



Oifig an Stiúthóra Náisiúnta Cúnta
Oibríochtaí Pobail
Seirbhísí do Dhaoine Scothaosta

Office of the Assistant National Director –
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Services for Older People

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10th November 2022

Deputy Róisín Shortall,
Dáil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

Dear Deputy Shortall,

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: 22/54803

To ask the Minister for Health the status of plans to update the homecare tender process; if it is still his intention to issue the invitation to tender towards the end of Q3 for implementation on 1 January 2023; if the work of a third party (details supplied) in the strategy development stage has concluded; 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, with NSP 2022 providing for the overall delivery of 24.26m hours nationally by year end, which includes 260k hours as part of the Home Support Pilot Programme. 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.

One of the key strategic intents of Sláintecare is to transform community services through a modernisation of the health care system, redirecting care out of the acute hospital system and into primary and community settings. This will see enhanced provision of care and support to older persons and persons of increasing frailty in their homes, where appropriate. In recognition that Home Support is a key service within the Irish healthcare system, 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 our older people.

In relation to the Home Support tender, it is envisaged that the statutory Home Support Scheme will not be implemented until into 2023.

There is therefore a requirement to ensure the availability of providers beyond the end date of the current tender arrangements, and in order to facilitate this the HSE published stage one of its *Invitation to Participate* on eTenders (<https://www.etenders.gov.ie/>) on 01 September 2022 on behalf of Services for Older People. The submission timeline in relation to stage one closed on 26th September 2022, with the evaluation of applicants the next step in the procurement process currently being undertaken. Stage two will be issued as soon as possible thereafter.

Yours sincerely,

Kathleen Jordan
General Manager
Services for Older People
Community Operations