



**Head of Service for Older Persons  
Cork Kerry Community Healthcare**  
Health Service Executive  
Caha House, Business & Technology Park  
Model Farm Road  
Cork Eircode: T12 XHT4

**Cúram Sláinte Pobail - Corcaigh & Ciarraí**  
Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Teach Caha, Párc Ghnó & Teicneolaíochta  
Bóthar na Modh Feirme, Corcaigh  
**Tel: 021 4923854**

16<sup>th</sup> February 2024

Deputy Duncan Smith, T.D.,  
Dáil Éireann  
Dublin 2

**PQ ref 5863/24**

**"To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons in County Kerry that have requested additional homecare hours; and the average waiting times for receiving additional care".**

Dear Deputy Smith,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

Despite a 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. Cork Kerry Community Healthcare continues to endeavour to deliver a home support service to as many clients as possible in the face of a challenging employment environment, an increasing demand for home support, competition with the private and voluntary sectors to access the same skilled workforce and the recent pause on recruitment. The majority of clients who are prescribed Home Support have a service commence almost immediately. However, on occasion, part of the prescribed service may not be put in place - this would be predominantly down to a lack of carer availability in the area.

Our wait list is made up of both clients who are awaiting a new service (i.e. currently are not in receipt of any service), and existing clients who are awaiting additional hours/part of the originally prescribed service (i.e. they are receiving some home support). At present in County Kerry, **50 existing clients are awaiting additional homecare hours**. Some clients are waiting only a matter of weeks for allocation of their service but unfortunately we do have clients waiting up to nine months for additional or outstanding support. An average waiting time is difficult to quantify as the waiting time between approval and commencement of additional home support can differ throughout the region as staff availability challenges can arise in some of our more rural areas.

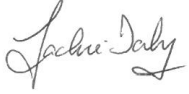
Waiting lists are constantly being validated and significant work has been undertaken to address the waiting list for Home Support in Kerry (both new and additional service) with priority being given to those requiring discharge from hospital and with higher levels of dependency.

Cork Kerry Community Healthcare continues to recruit staff to approved Health Care Assistant Home Support posts which have been approved for filling. Since the introduction of the current recruitment pause, derogation has been sought and granted for a total of 49 Health Care Assistant staff across the region. There is a Health Care Assistant Home Support panel in place in both Cork and Kerry for the purpose of recruitment and approved posts are being offered on a continuous basis. Our population is growing and it is also ageing and this means that demand for home support services is projected to increase substantially. Improving access to home support is a service priority for Cork Kerry

Community Healthcare and, to this end, we continue to make every effort to increase capacity and fulfil our service requirements.

I trust this clarifies the position and if you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jackie Daly".

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Jackie Daly  
Head of Service for Older People