

Oifig an Stiúrthóra Náisiúnta Cúnta
Oibríochtaí Pobail
Seirbhísi do Dhaoine Aosta
Teileafón: 087 345 5593
Riomhphost: olderpeople.operations@hse.ie



Office of the Assistant National Director
Community Operations
Services for Older People
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02 February 2022

**Deputy Róisín Shorthall TD,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.**

Dear Deputy Shorthall,

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 2464/22

To ask the Minister for Health if he plans to change the HSE model for commissioning homecare; 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. 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.

Following a tender process in 2018, each of the nine Community Health Organisations across the country have a number of Approved Providers available to provide a Home Support service to clients locally where the HSE is not in a position to provide the service directly. External providers operate subject to tender arrangements with the HSE.

The current tender was initially extended for 12 months from 01 January 2020 to 31 December 2020 and has been further extended for a final 12-month period to end December 2022. The operation of the tender is detailed in the Tender 2018 Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) available at the following web-link:-

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/olderpeople/service-arrangement-documents.html>

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As the existing tender is due to expire at end of 2022, the HSE in consultation with Department of Health is currently considering running a new tender to commence 01 January 2023 pending the introduction of a legislated Home Support Scheme. Any tender process undertaken by the HSE will be carried out in accordance with the relevant EU Procurement Directives which incorporate the principles of equity, fairness and transparency.

The Department is currently engaged in a detailed process to develop a new stand-alone, statutory scheme for the commissioning, financing and regulation of Home Support services. Developing a new statutory scheme, which will be underpinned by legislation, 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 blue ink that reads 'Sandra Tuohy'.

Sandra Tuohy
Assistant National Director
Community Operations
Services for Older People