



28th June 2022

Deputy Catherine Connolly,
Dáil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

Dear Deputy Connolly,

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 30093/22

To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons on waiting lists for home support in Ireland; the number of same who are awaiting a new service; the number awaiting additional services; the number of persons on waiting lists for home support services who have been waiting 0-6, 6-12, 12-18, 18-24 months, 2-3 years and more than 4 years; 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 May 2022. As of this date, 8,729,640 Home Support hours were delivered nationally to 55,392 people. Also, as of this date, there were 348 people assessed and waiting for funding for new or additional home support, while 4,720 people were assessed and approved for Home Support but are awaiting a carer to be assigned. Data requested in relation to (*waiting 0-6, 6-12, 12-18, 18-24 months, 2-3 years and more than 4 years*) is not currently collated nationally. While this information may be available locally, it would take considerable resources to collate same nationally. Please see Appendix 1 below for a breakdown of the current Home Support waiting list as at end of May 2022, for both new & additional HS clients.

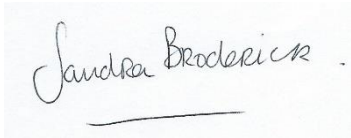
The HSE is aware that there are increasing capacity issues across both direct and indirect service provision. The HSE continues to advertise on an ongoing basis for Health Care Assistants (HCSAs) and recruits as many

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 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 black ink that reads "Sandra Broderick". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Sandra Broderick
Assistant National Director
Community Operations
Services for Older People

Appendix 1 – Home Support waiting list May 2022

CHO	WAITING LIST - MAY 2022					
	Funding			Carers		
	New	Additional	Total	New	Additional	Total
CHO 1	-	-	-	180	309	489
CHO 2	-	-	-	203	385	588
CHO 3	-	-	-	376	196	572
CHO 4	-	-	-	569	375	944
CHO 5	-	-	-	322	496	818
CHO 6	-	-	-	130	84	214
CHO 7	-	14	14	549	37	586
CHO 8	207	-	207	212	226	438
CHO 9	62	65	127	49	22	71
National Total	269	79	348	2,590	2,130	4,720