



**Denise Tighe, General Manager, Access and Integration, National Services
for Older People**

St Brigid's Complex, Kells Road,
Ardee, Co. Louth, A92 DRNO

Email: denise.tighe@hse.ie | Mobile: Denise: 087 601 3682

Tuesday 20 May 2025

Deputy Healy Rae,
Dail Eireann,
Dublin 2.

Dear Deputy Healy Rae,

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 Number: 22929/25

To ask the Minister for Health if she will secure extra funding for the meals on wheels initiative (details supplied); and if she will make a statement on the matter. -Michael Healy-Rae

There are currently 317 Meals on Wheels Organisations in operation across the country delivering on average 239,000 meals monthly to approximately 19,000 clients monthly. These organisations are geographically located across six Regional Health Areas. Funding to this service has increased each year (details below).

2022	2023	2024	2025
€3,500,000	€5,250,000	€6,250,000	€6,250,000

Community Refurbishment Programme

You may be aware that €10 million was allocated within the HSE Capital Plan in 2024 towards a community based package to support a refurbishment programme for some HSE Funded Older Persons Community Services.

This funding is to support improvements to the physical premises for Day Centres and Meals on Wheels services in the preparation of meals. Eligible proposals included the upgrading of kitchens or other food preparation facilities, purchase of food preparation equipment, related upgrade or purchase of vehicles for the delivery of meals or for transport for older people to access community services

As part of Discharge Planning, applications for a Meals on Wheels (MOW) service are processed by MOW providers themselves, not by the HSE/Acute Hospital. Acute Hospitals may refer to a MOW provider directly for service or contact the Public Health Nurse to provide information regarding local Meals on Wheels services to clients and families when a need is identified.

Once the referral is made it is the client or family member who have responsibility for further engaging with the local Meals on Wheels service.

The eligibility criteria, for receipt of the Meals on Wheels Service, is as follows;

1. Applicant is unable to prepare and / or serve a meal for themselves due to illness or disability.
2. Applicant lives alone or lives with another person who is also unable to prepare and / or serve a meal due to illness or mobility.
3. Applicant has no family support network to provide meals.
4. Applicant lives in an area where Meals on Wheels Service is available.
5. Applicant is unable to travel to local HSE day services, voluntary or community day service or local commercial outlet for meals.
6. Applicant lives in an area where there is no suitable commercial meal delivery service available.

The HSE is committed to supporting these agencies to continue this vital service.

I trust this information is of assistance to you but should you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind Regards,

Denise Tighe
General Manager
National Services for Older People