



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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8th November 2023

Deputy Ivana Bacik,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
E-mail: ivana.bacik@oireachtas.ie

Dear Deputy Bacik,

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: 46664/23

To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth the number of applicants for home care support who are awaiting the allocation of home care; his views on the recruitment of home care support workers; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

HSE Response

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

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.

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.

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. An individual's PA or Home Support hours may be adjusted following a service review where service demand can result in one individual's service being reduced in order to address priority needs of other people with disabilities within that community.

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.

Waiting Lists

Whilst there is currently no centrally maintained list of people awaiting these services, 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.

Disability Support Application Management Tool (DSMAT)

The HSE Disability Services has introduced a system called the Disability Support Application Management Tool (DSMAT), which enables Community Healthcare Organisation (CHO) areas to record and manage requests for support and to ensure that the application process is equitable and transparent. The DSMAT provides a consistent listing process for each CHO Area by presenting a detailed profile of the individuals (Adults & Children) who require funded supports outside of the current service quantum.

It captures detailed information on home and family circumstances and a detailed presentation profile of the individuals, including specialised profiles of behavioural intensity, key diagnoses, and complex support needs due to the extent and intensity of intellectual and/or physical & sensory disability.

It is important to note that in the absence of a statutory, legislative framework providing entitlement to services, the DSMAT is not a chronological waiting list. Rather, it is a support to the CHO area to feed into its decision making process around prioritisation of services subject to budgetary constraints. This means that services are allocated on the basis of greatest presenting need and associated risk factors.

The most recent information available, which is a demand profile, outside of current service quantum, shows that Non-Residential Services demand accounts for 2492 applications, of which applications for Children account for 25% of the total. Please note that Non-Residential comprises demand for either Respite, Personal Assistance (P.A.) or Home Support Hours. Frequently, the required service response may be a mixture of support hour and centre-based respite.

Recruitment

As mentioned above, Home Support Services are provided either directly by the HSE or through a range of voluntary and commercial service providers.

Service Providers of Home Support services are responsible for their own recruitment and retention of personnel to provide the required services.

Recruitment in the HSE is conducted both nationally (through HR National Recruitment Service) and at CHO level by local recruitment teams.




All recruitment undertaken, focuses on campaigns to attract qualified and eligible candidates in an effort to increase the potential candidate pool. The HSE and Service Providers continue to explore a wide range of options and initiatives to enhance the retention and recruitment of essential staff across all aspects of the health services.

The HSE Careers Hub allows potential candidates to register their interest in specific areas and in turn, these individuals will be notified of all recruitment in those areas in which they have expressed their interest.

The HSE is operating in a very competitive global market for healthcare talent as there are significant shortages of qualified healthcare professionals across the globe.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bernard O'Regan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a clear, legible font.

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

