



Oifig an Stiúirthóra Náisiúnta Cúnta – Oibríochtaí

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Services for Older People

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14th October 2021

Deputy David Cullinane, TD
Dáil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

Dear Deputy Cullinane,

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 47229/21

To ask the Minister for Health the number of home help hours provided annually by the HSE in each of the years 2017 to 2020; the number of home help hours provided in these years by private companies; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

From 1 January 2018, home help hours and homecare packages were amalgamated into a single funded service: Home Support. 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 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. The Home Support resource is used to its maximum effect as part of each individual recipient's care plan.

The type of support that is provided includes personal care and, where appropriate, essential household duties relating to the client's needs. The home support service which people receive is based on an individual client's care needs, which are assessed by clinical staff. The home support provided and associated care plan will vary dependent on the level of dependency, client's individual ability to undertake activities of daily living and other support structures in place such as attendance at day care.

Additional funding provided, as part of the Winter Plan 2020/2021, will support a significant increase of service provision of 5m hours by year end and will enable the HSE to keep the number of clients assessed and waiting on funding to a minimum in addition to the provision of packages of care to support reablement and those with complex care needs in order to avoid long-term care. This will amount to a service provision of approximately 24m hours in 2021.

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. Please see appendix below which shows a breakdown of activity since 2017 for both direct and indirect service provision.

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".

Sandra Tuohy
Assistant National Director
Services for Older People – Operations

