



Oifig an Cheannasaí Oibríochtaí & Feabhsúcháin Seirbhíse
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
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20 October 2020

**Deputy Cormac Devlin,
Dáil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.**

Dear Deputy Devlin,

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 28575/20

To ask the Minister for Health if he will request the HSE to issue guidelines to home care service providers that will ensure clients do not lose out if a carer cannot make an appointment due to unforeseen circumstances; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

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 spread of COVID-19 throughout our communities has posed significant challenges for many areas of our Older Person's Services, including Home Support Services. The HSE continues to work closely with providers and community staff to identify where service is most required. This is to ensure, insofar as possible, that Home Support Services can continue where needed most. The requirements of physical distancing must be encouraged, supported and maintained so as to keep our staff and service users safe and prevent any further spread of the virus.

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. Approved Providers are obliged to adhere to tender specifications and service level arrangements and to ensure continuity of service to clients, where possible.

Furthermore, the HSE acknowledges the valuable role of carers and families, home support workers and providers across the services in supporting older people and their care groups throughout this challenging period.

The Department is 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.



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Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sandra Tuohy".

Sandra Tuohy,
Assistant National Director - Community Operations,
Services for Older People.