



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,  
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25<sup>th</sup> September 2020

Deputy Michael Moynihan,  
Dail Eireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.  
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Dear Deputy Moynihan,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the following parliamentary questions, which were submitted to this department for response.

#### **PQ 23310/20**

*To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons with disabilities in receipt of home support hours in each LHO area as of 31 August 2020 or latest date available; the number on the waiting list for same in each LHO area; and the number waiting 0 to 12, 12 to 26, 26 to 52 and more than 52 weeks, respectively in tabular form.*

#### **PQ 23311/20**

*To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons with disabilities in receipt of personal assistance hours in each LHO area as of 31 August 2020 or latest date available; the number of persons currently on the waiting list for same in each LHO area; and the number waiting 0 to 3, 3 to 6, 6 to 12 and more than 12 months, respectively in tabular form.*

#### **HSE Response**

The HSE provides a range of assisted living services including Personal Assistant and Home Support Services to support individuals to maximise their capacity to live full and independent lives.

PA and Home Support Services are provided either directly by the HSE or through a range of voluntary service providers. The majority of specialised disability provision (80%) is delivered through non-statutory sector service providers.

Services are accessed through an application process or through referrals from public health nurses or other community based staff. Individuals' needs are evaluated against the criteria for prioritisation for the particular services and then decisions are made in relation to the allocation of resources. Resource allocation is determined by the needs of the individual, compliance with prioritisation criteria, and the level of resources available. As with every service there is not a limitless resource available for the provision of home support services and while the resources available are substantial they are finite. In this context, services are discretionary and the number of hours granted is determined by other support services already provided to the person/family.

The following tables provide details of the number of hours of service delivered and the number of people with a disability in receipt of services up to end Q2 in 2020.

Table 1 - PA Services for Persons with a Disability, up to Q2 2020

	Number of Adults with a Physical and Sensory Disability in Receipt of PA Services	Number of Hours PA Services Delivered
CHO	Up to Q2 2020	Up to Q2 2020
National Total	2,583	862,393
CHO Area 1	218	61,174
CHO Area 2	458	156,875
CHO Area 3	422	164,392
CHO Area 4	424	70,106
CHO Area 5	403	80,346
CHO Area 6	31	13,429
CHO Area 7	121	52,320
CHO Area 8	284	92,193
CHO Area 9	222	171,559

Table 2 – Home Support Services for Persons with a Disability, up to Q2 2020

	Number of Adults with a disability in Receipt of Home Support Services	Number of Hours Home Support Services Delivered
CHO	Up to Q2 2020	Up to Q2 2020
National Total	6,128	1,430,896
CHO Area 1	666	159,658
CHO Area 2	1,006	105,823
CHO Area 3	433	95,799
CHO Area 4	568	115,956
CHO Area 5	726	155,296
CHO Area 6	565	173,585
CHO Area 7	729	176,003
CHO Area 8	1,107	279,299
CHO Area 9	328	169,478

### Waiting Lists

Whilst there is currently no centrally maintained list of people awaiting these services, each Community Health Organisation Area would be aware of the presenting needs within each of the geographic areas. Following referral and assessment, available resources are allocated to clients with highest level of need.

The need for increased services is acknowledged and the HSE continues to work with agencies to explore various ways of responding to this need in line with the budget available.

To provide further support to understanding the future service need for Personal Assistance and Home Support, the Health Research Board provide planning analysis through databases for people with a disability. This is a key planning tool in respect of current service provision and future service needs which are used by the DOH and the HSE. In line with the information available from the National Disability Databases reports and local waiting lists, in excess of 376 people will require Home Support services in the future and 291 people are listed as awaiting PA services. Please note that as the National Disability Databases are not mandatory it is quite possible there is an under reporting of the need.

## COVID-19 Public Health Emergency

Prior to the public health emergency with regard to COVID-19, the HSE was committed to protecting the level of Personal Assistant (PA) and Home Support Services available to persons with disabilities. In the 2020 National Service Plan, the HSE's priority was continue to deliver high quality PA and Home Support to approximately 10,000 people with disabilities including 1.67 million PA hours and 3.08 million Home Support hours.

In preparing for and responding to COVID-19 and to fully align with Public Health guidance as recommended via the NPHET, the HSE and its partner service providers put in place a range of measures, which included the prioritisation of vital residential and home support services whilst curtailing or closing certain services such as day services, as well as certain clinical supports in order to; a) prioritise essential public health services at CHO level and b) ensure continued delivery of the referenced residential and home supports provision. I should note that in the absence of regular access to some service and supports, CHOs and service providers have tried to maintain services that can be delivered safely; providing outreach and telecare solutions, using technology where possible; and using creative and innovative models of care to support service users, both adults and children.

### Roadmap for Reopening

In the context of the Governments Resilience & Recovery Framework (2020 – 2021), the HSE regards the provision of disability services as essential to maintaining a response to people with a disability. All disability services must follow public health guidance in this area, including the prevention and management of COVID-19 related infection. The HSE and its funded disability partners will continue to provide PA and Home Support in line with public health guidance and direction and having regard to the availability of staffing resources.

Reference is drawn to the following HSE weblink which provides updates and guidance for disability service providers, including 'service resumption planning guidance'.

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/news/newsfeatures/covid19-updates/partner-resources/>

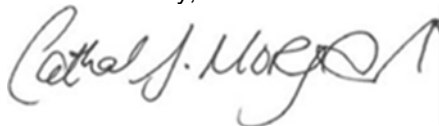
Attention is also drawn to the following important web links which provides up to date information resources in respect of covid.

[www.hspc.ie](http://www.hspc.ie)

<https://www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/c36c85-covid-19-coronavirus/>

The HSE and Service Providers recognise the critical need and importance of disability supports for people and their families. The impact of COVID-19 on people's lives has and continues to be very significant. Our collective aim is to restore services in a safe way and in line with the very significant investment made by the State and funded agencies and we will continue to work with service users and their families/carers to ensure that we achieve this aim.

Yours sincerely,



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