

Head of Service for Older Persons
HSE South West - Health Service Executive
Caha House, Business & Technology Park
Model Farm Road
Cork Eircode: T12 XHT4

Ceann na Seirbhíse do Dhaoine Scothaosta
FSS Iardheiscirt -Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Teach Caha, Párc Ghnó & Teicneolaíochta
Bóthar na Modh Feirme, Corcaigh
Tel: 021 4923854

30th June 2025

Deputy Ken O'Flynn, T.D.,
Dail Eireann
Dublin 2

PQ ref 32113/25:

"To ask the Minister for Health the number of applications for HSE home support (older people) in CHO 4 in 2024; and if she will make a statement on the matter."

PQ ref 32114/25:

"To ask the Minister for Health the number of approvals for HSE home support (older people) in CHO 4 in 2024; and if she will make a statement on the matter."

PQ ref 32115/25:

"To ask the Minister for Health the number of refusals for HSE home support (older people) in CHO 4 in 2024; and if she will make a statement on the matter".

PQ ref 32116/25:

"To ask the Minister for Health the average number of hours granted to HSE home support (older people) clients in CHO 4, broken down by LHO, in 2024; and if she will make a statement on the matter".

Dear Deputy O'Flynn,

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

The HSE provides a range of services including Home Support Services to support older persons to maximise their capacity to live full and independent lives. Home Support Services are provided either directly by the HSE or indirectly by our approved private providers. Provision of Home Support is a core service for older people and their families and is highly valued by service users and their families because it enables older people to remain living with dignity in their own homes and communities for longer. It also enables many older people to return home following acute hospital admission.

In relation to **PQ ref 32113/25**, an application for home support is initially received by an individual's Public Health Nurse who then carries out a care needs assessment and prescribes a service if it is deemed to be clinically required. The subsequent request for home support is then sent to the Home Support Unit which approves the request and allocates a service as quickly as possible within available capacity. This care group does not retain data on applications received as the initial application is processed by our Public Health Nursing colleagues, under the remit of Primary Care. We only receive a request when a home support service is prescribed. However, in response to **PQ ref 32114/25**, I can confirm that the Home Support Unit approved a total of 3332 requests for home support in 2024 in Cork and Kerry - these approvals incorporate new service approvals as well as requests for additional or increased service.

With regard to **PQ ref: 32115/25**, the Home Support Unit does not refuse any request that is clinically prescribed by our Public Health Nursing colleagues. However, where we do not have capacity to allocate a service (full or partial) at the time of request, the request may be waitlisted. These clients have not been refused a service; they are awaiting allocation of their service until such time as staff availability arises. Our waiting list is made up of both clients who are awaiting a new service (i.e. currently are not in receipt of any service), and clients who are awaiting additional hours/part of the originally prescribed service (i.e. they are receiving some home support). Significant work has been undertaken to address the waiting list for home support throughout this region. Priority is given to those clients requiring discharge

from hospital and with higher levels of dependency. The majority of clients who are prescribed Home Support have a service commence almost immediately.

It should also be noted that, on occasion, when a home support service is prescribed, a client may subsequently decline the service when it is offered. In such circumstances, the individual and their family are advised to contact their Public Health Nurse if they wish to avail of a home support service at a later stage when an up to date assessment can be arranged.

In relation to **PQ ref 32116/25**, The HSE does not routinely collate average hours per client - rather specific hours allocated for each individual client based on their need is recorded. In addition Home Support Services are subject to review and may increase or decrease in accordance with assessed need

The HSE South West (formerly CHO 4) Home Support department is the largest provider of home care in Ireland with a geographical area covering approximately 16,390 square kilometres across Kerry and Cork and serving a population of more than 700,000 people. As at the end of May 2025, 8,112 clients were receiving a home support service in the HSE South West region with 271,776 hours delivered monthly and 3.2m hours delivered per annum. Our population is growing and it is also ageing and this means that demand for home support services is projected to increase substantially. Challenges are ongoing and well-documented in relation to recruitment and retention of staff with certain areas experiencing increased pressures; however, improving access to home support across the region is a service priority for HSE South West.

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

Yours sincerely,

Jackie Daly
Head of Service for Older Persons