



Oifig an Stiúirthóir Cúnta Náisiúnta,
Foireann Míchumais Náisiúnta,
An Chéad Urlár - Oifigí 13, 14, 15,
Áras Phlásóg na Rós, Coimpléasc Gnó na hOllscoile,
Páirc Náisiúnta Teicneolaíochta,
Caladh an Treoigh,
Luimneach.

Office of the Assistant National Director,
National Disability Team,
First Floor- Offices 13, 14, 15,
Roselawn House, University Business Complex,
National Technology Park,
Castletroy,
Limerick.

12th July 2024

Deputy Cathal Crowe,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
E-mail: cathal.crowe@oireachtas.ie

Dear Deputy Crowe,

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: 29617/24

To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth the progress made in personal assistance and home support services since 27 June 2020; the additional funding provided in successive budgets; his plans for 2024; 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.



While there is no centrally maintained waiting list for PA and Home Support services, the local HSE CHO areas are aware of the needs in their respective areas and work with the local Service Providers to respond within the resources available.

The HSE is committed to protecting the level of Personal Assistant (PA) and Home Support Services available to persons with disabilities. Table 1 below provides data for PA & Home Support Services delivered to people with a disability from 2014 - 2023. 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 2014-2023

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
PA Services – Number of Hours	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	1,686,227
PA Services – No. People availing of service	2,224	2,369	2,427	2,470	2,535	2,551	2,673	2,613	2,669	2,728
Home Support – Number of Hours	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	3,544,938
Home Support – No. People availing of service	7,312	7,219	7,323	7,492	7,522	7,321	6,792	6,902	7,164	7,026

The current level of PA service includes an over 15% increase in PA hours totalling 270,370 hours in the National Service Plans since 2020 as follows:

- 2020 = 40,000 additional hours of personal assistant supports
- 2021 = 40,000 additional hours of personal assistant supports
- 2022 = 120,000 additional hours of personal assistant supports
- 2023 = 70,370 additional personal assistant hours.

Activity Data Quarter 1 2024: PA & Home Support Services

- PA hours delivered = 459,413 in Q1, which is -0.7% down on NSP target of 462,501. However, it is up 5.8% on SPLY reflecting the allocation in the NSP 2024 of additional personal assistant hours to support persons with a disability in their own communities.
- No. People in receipt of PA = 2,867, which is 4.6% ahead of NSP target of 2,740.
- Home Support hrs delivered = 951,427 which is 9.4% ahead of NSP target of 869,998 and 15% ahead of SPLY.
- No. People in receipt of HS = 7,023, which is down on NSP target of 7,326.

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.

Funding

Funding for PA and Home Supports services has increased year and year. Please see the table below.



Service area	2018 Funding €000	2019 Funding €000	2020 Funding €000	2021 Funding €000	2022 Funding €000	2023 Funding €000
PA & Home Support	80,957	84,909	94,885	100,613	109,809	115,191
Total Funding	1,772,300	1,903,625	2,054,500	2,210,900	2,347,380	2,518,552

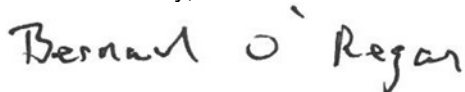
Future Planning

With regard to additional PA and Home Support Services, the Department of Health's 2021 Disability Capacity Review advises that up to €15 million per year by 2032 – equivalent to 600,000 additional hours - is needed to meet the requirements for Personal Assistants and Home Support.

The Action Plan for Disability Services 2024 – 2026 advises that 800,000 extra PA hours and 110,000 extra hours a year is required by 2026 to address shortfall in services and to support individuals with disabilities to live a fuller more independent life and participate in normal activities in the community, in line with UNCRPD Article 19.

Each CHO continues to actively manage applications for support from service users with high levels of acuity/ safeguarding risks, through active case-management and inter-agency cooperation.

Yours sincerely,



Bernard O'Regan
Assistant National Director
National Disability Team

