through tendered arrangements with private (for profit) providers.

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 type of support that is provided includes personal care and, where appropriate, essential household duties relating to the client's needs, as determined by the care needs assessment.

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

Kathleen Jordan

On Behalf Of

Sandra Tuohy

Assistant National Director

Older Persons Services - Operations