



Oifig an Cheannaire Oibríochtaí,
Na Seirbhísí Míchumais/An Rannán Cúram Sóisialta,
31-33 Sráid Chaitríona, Luimneach.

Office of the Head of Operations,
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19th October 2023

Deputy Danny Healy-Rae,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
E-mail: danny.healyrae@oireachtas.ie

Dear Deputy Healy- Rae,

The Health Service Executive 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: 42308/23

To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth for an update on a service (details supplied); and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Details supplied: For people with disabilities who have limited mobility, is there any service available to provide assistance with house work, laundry etc so they can continue to live independently. In the past the home help service of the HSE assisted with this but now this is only for personal care so they cannot help with house work. Without such help, people who would prefer to remain living at home will need to go into full time care which would cost the state a lot more.

HSE Response

The Home Support service provided by Older Persons Services is provided primarily for older adults in order to enable them to carry on living at home for as long as possible.

It provides support with the basic activities of daily living, including dressing, grooming, personal hygiene, walking, transferring, toileting, changing position in bed, and eating, which are essential to maintain the person in their own home.

To comply with the policy objectives of the service, the vast majority of clients will be older people i.e. aged 65 or over. Some people aged less than 65 years whose assessed care needs can be best met by Services for Older People may also be considered as exceptional cases for the Older Persons' Home Support Service.

Access to Home Support is based on assessment of the person's needs by the HSE and having regard to available resources and the competing demands for the services from those people with assessed needs. Support with domestic duties is not provided by the HSE's Home Support service; only household duties which are considered to be essential to a client's personal care needs will be considered in the assessment process. A review of each individual's assessed care needs must be undertaken by the local Community Healthcare Area in line with the policy objectives of the Home Support service.

The HSE Disability Services provides a range of assisted living services including Personal Assistant and Home Support Services to support individuals to maximise their capacity to live full and independent lives.



PA and Home Support Services are provided either directly by the HSE or through a range of voluntary service providers. The majority of specialised disability provision (80%) is delivered through non-statutory sector service providers.

Services are accessed through an application process or through referrals from public health nurses or other community based staff. Individuals' needs are evaluated against the criteria for prioritisation for the particular services and then decisions are made in relation to the allocation of resources. Resource allocation is determined by the needs of the individual, compliance with prioritisation criteria, and the level of resources available. As with every service there is not a limitless resource available for the provision of home support services and while the resources available are substantial they are finite. In this context, services are discretionary and the number of hours granted is determined by other support services already provided to the person/family.

In the normal course of service delivery, there will be ongoing reviews throughout the year to ensure that if needs change the service provided will address this change within available resources.

Currently, each CHO has a process to manage applications and referrals for PA and Home Support Services. While many individuals are adequately provided for by their current level of support, it is also the case that many would benefit from more support hours if they were available.

Home Support Service

The Home Support service provides domestic and or personal care inputs at regular intervals on a weekly basis. Temporary relief is offered to the carer by providing a trained reliable care attendant to look after the needs of the person with the disability. The service provides support to the parents to enable them to spend quality time with the other siblings in the family. It also supports the individual with the disability in terms of their care plan, with particular attention on the personal needs of the individual. Home supports can be an alternative to residential care, where support to individuals in daily living can avoid the need for full time residential services.

Personal Assistant Service

The role of a Personal Assistant (PA) is to assist a person with a disability to maximise their independence through supporting them to live in integrated settings and to access community facilities. The PA works on a one to one basis, in the home and/or in the community, with a person with a physical or sensory disability. A vital element of this personalised support is the full involvement of the individual (service user) in planning and agreeing the type and the times when support is provided to them, supporting independent living must enhance the person's control over their own life.

Each Community Health Organisation Area would be aware of the presenting needs within each of the geographic areas. Following referral and assessment, available resources are allocated to clients with highest level of need.

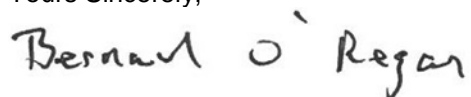
The need for increased services is acknowledged and the HSE continues to work with agencies to explore various ways of responding to this need in line with the budget available.

Future Planning

With regard to additional PA and Home Support Services, the Department of Health's 2021 Disability Capacity Review advises that up to €15 million per year by 2032 – equivalent to 600,000 additional hours - is needed to meet the requirements for Personal Assistants and Home Support.

Each CHO continues to actively manage applications for support from service users with high levels of acuity/safeguarding risks, through active case-management and inter-agency cooperation.

Yours Sincerely,



**Bernard O'Regan,
Head of Operations - Disability Services,
Community Operations**

