



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

Oifig an Cheannaire Oibríochtaí,  
Na Seirbhísí Míchumais/An Rannán Cúram Sóisialta,  
31-33 Sráid Chaitríona, Luimneach.

Office of the Head of Operations,  
Disability Services/Social Care Division,  
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15<sup>th</sup> October 2020

Deputy Verona Murphy  
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Dublin 2.  
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Dear Deputy Murphy,

The Health Service Executive 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 29214/20**

*To ask the Minister for Health if funding is to be reinstated to offer affordable first aid training to full-time home carers caring for persons with disabilities and special needs; and if he will make a statement on the matter.*

#### **HSE Response**

Within the Disability services, voluntary agencies provide the majority of services in partnership with and on behalf of the Health Service Executive.

The HSE is providing funding to over 419 organisations through over 1,045 service arrangements throughout the country.

The HSE has a formal Governance Framework (the Framework) in place which enables the HSE to contractually underpin the grant-funding provided to all Non-Statutory Service Providers (Providers). This Framework seeks to ensure the standard and consistent application of good governance principles, which are robust and effective, to ensure that both the HSE and the Providers meet their respective obligations. This Governance Framework incorporates national standardised documentation, and guidance documents.

The governance documentation comprising Service Arrangements (SAs) (funding greater than €250K), Grant Aid Agreements (GAs) (funding less than €250K), and related guidance documents, are utilised by the HSE Acute and Non-Acute divisions and by Hospital Groups (HGs) and Community Healthcare Organisations (CHOs), as appropriate, when contracting with Providers.

Sections 38 and 39 of the Health Act 2004 legally underpin (i) the provision of services by Non-Statutory Providers on behalf of the HSE (Section 38) and (ii) the provision of services similar or ancillary to a service that the HSE may provide (Section 39).

Schedule 9 of the Service Arrangements refers to Staffing and in particular the section regarding staff qualifications outlines that this section should contain a statement regarding the registration and qualifications of staff as appropriate.

The agency with which the HSE has a Service Arrangement, must confirm that the Agency only appoints staff who meet the relevant HSE declared qualifications and experience appropriate to the position being filled and that the qualifications have been validated by the relevant competent authority.

The agency must provide information regarding it's staff induction programme, training, on-going education, personal or professional development as well as the structures and processes employed to support staff in improving individual and organisational performance.

The agency must provide reference to those staff who are required by legislation, to maintain a valid registration with the appropriate professional organisation, and the process the Agency has in place to ensure that all such staff conform to this requirement.

The agency must ensure that it's staff have the skills and qualifications to meet the needs of the service users it is funded and contracted to provide.

Additionally, the agency must provide an outline of the skill mix employed and the appropriateness of this particular mix to meet the needs of the client base.

When employing staff, the agency must provide a detailed job description that outlines the skills and qualifications required for post holders. All staff should either satisfy these requirements at interview stage or agree to further training to develop these skills. As part of the on-going development of the team all staff should participate in on-going training and development.

The Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA) introduced the National Standards for Safer Better Healthcare in June 2012. The standards apply to all health care services provided or funded by the HSE. The Authority has developed these National Standards to set out the key principles of quality and safety that would be applied in any health care service setting. The primary obligation will be on service providers to meet the National Standards and demonstrate this to service users and the public.

Standard 6.1 of these standards outline that Service Providers must plan, organise and manage their workforce to achieve the service objectives for high quality, safe and reliable healthcare. Service users can expect that the people caring for them have the necessary qualifications, skills and experience to provide safe high quality care.

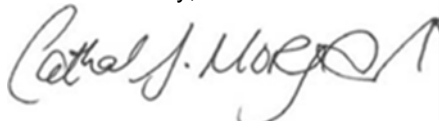
The HSE recommended level of qualification for working on HSE contracts are listed below.

Code	FETAQ Level	Title	Type
<a href="#">5M3782</a>	5	Health Service Skills	Major
<a href="#">5M2786</a>	5	Community Care	Major
<a href="#">5M4339</a>	5	Healthcare Support	Major
<a href="#">5M4349</a>	5	Nursing Studies	Major

A FETAC level 5 is the minimum qualification expected for carers working with people with disabilities.

However, the support needs of every individual is different and the employer should ensure that any additional training, for example first aid training, if required, is provided to a carer based on the specific needs of the individual that the carer will be supporting.

Yours sincerely,



**Dr. Cathal Morgan,**  
**Head of Operations - Disability Services,**  
**Community Operations**