



**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

28th February 2024

Deputy Padraig O'Sullivan, T.D.,
DAil Éireann
Dublin 2

PQ ref 7337/24

"To ask the Minister for Health if the recent pause on recruitment includes home care workers (home support); if so, if he will intervene to allow the HSE in CHO4 replace the 189 health care assistants (home support) that have retired or resigned in the period January to end September 2023; and if he will make a statement on the matter."

Dear Deputy O'Sullivan,

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.

In November 2023, the existing recruitment pause in the HSE was extended to almost all staff, with the exception of consultants, doctors in training and 2023 graduate nurses and midwives.

Efforts have been ongoing in this region to recruit additional Health Care Assistants (Home Support) to fill vacant posts, increase our staff complement and bolster service delivery. A shortage of care-workers against a background of rising demand for home support is an on-going challenge for this organisation.

A significant proportion of care-workers providing home-support are themselves older people, with national HSE data indicating that 42 per cent of our home support workforce is aged 60 and over. The ageing population is resulting in increased demand for our home support service while also continuing to impact our workforce through HCA (Home Support) staff retirements or resignations. The HSE also competes with the private and voluntary sectors to access the same skilled workforce and there is an apparent shift away from caring roles, such as the HCA (Home Support) role, towards other employment sectors.

To mitigate the impact of staff retirements and resignations, we continue 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.

Improving access to home support is a service priority and to this end, we continue to make every effort to increase capacity and fulfil our service requirements within current constraints.



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

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jackie Daly". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J' and 'D'.

Jackie Daly
Head of Service for Older People

