



Oifig Ceannasaí Oibríochtaí,
Oibríochtaí Pobail, Cúram Priomhúil

Seomra 243, Ospidéal Dr Steevens,
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20th May 2024

Deputy Bruton,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

PQ 17498/24 - To ask the Minister for Health the most common technology aids provided under the medical appliances scheme offered by the HSE; the number sanctioned in each of the past three years; if an evaluation has been carried out on the effectiveness of such technologies to keep people independent in their own homes; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

-Richard Bruton

Dear Deputy Bruton,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question (PQ 17498/24) which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

Assistive technology refers to the development and application of knowledge, skills, procedures and policies relevant to the provision, use and assessment of assistive products. Assistive products are any product (including devices, equipment, instruments and software), both specially designed or generally available, with a primary purpose to maintain or improve an individual's functioning and independence and thereby promote their wellbeing. Assistive technology is an essential enabler for many persons with disabilities, people living with chronic health conditions and older persons.

Assistive Technology support is broadly provided through three sectors:

- Health: Supplied via the HSE Community Funded Schemes
- Education: Provided through the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) Technical Aid Grant.
- Employment/Social Protection: Provided via the Workplace Equipment Adaptation Grant.

In relation to Health, assistive products are generally provided via the HSE Community Funded Schemes. The budget and management of Community Funded Schemes is devolved to the local Community Healthcare Organisations (CHOs). There are a variety of assistive products provided through community funded schemes and these products play a key role in assisting and supporting service users to maintain every day functioning.

The HSE does not have access to the most common assistive products used by the HSE nationally, however the Community Funded Schemes Service Improvement Group have published a national list of aids and appliances and prescribing criteria on the HSE website. This is available from the following webpage:

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/2/primarycare/community-funded-schemes/aids-and-appliances/>

Ireland and the World Health Organisation (WHO) currently have a collaboration agreement for a range of measures in the assistive technology area. This includes undertaking of an assistive technology capacity assessment. The HSE is seen as a key stakeholder within this collaboration and a number of preliminary meetings have taken place to date.



I trust this is of assistance.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Seán McArt', written over a horizontal line.

Seán McArt
General Manager Primary Care
National Community Operations