



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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6th May 2021

Deputy Brid Smith, TD
Dáil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

Dear Deputy Smith

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 19101/21

To ask the Minister for Health the number and name of all homecare providers for older persons used by the HSE; the cost of same in 2018, 2019 and 2020; the number of home help hours provided by private contracted companies; and the number provided directly by HSE staff in the same period.

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.

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.

In relation to your query regarding the contact details of "all homecare providers for older persons used by the HSE", please see link hereunder to the published list of Approved Home Support Providers who have formal tender arrangements with the HSE under current tender arrangements; <https://www.hse.ie/eng/home-support-services/choosing-an-approved-provider/>. In some areas, the HSE has implemented Service Arrangements with private providers who are not on the tender framework in order to meet capacity in the areas.

Preliminary data currently available reflects the period to end of March 2021. As of this date, 4,686,335 home support hours were delivered nationally to 54,122 people. Also, as of this date, there were 1,601 people waiting for funding for new or additional home support. Please see Appendix 1 below for a breakdown of direct and indirect service provision for the years 2018 to 2020 inclusive.

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 and as the country moves through the phases of Government restrictions, 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.



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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. The HSE welcomes recent Government approval to draft a General Scheme and Heads of Bill to establish a licencing framework for publicly funded, for-profit and not-for-profit home support providers. The drafting of the General Scheme is one part of the regulatory framework for home-support services currently being developed by the Department of Health. It is envisaged that this framework will include minimum requirements (regulations) to form the criteria against which the regulator will determine providers' eligibility to hold a licence to operate as well as national standards which are currently being developed by HIQA. The aim of a licensing system for home support providers is to enhance service-user safety and quality of care by ensuring that each individual provider complies with minimum standards.

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 cursive script that reads "Sandra Tuohy".

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