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12 April 2021

**Deputy Matt Shanahan, TD
Dáil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.**

Dear Deputy Shanahan,

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 15985/21

To ask the Minister for Health the estimated full-year cost of providing an extra 1.3 million home support hours; 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 National Service Plan for 2021 provides for the following: -

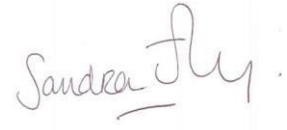
- 23.67m home support hours to be delivered to 55,675 people by year end, inclusive of an additional 5m hours funded under the Winter Plan 2020/2021
- 230,000 hours to be delivered as part of the Home Support Pilot Scheme to commence in 2021 and
- 360,000 home support hours provided to 235 people under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

Funding provided in 2021 will see an increase in home support provision to circa 24m hours by year end. In relation to your query regarding the estimated cost of providing a further 1.3m Home Support hours is in the region of €34.5m - full year cost.

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 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 cursive script that reads "Sandra Tuohy". The signature is written in black ink on a white background.

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