



17 April 2024

Deputy Pádraig O' Sullivan,
Dáil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

Dear Deputy O' Sullivan,

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: 23/53280

To ask the Minister for Health what efforts are being made to develop a graded career structure in homecare that rewards and encourages upskilling and training; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

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 and having regard to the available resources and the competing demands for the services.

Despite the significant level of service provision, the demand for Home Support, and its importance as an alternative service to long stay care, has grown considerably over the past number of years. Similarly, the type of Home Support that is now required to meet the needs of the population is a more person-centred personal care model.

Recruitment and retention of Home Support staff for both direct and indirect service provision remains a significant challenge leading to capacity issues across the Community Healthcare Organisations (CHOs).

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* document was launched in June 2023.

This RRR Programme introduces a focused capacity to grow our workforce and support our services to meet projected increased workforce demand while ensuring that staff are enabled to work at the top of their license to maximise the delivery of healthcare services. This Programme is a multi-year, Strategic Programme of work. It aims to increase capacity within services and have positive impacts on the delivery of integrated and community based care to patients, service users and their families by introducing multi-agency training run at local levels to source and train, for example, HCSA and HCAs to HSE requirements.

The *HSE Resourcing Strategy – Resourcing our Future* is an action orientated piece of work that has been developed by the services and with the services, through five profession led groups, one of which focuses on the grade categories of Patient Client Care & Support. These groups have identified both the challenges and a suite of actions that need to be taken. 112 actions in total have been identified and the first 27 have been prioritised and

have commenced implementation. Many of the actions identified and prioritised relate to common challenges and themes across grade categories. Examples of which are Talent Attraction and Engagement.

One such output is the development of the HSE Career Hub which was launched in 2024 and available to view at <https://careerhub.hse.ie/>. This is a registration and notification system for prospective candidates of which to date over 18,500 have registered their interest, of which 2,215 are in the category of Patient & Client Care. The HSE has developed a high profile service focus initiative for the HSE Career Hub concentrating on opportunities within the Home Support Service, designed to extend the candidate pool. This will be progressed in the context of the current HSE employment environment.

This Strategy is not a static document but will evolve over time to meet the changing landscape both nationally and internationally. You will find more information on the HSE Resourcing Strategy from the following link: <https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/resources/hrstrategiesreports/hse-resourcing-strategy.pdf>

Yours sincerely,



Kathleen Jordan
Head of Service – Home Support
Services for Older People
Community Operations