



15 March 2022

Deputy Denis Naughten TD,
Dáil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

Dear Deputy Naughten,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the following Parliamentary Question, which were submitted to this Department for response.

PQ 11685/22

To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons waiting on home help hours in each CHO area; the number of hours required to meet that need; the number of persons in receipt of home help that are approved for additional hours; the number of hours required to meet that need in each CHO; the number of home help hours that are not being completed due to staff shortages by CHO 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 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 the Home Support Waiting List as at end of January 2022. ** Please note that there is a data gap in CHO 1 Sligo/Leitrim for January 2022.*

In relation to your question regarding “*the number of hours required to meet that need*”, please note that it is not possible to quantify this need as it pertains to the Home Support waiting list. This is due to the fact that each client listed on the waiting list, has an allocation of hours specific to their individual needs. This is determined following a care needs assessment having been undertaken for

each individual client. Collation of this data would require considerable resources which are presently not available.

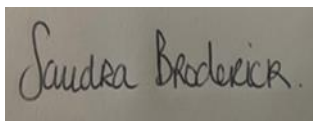
In addition, the HSE is aware that there are increasing capacity issues across both direct and indirect provision and it continues to advertise on an ongoing basis for Health Care Support Assistants (HCSAs) and recruits as many suitable candidates, where possible. The HSE conducts its recruitment through a variety of channels both at local level and through the shared service offices of HBS.

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 Waiting List – January 2022

CHO	WAITING LIST - JANUARY 2022					
	Funding			Carers		
	New	Additional	Total	New	Additional	Total
CHO 1	-	-	-	186	261	447
CHO 2	-	-	-	269	408	677
CHO 3	-	-	-	421	103	524
CHO 4	-	1	1	526	316	842
CHO 5	-	-	-	462	433	895
CHO 6	-	-	-	172	79	251
CHO 7	8	124	132	684	36	720
CHO 8	-	7	7	169	212	381
CHO 9	56	77	133	36	14	50
National Total	64	209	273	2,925	1,862	4,787