



10 May 2023

David Cullinane,
Dáil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

Dear Deputy Cullinane,

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 20894/23

To ask the Minister for Health the number of patients on home support waiting lists at the end of quarter 1 2019-2023, inclusive in tabular form; and the breakdown by length of wait

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, having regard to the available resources and the competing demands for the service. The volume and type of service provided to each client is based on individually assessed care needs and will vary dependent on the needs identified and the resources available to meet those needs.

Demand for home support continues to increase due to population growth and the increasing dependency of the growing numbers of people aged ≥80years, within the over 65 years' cohort. In the context of increasing demand, priority is given to those being discharged from acute hospitals who are in a position to return home with supports and to those in the community with acute needs. Funding approval is expedited across the system to ensure minimum waiting times. While there may 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. The HSE advertises on an ongoing basis for Health Care Support Assistants (HCSAs) and recruits as many suitable candidates where possible.

The Strategic Workforce Advisory Group on Home Carers & Nursing Home Healthcare Assistants have set out a number of recommendations in their October 2022 published report through which the current workforce crisis in Healthcare Assistants (and home support staff) could be addressed at a cross governmental level. Further discussions are to be held with DoH on the phased implementation of the recommendations assigned to the HSE for delivery and the associated funding implications.

Available waiting list data reflects those that have been assessed and waiting for the provision of Home support. Activity data relating to the length of time waiting is not held nationally and therefore we are not in a position to provide this information

We can provide activity by:

- Number of Clients assessed and waiting for the provision of Home Support

Appendix 1 for a breakdown of the Home Support Waiting List for March from 2019 -2023.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathleen Jordan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'K' and a long, sweeping tail on the 'n'.

Kathleen Jordan
Head of Service – Home Support
Services for Older People
Community Operations

Appendix 1 -Home Support Waiting list for March from 2019-2023

| | Mar-19 | Mar-20 | Mar-21 | Mar-22 | Mar-23 |
|-----------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| National Total | 7,975 | 8,670 | 4,615 | 5,288 | 6,439 |