



Oifig an Cheannasaí Feabhsúcháin Seirbhíse - Oibríochtaí
Seirbhísí do Dhaoine Scothaosta
Tel: 061 483245
Email: olderpeople.operations@hse.ie

Office of the Assistant National Director - Operations
Services for Older People
Tel: 061 483245
Email: olderpeople.operations@hse.ie

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Deputy David Cullinane, TD
Dáil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

Dear Deputy Cullinane,

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 17861/20

To ask the Minister for Health the estimated additional funding provided to increase homecare provision since the adoption of Sláintecare; 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.

The 2020 National Service Plan provides for;

- 18.9m home support hours to be delivered to 53,700 people inclusive of 770,000 hours/2,210 home support packages funded under the Winter Initiative 2019/2020, and 230,000 hours relating to the Home Support Pilot Scheme to commence Q2 2020
- 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, and its importance as an alternative service to long stay care, has grown considerably over the past number of years. Similarly, the type of Home Support that is now required to meet the needs of the population is a more person-centred personal care model.

The development of this new service model grounded in the National Standards for Better Safer Healthcare and sufficiently flexible to meet the more complex needs of an aging population brings with it challenges of ensuring that all providers, including HSE directly provided services, are in a position to deliver a quality service and one in which the workforce is trained and competent to undertake the required duties.

The Sláintecare vision is to achieve a universal single-tier health and social care system where everyone has equal access to services based on need, and not ability to pay. Since its initial inception, following the publication of the Sláintecare Report in May 2017 and the subsequent approval of the Sláintecare Implementation Strategy in July 2018, significant additional funding has been provided to the HSE to further deliver essential home support services to those most in need in our communities.

Since 2017, there has been a 22% increase in funding provision for Home Support Services with funding in 2020 at circa. €490m. (Please note that these figures exclude any provision relating to the ongoing Public Health emergency).

The increase in funding supports have provided for an increase in service delivery, together with the streamlining of home support services and proposed pilot Home Support Scheme relating to preparation for the legislation and regulation of Home Support Services. The Department of Health is presently leading out on the development of a statutory Home Support Service which will consider the future design of both the funding and regulation systems for these essential services.

Yours sincerely



Sandra Tuohy
Assistant National Director
Services for Older People – Operations