



Oifig an Cheannasaí Oibríochtaí & Feabhsúcháin Seirbhíse
Seirbhísí do Dhaoine Scothaosta
Tel: 061 483245
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Office of the Assistant National Director - Operations
Services for Older People
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7 October 2021

**Deputy Claire Kerrane, TD
Dáil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.**

Dear Deputy Kerrane,

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 45827/21

To ask the Minister for Health the number of nursing homes in the State that receive a top-up payment from the HSE in respect of a resident or residents; the corresponding county each nursing home is located; the rationale for these top-up payments; and the way in which it is determined who receives them.

PQ 45825/21

To ask the Minister for Health if a list of nursing homes in the State in which residents in them are provided with tailored support packages or comfort monies will be provided; the number of individuals who receive these supports; the grounds on which they receive them; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Firstly, it is important to note that “Top Up” payments are only provided in extremely rare circumstance and are based on a case by case assessment which has determined that additional supports are required to meet the complex needs of the client in order for the admission to be safely facilitated.

There are currently two mechanisms by which the HSE are providing “Top Up” payments. In the main, this additional funding is in place to support providers who are incurring additional costs in relation to managing new admissions where the resident has, for example, a cognitive impairment, and is known to for example, “wander with purpose”. The funding allows the facility to maintain the new resident on 1:1 care for the entirety of the isolation period on admission to the facility. Funding is also provided to nursing homes from the National Office for Older Persons where the resident admitted is subject to Court of Protection / Ward of Court. The other “Top Up” funding mechanism in place is to support providers to manage clients being admitted to nursing homes with highly complex needs.



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With regards to criteria, in relation to the isolation cases where temporary additional supports are required for isolation period, this is done in liaison with the discharging hospital, the private nursing home and the National Transitional Care Office. In respect of the complex cases, many of these patients are not accepted into nursing homes who provide standard non-complex nursing oversight of residents. The HSE do not have a list of pre-determined nursing homes for any clients deemed eligible for nursing home care.

Currently, the organisation has 38 clients across 16 facilities in receipt of “top up” payments. These are vulnerable clients with highly complex needs. The payments are not common and, as such, to publicly identify the individual nursing homes and the number of clients supported within each centre with the significant financial support documented could potentially cause speculation within the actual nursing home, the community and the general public as to who these actual clients are. This could greatly impinge on the supported client’s privacy, in particular those for whom the top up payment is substantial. As such, the list of Nursing Homes in receipt of these top up payments will not be released by this office at this time.

Finally, with regards to your query relating to comfort money, this is the term used to describe that amount of their own money residents require to pay for their day to day comforts such as confectionary, newspaper, shop purchases, personal items such as toiletries etc. It is not a HSE funded payment to nursing home residents.

I hope this clarifies the position.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sandra Tuohy".

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