



29 December 2020

**Deputy Thomas Gould,
Dáil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.**

Dear Deputy Gould,

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: 20/42990

To ask the Minister for Health the duties home helps can perform; and if his attention has been drawn to a situation in which persons are being informed home helps will now only perform personal care duties.

Home Support Services play an important role in providing personal care to people in their own homes and support to carers. 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.

The home support service which people receive is based on an individual client's care needs which are assessed by clinical staff and the home support provided and associated care plan will vary dependent on the level of dependency, client's individual ability to undertake activities of daily living and other support structures in place such as attendance at day care.

The overall home care resource and the range of providers, including HSE directly employed staff, is carefully managed to ensure that this key service is available at the required times, in a flexible way and at the appropriate standard to support clients' changing assessed needs.

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.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sandra Tuohy".

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