



17th July, 2025

Deputy Pat Buckley,
Dáil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

Dear Deputy Buckley,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the following Parliamentary Questions, which was submitted to this Department for response.

PQ: 38601/25

To ask the Minister for Health if she will provide an update on the current waiting times for access to home care packages across each CHO area. -Pat Buckley

PQ: 38602/25

To ask the Minister for Health the steps being taken to reduce delays for older people and those with disabilities who have been approved for support but are still waiting for hours to be allocated; and if there are plans to expand funding or staffing to meet increasing demand for home care services. -Pat Buckley

The Home Support Service is funded by Government to deliver a volume of service each year as approved in the HSE National Service Plan. It is a non-statutory service and access to the current service is based on assessment of the person's needs by the HSE, having regard to the available resources and the competing demands for the service.

Demand for home support continues to increase due to population growth and the increasing dependency of the growing numbers of people aged ≥80years, within the over 65 years' cohort. The home support service is managed by the local Home Support Management Team within each Health Region to ensure that this key service is available at the required times, in a flexible way and at the appropriate standard to support service users assessed needs.

In the context of increasing demand, priority is given to those being discharged from acute hospitals who are able to return home with supports and to those in the community with priority needs. The service is currently provided by Health Care Assistant (Home Support) staff directly employed by the HSE or when commissioned, by staff working with voluntary and private providers who have formal service arrangements with the HSE to deliver services under the Home Support Authorisation Scheme.

The HSE has committed to the direct employment of Home Support staff to maximum effect for those with the appropriate skill set. However, it should be noted that private providers are part of the landscape for Home Support provision and will continue to be used, not least for the choice of care which they allow to the user of the service. The HSE has implemented an Authorisation Scheme (AS) for the supply of the Home Support Scheme (HSS) that commenced on 14th August 2023. Under the Authorisation scheme the rates for the Home Support Scheme are fixed for all Approved Providers. The HSE has appointed Home Support Scheme Providers as Approved Providers under the Authorisation Scheme in each Health Region.

Recruitment and retention of Home Support staff for both direct and indirect service provision remains a significant challenge leading to capacity issues cross the Health Regions. The Recruitment Reform and Resourcing (RRR) Programme was established in June 2022 to form a coordinated response to these challenges and the [HSE Resourcing Strategy – Resourcing our Future](#) was launched in June 2023.

The latest available preliminary data reflects the period to 31st May 2025. As of this date, 4,833 people were assessed and waiting for a carer to be assigned, 2,198 were waiting on a new service while 2,635 were already in receipt of home support but waiting on additional hours to commence. As of this date, no person was waiting on Home Support Funding. Please see requested data below set out by Health Region. In addition, please note that data requested relating to “waiting times”, is not currently collated Nationally. While this information may be available locally, it would take considerable resources to collect this nationally.

** Please note that data provided is preliminary in nature and may be subject to change.*

Yours sincerely,

Kathleen Jordan
Head of Service
Services for Older People, Access and Integration

Appendix 1: Number of Service Users waiting on a Home Support Carer May YTD

Waiting on Carers (New & Additional)	May-25		
	Total	New	Additional
National Total	4,833	2,198	2,635
HSE Dublin North East	600	233	367
HSE Dublin Midlands	447	309	138
HSE Dublin South East	779	238	541
HSE South West	933	564	369
HSE Mid West	740	197	543
HSE West and North West	1,334	657	677