



Office of A.N.D. Older People and Palliative Care - Strategy
Services for Older People
HSE Community Services Building
Rathass, Tralee, Co. Kerry

Tel: 066 7199711 Fax: 066 7195609
Email: olderpeople.strategy@hse.ie

12th December 2019

Deputy Michael McGrath
Dáil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

Dear Deputy Mc Grath,

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 Ref: 48046/19

To ask the Minister for Health the position in relation to the level of community and home supports that will be available for persons with dementia nationally in 2020; the position in relation to the recruitment of dementia advisors; and if he will make a statement on the matter

The National Dementia Strategy was published in December 2014. It is estimated that there are currently 55,000 people with dementia in Ireland today. Furthermore, these numbers are expected to increase significantly in the years ahead.

The aim of the Strategy is to improve dementia care so that people with dementia can live well for as long as possible, can have services and supports delivered in the best way possible, and can ultimately die with dignity. The Strategy emphasises that most people with dementia live in their own communities and can continue to live well and to participate in those communities. The Strategy contains a set of priority actions capable of implementation within existing resources or by reconfiguring resources. It also contains a number of additional actions which may require resources additional to what is currently available and which will be considered as these become available in the future.

The Department of Health and the Health Service Executive recognise that community and voluntary agencies provide a wide range of services to support older people to continue living in their communities and maintain their social connections. These services, which contribute to positive ageing and better overall health, include befriending, day care, social centres and meals on wheels etc. Improving and developing community supports is in line with the vision outlined in Sláintecare which supports a shift to providing the majority of care in the community and a focus on prevention and early intervention.

As part of a joint initiative, by the Minister for Older People and the HSE, an extra €1 million funding has been made available to community and voluntary groups to continue to support people, family carers and significant others to stay well and remain connected with their local community. Approximately €250,000 of this funding was dedicated to Dementia related initiatives.

The funding was open to community and voluntary agencies that currently hold a Service Arrangement of Grant Aid Agreement with the HSE, or non-statutory agencies who aim to provide social services similar or ancillary to services the HSE may provide.

Some examples of dementia specific projects include:

- ❖ Dementia Cafés
- ❖ Dementia Social Clubs
- ❖ Dementia Day Centres
- ❖ Funds for Dementia specific training for volunteers and staff
- ❖ Respite services
- ❖ Technology kits
- ❖ Art and Music therapy for people with Dementia

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 funds the ASI Dementia Adviser service, that works with people with dementia and their families and carers to provide highly responsive and individualised information and signposting service. Dementia Advisers provide information and advice throughout the journey with dementia, helping to connect people living with dementia and their families with local groups and services. There are currently eight Dementia Advisers in post.

The table below shows the number of dementia advisers and the counties and areas which they cover

Number of Dementia Advisers	Areas covered
1	Galway
1	South Dublin
1	South Dublin and North Wicklow
1	North Dublin
1	Cork City, South Cork, West Cork and South Kerry
1	North Cork, Co Limerick, South Clare, East Kerry and Tipperary
1	Cavan Monaghan and Louth
1	Mayo
Total:	8

The Minister for Health has approved funding for 10 additional advisers for 2020. The National Dementia Office and the Alzheimer's Society will utilise the recommendations from the external evaluation of the Dementia Advisers role to inform new service development.

Yours sincerely,



MICHAEL FITZGERALD

A.N.D. Older People and Palliative Care - Strategy