



16th November 2021

Deputy Jackie Cahill, TD
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

Dear Deputy Cahill,

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 59353/21

To ask the Minister for Health the measures in the HSE Winter Plan 2021-2022 that will enhance homecare provision for older people; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

The National Service Plan for 2021 provides for the following: -

- 23.67m home support hours to be delivered to 55,675 people by year end, inclusive of an additional 5m hours funded under the Winter Plan 2020/2021
- 230,000 hours to be delivered as part of the Home Support Pilot Scheme to commence in 2021 and
- 360,000 home support hours provided to 235 people under the Intensive Home Support Scheme

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.

Despite the significant level of service provision, the demand for Home Support, and its importance as an alternative service to long stay care, has grown considerably over the past number of years. Similarly, the type of Home Support that is now required to meet the needs of the population is a more person-centred personal care model.

Preliminary activity data currently available reflects the period to end of October 2021. As of this date, 16,877,254 home support hours were delivered nationally to circa 54,000 people.

The Winter Plan for 2020/2021 was framed in the context of an increasing demand for unscheduled care, the need to support service continuity and resumption of services and delivering essential healthcare in the context of the ongoing Pandemic. Winter Plan 2020/2021 included a targeted work programme to significantly expand the existing home support hours to support those with high and moderate levels of frailty including people with dementia, utilising a discharge to assess model with a philosophy of 'Home First' underpinning all care pathway decisions.

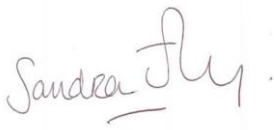
The Services for Older People Reform Programme which commenced in 2021, will continue in 2022, and includes the following work streams:

- Increased capacity in intermediate care beds
- Implementation of InterRAI as a standardised clinical care needs assessment tool
- Increase of 5m hours of home support, to include the delivery of long-term care avoidance home support packages and the development of a reablement model to be established in each CHO.

In relation to the HSE Winter Plan 2021-2022, and in particular the elements relating to Home Support 2022, the Winter Plan 2021/2022 supports the continued deliverance of the original allocation of an additional 5m Home Support hours (2020/21), into 2022. As of the end of October 2021, the full year value (FYV) of all allocated Winter Plan 2021 hours, was circa 2.5m nationally, with 11,775 people benefitting from a home support service under this initiative. The balance of hours at year end will be carried over for delivery in 2022, with the overall Home Support target service provision for 2022 at 24.2m hours.

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". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line under the name.

Sandra Tuohy
Assistant National Director
Services for Older People – Operations