



Oifig an Cheannasaí Oibríochtaí & Feabhsúcháin Seirbhíse  
Seirbhísí do Dhaoine Scothaosta  
Tel: 087 345 5593  
Email: olderpeople.operations@hse.ie

Office of the Assistant National Director - Operations  
Services for Older People  
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13th October 2021

**Deputy Noel Grealish, TD**  
**Dáil Eireann,**  
**Leinster House,**  
**Kildare Street,**  
**Dublin 2.**

Dear Deputy Grealish,

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 46894/21**

**To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons in County Galway and nationally waiting for an assessment or reassessment for home help hours and for additional home help hours; the number approved but on a waiting list; the length of time each has been waiting; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Noel Grealish**

**PQ 46895/21**

**To ask the Minister for Health if a shortage of staff is hampering the provision of services under the HSE home support service; if so, the extent of same; the areas that are worst affected; the steps being taken to address the issue; the number of persons employed in the provision of the service; the number of persons required to fully operate the service; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Noel Grealish**

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 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.

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



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Preliminary activity data\* currently available reflects the period to end of August 2021. As of this date, 13,218,094 home support hours were delivered nationally to 53,905 people. Also, as of this date, there were 478 people assessed and waiting for funding approval for new or additional home support, with 4,449 people assessed and approved for funding but waiting on a carer to be assigned. It should be noted that despite capacity challenges experienced nationwide within Home Support services, overall service delivery has increased by 17% based on activity levels for the same period last year.

See Appendix 1 for a breakdown of same. Please note that the data requested on waiting for an “assessment or reassessment” & “length of time waiting”, is not currently collated nationally. While this data may be available locally, it would take considerable resources to collate this information nationally.

While the HSE is aware that there are increasing capacity issues across both direct and indirect provision, it continues to advertise on an ongoing basis for Health Care Assistants (HCSAs) and recruits as many suitable candidates, where possible. The HSE conducts its recruitment through a variety of channels both at local level and through the shared service offices of HBS. Due to the nature of Healthcare Support Assistants, this recruitment is normally conducted at a very local level and is on-going continually across the HSE in an effort to ensure availability of carers. Approved Home Support Providers also continue to recruit home support workers. Efforts are ongoing to meet the demand for home support services.

As at the end of June 2021 (latest quarterly report available) there were 5,333 directly employed HCSAs (headcount). The HSE does not hold data on the number of home support workers employed by individual home support providers.

While there are sometimes delays between the approval of funding and the availability of carers to commence delivery of home support hours in certain regions, significant work is underway to address these challenges. This includes the establishment of a Strategic Workforce Advisory Group led by Department of Health, working with the HSE to look in detail at issues of recruitment, retention, skills development, pay and conditions, and sustainable employment of home carers into the future.’

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.



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Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sandra Tuohy".

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**Sandra Tuohy**  
**Assistant National Director**  
**Services for Older People – Operations**



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## **Appendix 1 – Home Support Waiting List – August 2021 YTD**



Oifig an Cheannasaí Oibríochtaí & Feabhsúcháin Seirbhíse  
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CHO	LHO	Funding		Total Funding	Carers		Total Carers
		New	Additional		New	Additional	
CHO 1	Cavan Monaghan	-	-		56	146	202
CHO 1	Donegal	56	27		12	5	17
CHO 1	Sligo Leitrim	-	-		23	31	54
CHO 1	<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>273</b>
CHO 2	Galway	-	-	-	57	155	212
CHO 2	Mayo	-	-	-	172	153	325
CHO 2	Roscommon	1	-	1	36	78	114
CHO 2	<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>386</b>	<b>651</b>
CHO 3	Clare	-	42	42	171	-	171
CHO 3	Limerick	12	11	23	44	30	74
CHO 3	North Tipperary East Limerick	-	-	-	33	12	45
CHO 3	<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>290</b>
CHO 4	Kerry	-	-	-	104	53	157
CHO 4	North Cork	-	-	-	67	33	100
CHO 4	North Lee	-	-	-	33	50	83
CHO 4	South Lee	-	-	-	108	60	168
CHO 4	West Cork	-	-	-	78	64	142
CHO 4	<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>650</b>
CHO 5	Carlow Kilkenny	-	-	-	68	73	141
CHO 5	South Tipperary	-	-	-	58	118	176
CHO 5	Waterford	-	-	-	130	195	325
CHO 5	Wexford	-	-	-	649	216	865
CHO 5	<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>905</b>	<b>602</b>	<b>1,507</b>
CHO 6	Dublin South East	-	-	-	-	-	-
CHO 6	Dun Laoghaire	-	-	-	9	97	106
CHO 6	Wicklow	-	-	-	18	21	39
CHO 6	<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>145</b>
CHO 7	Dublin South City	10	11	21	68	2	70
CHO 7	Dublin South West	20	78	98	117	-	117
CHO 7	Dublin West	14	39	53	122	31	153
CHO 7	Kildare West Wicklow	22	56	78	73	3	76
CHO 7	<b>Total</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>416</b>
CHO 8	Laois Offaly	10	14	24	-	-	-
CHO 8	Longford Westmeath	-	-	-	27	75	102
CHO 8	Louth	-	-	-	18	28	46
CHO 8	Meath	-	-	-	248	84	332
CHO 8	<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>480</b>
CHO 9	Dublin North	10	10	20	24	13	37
CHO 9	Dublin North Central	12	15	27	-	-	-
CHO 9	Dublin North West	4	4	8	-	-	-
CHO 9	<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>National Total</b>		<b>171</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>478</b>	<b>2,623</b>	<b>1,826</b>	<b>4,449</b>



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