



02 February 2022

**Deputy Cian O'Callaghan TD,
Dáil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.**

Dear Deputy O'Callaghan,

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 2118/22

To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons on waiting lists for homecare package applications by CHO, LHO and time waiting; 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 December 2021. As of this date, 20,463,216 Home Support hours were delivered nationally to 55,043 people, while 21,164 new Home Support clients have benefitted from the service. Also, as of this date, there were 474 people waiting for funding for new or additional home support, while 5,322 people were approved for Home Support but are awaiting 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 14% based on activity levels for the same period last year.

Data requested in the format of “*time waiting*”, is not currently collated nationally. While this may be available locally, it would take considerable resources to collate this nationally. Please see Appendix 1 below for a breakdown of the current Home Support waiting list, as at end of December 2021.

With regards to the Home Support waiting list, the HSE is aware that there are increasing capacity issues across both direct and indirect service provision. The HSE 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.

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 work within the Department of Health to establish a Strategic Workforce Advisory Group to include key stakeholders including the HSE to look 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 recently 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,



Sandra Tuohy
Assistant National Director
Community Operations
Services for Older People

Appendix 1 – Home Support Waiting List – December 2021

Home Support Waiting List 2021

Report Date: December 2021

CHO	LHO	Funding			Carers		
		New	Addition	Total	New	Addition	Total
CHO 1	Cavan Monaghan	-	-	-	75	147	222
CHO 1	Donegal	66	-	66	30	55	85
CHO 1	Sligo Leitrim	-	-	-	24	34	58
CHO 1	Total	66	-	66	129	236	365
CHO 2	Galway	-	-	-	98	180	278
CHO 2	Mayo	-	-	-	136	157	293
CHO 2	Roscommon	-	-	-	30	97	127
CHO 2	Total	-	-	-	264	434	698
CHO 3	Clare	-	52	52	205	-	205
CHO 3	Limerick	-	-	-	127	53	180
CHO 3	North Tipperary East Limerick	-	-	-	101	37	138
CHO 3	Total	-	52	52	433	90	523
CHO 4	Kerry	-	1	1	139	69	208
CHO 4	North Cork	-	-	-	73	32	105
CHO 4	North Lee	-	-	-	74	46	120
CHO 4	South Lee	-	-	-	154	95	249
CHO 4	West Cork	-	-	-	66	48	114
CHO 4	Total	-	1	1	506	290	796
CHO 5	Carlow Kilkenny	-	-	-	39	96	135
CHO 5	South Tipperary	-	-	-	82	116	198
CHO 5	Waterford	-	-	-	149	168	317
CHO 5	Wexford	-	-	-	644	227	871
CHO 5	Total	-	-	-	914	607	1,521
CHO 6	Dublin South East	-	-	-	-	-	-
CHO 6	Dun Laoghaire	-	-	-	46	86	132
CHO 6	Wicklow	-	-	-	13	18	31
CHO 6	Total	-	-	-	59	104	163
CHO 7	Dublin South City	4	43	47	129	1	130
CHO 7	Dublin South West	-	107	107	274	-	274
CHO 7	Dublin West	-	48	48	169	32	201
CHO 7	Kildare West Wicklow	-	80	80	113	-	113
CHO 7	Total	4	278	282	685	33	718
CHO 8	Laois Offaly	-	8	8	-	-	-
CHO 8	Longford Westmeath	-	-	-	7	106	113
CHO 8	Louth	-	-	-	81	66	147
CHO 8	Meath	-	-	-	122	82	204
CHO 8	Total	-	8	8	210	254	464
CHO 9	Dublin North	6	7	13	57	17	74
CHO 9	Dublin North Central	12	17	29	-	-	-
CHO 9	Dublin North West	15	8	23	-	-	-
CHO 9	Total	33	32	65	57	17	74
National Total		103	371	474	3,257	2,065	5,322