



**Oifig an Cheannaire Oibríochtaí,**  
Na Seirbhísí Míchumais/An Rannán Cúram Sóisialta,  
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Dear Deputy Devlin,

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: 56376/23**

*To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth the number of under 65-year-olds in receipt of home care supports each year since 2019; and if he will make a statement on the matter.*

**HSE Response**

The HSE 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.

The HSE is committed to protecting the level of Personal Assistant (PA) and Home Support Services available to persons with disabilities. Table 1 on the next page provides data for PA & Home Support Services delivered to people with a disability from 2014 - 2022.

The HSE has consistently, year on year, increased the number of hours of PA and Home Support Services delivered to people with a disability.



**Table 1: Figures for PA and Home Support Services Delivered to People with a Disability 2014-2022**

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
<b>PA Services – Number of Hours</b>	1,335,759	1,482,492	1,510,116	1,516,727	1,639,481	1,652,030	1,781,310	1,700,309	1,746,136
<b>PA Services –No. People availing of service</b>	2,224	2,369	2,427	2,470	2,535	2,551	2,673	2,613	2,669
<b>Home Support – Number of Hours</b>	2,614,967	2,777,569	2,928,914	2,930,000	3,138,939	3,036,182	2,939,541	2,949,806	3,369,146
<b>Home Support – No. People availing of service</b>	7,312	7,219	7,323	7,492	7,522	7,321	6,792	6,902	7,164

**Activity Data for 2023**

As per the National Service Plan 2023, the HSE is committed to deliver an additional 70,370 personal assistant hours to expand and enhance the supports for people to live self-directed lives in the community. The figures for Quarter 1, 2023 are in line with national targets and are provided below.

Please see Tables 2 and 3 below which gives end of Quarter 2, 2023 information. Data is provided quarterly one month in arrears.

Please note that this is the most recent data available at this time.

**Table 2 - PA Services for Persons with a Disability, Quarter 2, 2023**

	Number of Adults with a Physical and Sensory Disability in Receipt of PA Services		Number of Hours PA Services Delivered
CHO	2023 (up to end Quarter 1)		2023 (Quarter 1)
<b>National Total</b>	<b>2,708</b>		<b>850,298</b>
CHO Area 1	76		28,452
CHO Area 2	559		178,896
CHO Area 3	470		165,688
CHO Area 4	464		68,290
CHO Area 5	334		78,430
CHO Area 6	116		36,713
CHO Area 7	87		38,827
CHO Area 8	381		111,229
CHO Area 9	221		143,772

**Table 3 – Home Support Services for Persons with a Disability, Quarter 2, 2023**

	Number of Adults with a disability in Receipt of Home Support Services		Number of Hours Home Support Services Delivered
CHO	2023 (up to end Quarter 1)		2023 (Quarter 1)
<b>National Total</b>	<b>6,500</b>		<b>1,741,307</b>
CHO Area 1	535		179,335
CHO Area 2	603		137,490
CHO Area 3	653		178,769



CHO Area 4	715		128,434
CHO Area 5	744		176,323
CHO Area 6	459		165,089
CHO Area 7	901		221,209
CHO Area 8	881		335,145
CHO Area 9	1,009		219,513

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. Information regarding the age of recipients of PA and home support is not collated and reported on.

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.

### ***HSE's U65 Programme for Community Transitions from Nursing Homes***

A proposal for funding this initiative formed part of the HSE Estimates Process presented to the Department of Health in 2020 and as per the 2021 National Service Plan, this project commenced in 2021 with 18 people targeted to move at a cost of €3 million at that time. (There was no additional funding for capital or project overhead costs included.)

The HSE has established a dedicated funding stream as part of the National Service Plan to enable people under the age of 65 years living in Nursing Homes to move to homes of their choosing in the community, with support. This initiative is in line with the Programme for Government and the UNCRPD, as well as Time to Move On Policy and the Ombudsman's Report into the placement of persons under 65 years of age in nursing homes.

As per the 2023 National Service Plan, 5.5 million has been allocated to support the work of U65 transitions and enhancing quality of life for 2022 and 2023.

The HSE is co-ordinating a programme of work to review and implement the report's recommendations for which the HSE has accountability. Through this work the HSE aims 1) to prevent and reduce the practice of inappropriately placing younger people with disabilities in nursing home settings and 2) to actively support individuals who wish to move into the community or who wish to be provided with additional levels of support to improve their daily lives while resident in a nursing home.

It is acknowledged that for some individuals, based on a set of clearly defined assessed needs, nursing home interventions may be appropriate, where the required clinical supports are available and best met.

At Community Healthcare Organisation level, Disability teams work with persons under 65 years of age currently residing in nursing homes, to discuss moving to living arrangements in line with their will and preference or alternative supports and/or additional supports within their current environment.

Of the number of people who have successfully transitioned to homes of their choosing in the community, the majority have moved to a more appropriate residential placement, including sheltered living and specialised residential placements.

This is closely followed by those who have moved to their own home, either back to the family home or to a new personal home, with the support of housing adaptations. Housing support at local and national level for both groups of residential options would be key to helping both individuals and Disability teams make significant progress.

An U65 operational tracker database has now been fully embedded into CHO and National Disability Operations Team processes, with monthly updates provided to the national office and shared within the CHO

The CHO areas have indicated for 2021 that 14 transitions took place and based on the U65 operational tracker data, from January 2022 to August 2023, 42 people had transitioned from NHs. As of August 2023, 56 people have transitioned to homes of their choosing in the community since the start of the U65 programme.



Please note that the project team are aware of additional transitions that have taken place in Q4 2023, however due to the industrial action, they are not yet included in the transition numbers until they can be validated on the U65 Operational tracker.

Yours sincerely,

*Bernard O'Regan*

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

