



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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4 November 2020

Deputy Johnny Mythen, TD
Dáil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

Dear Deputy Mythen,

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 32130/20

To ask the Minister for Health the cost per hour for an individual HSE staff member providing homecare assistance; the hourly fee charged by agencies for an individual employee providing homecare assistance; 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 in 2020
- Intensive Home Care Packages delivered to approximately 235 people with approximately 360,000 hours delivered in the full year

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.

In relation to the use of private providers, the HSE has committed to the direct employment of home support staff to maximum effect for those with the appropriate skill set. However, it should be noted that private providers are part of the landscape for home support provision and will continue to be used, not least for the choice of care which they allow to the user of the service.

In that regard, following a tender process in 2018, each of the nine Community Health Organisations across the country have a number of Approved Providers available to provide a Home Support service to clients locally where the HSE is not in a position to provide the service directly. External providers operate subject to tender arrangements with the HSE and are paid in accordance with agreed tender rates.

The funded rate in 2020 across direct and indirect home support service provision is an average of €24.40 per hour and 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



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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.

As the country moves into the parameters of the new "*Roadmap for Living with Covid*", 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 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 - Community Operations,
Services for Older People.