



20<sup>th</sup> June 2022

Deputy Claire Kerrane,  
Dáil Eireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.

**PQ 27636/22 - To ask the Minister for Health the reason that the HSE pay two different rates for the care of older people and the care of disabled people to homecare providers; the reason that the hourly rate paid by the HSE is 38.8% less for disabled people; and the reason that the two rates are not the same for both older people and disabled people.**

**PQ 27637/22 - To ask the Minister for Health the reason that the hourly rate of payment paid to homecare providers for the care of disabled people has not been reviewed for three years; if he will review this rate and bring it in line with the rate paid for the care of older people.**

**PQ 27638/22 - To ask the Minister for Health if two different rates are paid by the HSE for the care of older people and the care of disabled people to all homecare providers; if this rate varies by provider; and if not, if it is the same for all providers.**

-Claire Kerrane

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Dear Deputy Kerrane,

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

Home Support Services play an important role in providing personal care to people in their own homes and support to carers. The type of support provided includes personal care and, where appropriate, essential household duties relating to the client's assessed needs.

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.

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. A joint work programme between the Department of Health and HSE for the design, development and regulation of the new statutory home support scheme is currently underway with the Department of Health leading out on a detailed process to determine what type of scheme is best to meet the ongoing and evolving needs of those requiring home support.

Home Support services are provided by both directly employed Healthcare Support Assistants (HCSAs) and Approved Providers with formal tendered arrangements with the HSE.

In relation to the rates paid to Approved Providers with regards to the delivery of Home Support services for Older People, same are paid in accordance with the Tender 2018 Framework, which is the current tender in operation. As part of that initial Tender process, prospective providers were asked to submit their own individual rates for consideration, in line with the Tender Guidelines and related Specifications. Tender rates vary across CHO areas and from Provider to Provider with a range of rates applicable for core and non-core hours.

At the time of the tendering process for home support services, this was solely a decision made by Older Persons Services to proceed. The model of support was traditionally for Home Help through Older Persons Services which historically is a different delivery model to that of Home Support by Disability Services due to the different presenting needs for each cohort.

Currently, consideration is being given to addressing the difference in hourly rates with a view to bringing equity across Older Persons and Disability Services. The HSE raised this matter through inclusion in the Estimates and ELS submissions for 2022 and partial funding was allocated. The HSE is currently working to identify the outstanding funding required to bring equity to the rates and it is the HSE's intention to tender for the services.

There is a process within community services to amalgamate the delivery of supports into a person's home across older person and disability services, thus the Home Help title has been dropped and Home Support is the now preferred reference to the service delivery. This is to stream line the management processes and a procurement process will be required in the future for disability services.

The length of time for the current older persons preferred provider framework and the presenting needs of those with a disability, are two key factors for consideration regarding a combined tender approach in the future, or a distinct Disability Services tender approach.

A tender process would have to be considered by the Department of Health in the first instance with due consideration given for a likely increased spend.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,



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Yvonne O'Neill,  
Interim National Director,  
Community Operations

