



2<sup>nd</sup> April 2025

Deputy Claire Kerrane,  
Dáil Eireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.

Dear Deputy Kerrane,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) 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: 11226/25**

**To ask the Minister for Health if additional funding will be provided to address the impact the high cost of fuel is having on social care staff working in rural communities; and if she will make a statement on the matter. -Claire Kerrane**

Home Support Services are an important component of the provision of service to older people with assessed needs and to support them in their choice of living in their own home and community. The HSE, working within its available resources, has sought to maintain and when possible, expand the range and volume of services available to support people to remain in their own homes, to prevent early admission to long term residential care and to support people to return to their homes following an acute hospital admission.

In 2023, the existing competitive tender system for the contracting of home support hours from external companies (indirect service provision/hours) was replaced with an Authorisation Scheme which facilitates new entrants over the life time of the scheme with a view to extending capacity. It provides for fixed pricing and a common framework for the delivery of Home Support Services.

Under current Service Arrangements, all current Approved Providers are now required to pay travel time as part of remuneration to staff delivering services on behalf of the HSE in relation to the provision of Home Support.

Additional information can be found in Home Support Services Standard Operating Procedures - Appendix 1: <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/olderpeople/authorisation-scheme-standard-operating-procedures-v2.pdf>

Monitoring of the day to day operation of the Authorisation Scheme is managed through existing governance structures in each Health Region and in accordance with Service Arrangements and the Standard Operating Procedures.

Yours sincerely,

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