



Oifig an Stiúrthóra Náisiúnta Cúnta – Oibríochtaí

Seirbhísí do Dhaoine Scothaosta

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**Deputy Ruairí Ó Murchú TD,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.**

Dear Deputy Ó Murchú,

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: 51623/21

To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons per CHO in tabular form from the establishment of the scheme who have availed of HSE funding to hire homecare support providers themselves; 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 care needs by the HSE and having regard to available resources and competing demands for the service from those people with assessed needs. Home Support Services are an important component of the provision of service to older people with assessed needs and to support them in their choice of living in their own home and community.

The HSE, working within its available resources, has sought to maintain and when possible to expand the range and volume of services available to support people to remain in their own homes, to prevent early admission to long term residential care and to support people to return to their homes following an acute hospital admission.

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, 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.

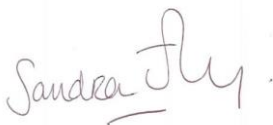
In addition to the above and as part of the Tender Guidelines 2018, additional flexible options were introduced whereby an approved client would have the option to choose their service provider from the list of Approved Providers within their catchment area. This is known as Client Choice. The second additional option was Consumer Directed Home Support (CDHS). This approach facilitates funded clients to deal directly with the HSE Approved Provider(s) of their choice and to arrange days and times of service delivery. CDHS is available in all CHOs across the country and further information is available in the Home Support Information Booklet available at the web-link: - [Home Support Service \(hse.ie\)](https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/disability/personalised-budgets-for-people-with-a-disability/)

A pilot on the use of personalised budgets is currently underway in HSE Disability Services, it is not however presently available to clients in receipt of home support funded through Services for Older People. More information relating to the Disability Pilot Project is available at the below link: -

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/disability/personalised-budgets-for-people-with-a-disability/>

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,



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