



01 March 2022

Deputy Mairead Farrell TD,
Dáil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

Dear Deputy Farrell,

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 7530/22

To ask the Minister for Health the number of home help hours that are not being completed due to staff shortages by county in tabular form; 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.

NSP 2022 provides for the following: -

- Rollover of the 2021 target levels of service into 2022, inclusive of the additional 5m hours funded in 2021 to 23.67m hours nationally
- 360,000 hours provided via Intensive Home Care Packages
- 230,000 hours associated with the roll-out of the pilot Statutory Home Support Scheme, which commenced in late 2021

Despite the significant level of service provision, the demand for Home Support, and its importance as an alternative service to long stay care, has grown considerably over the past number of years. Similarly, the type of Home Support that is now required to meet the needs of the population is a more person-centred personal care model.

Preliminary activity data currently available reflects the period to end of January 2022. As of this date, 1,653,854 Home Support hours were delivered nationally to 53,455 people. Also, as of this date, there were 273 people assessed and waiting for funding for new or additional home support, while 4,787 people were assessed and approved for Home Support but are awaiting a carer to be assigned. Please see Appendix 1 below for a breakdown of target and activity as at January 2022.

** Please note that there is a data gap in CHO 1 Sligo/Leitrim for January 2022.*

The HSE is aware that there are increasing capacity issues across both direct and indirect provision and it continues to advertise on an ongoing basis for Health Care Support 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.

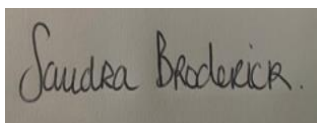
Due to the nature of Health Care Support Assistants, recruitment is normally conducted at a local level and is on-going continually across the HSE in an effort to ensure availability of carers. Approved Home Support Providers also continue to recruit health care support workers. Efforts are ongoing to meet the demand for home support services.

While there can be 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 work within the Department of Health to establish a cross-departmental Strategic Workforce Advisory Group including the HSE to work with key stakeholders to examine in detail at issues of recruitment, retention, skills development, pay and conditions, and sustainable employment of home support workers into the future.

The Minister for Health has invited submissions from key stakeholders in order to afford organisations an opportunity to set out current workforce challenges; to gather data and evidence to support scoping the nature and extent of the issue in advance of the Department bringing the relevant stakeholders together in a structured process.

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 rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sandra Broderick".

Sandra Broderick
Assistant National Director
Community Operations
Services for Older People

Appendix 1 – Home Support Activity January 2022 YTD

CHO	LHO	Target YTD	Jan YTD
CHO 1	Cavan Monaghan	40,267	43,462
CHO 1	Donegal	78,395	82,441
CHO 1	Sligo Leitrim	53,016	-
CHO 1	Total	171,678	125,903
CHO 2	Galway	98,512	96,809
CHO 2	Mayo	66,221	54,708
CHO 2	Roscommon	37,500	34,973
CHO 2	Total	202,233	186,490
CHO 3	Clare	48,156	51,509
CHO 3	Limerick	64,208	55,770
CHO 3	North Tipperary East Limerick	48,156	32,076
CHO 3	Total	160,520	139,355
CHO 4	Kerry	62,061	57,532
CHO 4	North Cork	36,409	32,766
CHO 4	North Lee	47,009	43,859
CHO 4	South Lee	53,612	60,292
CHO 4	West Cork	29,293	25,547
CHO 4	Total	228,384	219,996
CHO 5	Carlow Kilkenny	42,555	44,502
CHO 5	South Tipperary	33,522	24,238
CHO 5	Waterford	32,344	36,917
CHO 5	Wexford	57,276	42,350
CHO 5	Total	165,697	148,007
CHO 6	Dublin South East	45,182	54,269
CHO 6	Dun Laoghaire	58,870	72,139
CHO 6	Wicklow	64,959	43,977
CHO 6	Total	169,011	170,385
CHO 7	Dublin South City	37,995	40,066
CHO 7	Dublin South West	49,993	54,304
CHO 7	Dublin West	39,995	39,772
CHO 7	Kildare West Wicklow	71,990	55,174
CHO 7	Total	199,973	189,315
CHO 8	Laois Offaly	44,956	50,471
CHO 8	Longford Westmeath	47,097	47,310
CHO 8	Louth	42,815	41,363
CHO 8	Meath	49,238	48,991
CHO 8	Total	184,106	188,135
CHO 9	Dublin North	143,972	112,871
CHO 9	Dublin North Central	114,597	85,852
CHO 9	Dublin North West	68,038	87,546
CHO 9	Total	326,607	286,269
National Total		1,808,209	1,653,854