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15<sup>th</sup> October 2019

Deputy Pat Casey, TD  
Dáil Eireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.

Dear Deputy Casey,

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 41295/19**

**To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons up to 30 September 2019 waiting for homecare support by county in tabular form; the number of applications for homecare support up to 30 September by CHO areas 6 and 7; 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. 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. There has been a significant increase in funding being made available for the provision of home support services; an increase of circa €140 million since 2014.

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

Despite the significant level of service provision, the demand for Home Support continues to grow as the population aged over 65 years' increases. All those waiting are assessed and provided with a service, if appropriate, as soon as possible having regard to their assessed needs. In addition, people being discharged from acute hospitals, who are in a position to return home with supports, are prioritised.

While the resources for the provision of home support are substantial, they are finite. The aim is to be as responsive as possible to all applications; however, given the changing demographics and limitation of the resource, delays can occur. In this context, those clients who are assessed and approved for home support, and who are not being provided immediately with a service, are risk assessed and placed on a waiting list for a resource as it becomes available.

Preliminary data currently available reflects the period to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2019. As of this date, 11,572,809 home support hours were delivered to 51,588 people nationally. As of same date 7,255 people have been assessed and are waiting on funding for home support. See table 1 below for a breakdown by LHO/CHO.


It should be noted that the data requested (i.e. the number of applications for homecare support) is not currently collated nationally. The data we collect and collate relates to the number of successful home support applications, which is then used determine the national waiting list, specifically for those who are currently waiting for funding to be allocated in order to commence their home support service.

As the population of older people continues to increase, the level of resources for home support services also needs to continue to grow or waiting lists will expand. People who are on the waiting list are reviewed, as funding becomes available, to ensure that individual cases continue to be dealt with on a priority basis within the available resources. Priority is determined by local front line staff who know and understand the clients' needs, and who undertake regular reviews of those care needs to ensure that the services being provided remain appropriate.

The level of activity and associated costs in relation to home support is monitored on an on-going basis by the Chief Officers across their CHOs and with the Head of Operations Services for Older People nationally to ensure that those with the greatest needs are supported and that the overall expenditure on home support services by the HSE does not exceed the available funding.

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



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**Sandra Tuohy**  
**Assistant National Director**  
**Services for Older People – Operations**

**Appendix 1 – Home Support Activity: August 2019 (Preliminary Data)**

		Home Support - August 2019		
CHO	LHO	Activity YTD	Clients YTD	Waiting List
<b>National Total</b>		<b>11,572,809</b>	<b>51,588</b>	<b>7,255</b>
CHO 1	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,121,783</b>	<b>3,941</b>	<b>793</b>
	Cavan Monaghan	298,255	1,138	321
	Donegal	503,269	1,544	246
CHO 2	Sligo Leitrim	320,259	1,259	226
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,217,562</b>	<b>5,999</b>	<b>758</b>
	Galway	637,272	3,071	258
	Mayo	361,730	1,897	343
CHO 3	Roscommon	218,560	1,031	157
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,022,023</b>	<b>4,401</b>	<b>775</b>
	Clare	312,730	1,131	553
	Limerick	393,454	1,856	158
CHO 4	North Tipperary Eas	315,839	1,414	64
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,772,180</b>	<b>8,929</b>	<b>491</b>
	Kerry	429,788	2,472	64
	North Cork	289,669	1,436	50
	North Lee	395,753	2,046	105
	South Lee	444,482	2,039	96
CHO 5	West Cork	212,488	936	176
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,336,475</b>	<b>5,852</b>	<b>1012</b>
	Carlow Kilkenny	346,476	1,443	0
	South Tipperary	276,729	1,292	92
CHO 6	Waterford	246,869	1,395	174
	Wexford	466,401	1,722	746
	<b>Total</b>	<b>903,680</b>	<b>4,259</b>	<b>82</b>
CHO 7	Dublin South East	235,084	1,375	0
	Dun Laoghaire	333,761	1,665	0
	Wicklow	334,834	1,219	82
CHO 8	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,297,251</b>	<b>6,193</b>	<b>825</b>
	Dublin South City	243,489	1,423	209
	Dublin South West	328,448	1,592	200
	Dublin West	261,319	1,369	180
	Kildare West Wicklow	463,996	1,809	236
CHO 9	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,129,188</b>	<b>5,414</b>	<b>656</b>
	Laois Offaly	292,978	1,146	184
	Longford Westmeath	259,468	1,325	14
	Louth	267,904	1,649	88
CHO 10	Meath	308,838	1,294	370
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,772,668</b>	<b>6,600</b>	<b>1,863</b>
	Dublin North	638,135	2,491	818
	Dublin North Centra	616,149	2,193	198
CHO 11	Dublin North West	518,384	1,916	847