



Oifig an Stiúirthóra Náisiúnta Cúnta  
Oibríochtaí Pobail  
Seirbhísí do Dhaoine Scothaosta

Office of the Assistant National Director –  
Community Operations  
Services for Older People

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12 March 2024

Deputy Burke,  
Dáil Eireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.

Dear Deputy Burke,

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: 23/47634**

**To ask the Minister for Health if he will take the necessary steps to enable hospitals to block book home care hours, in order to enable providers to plan strategically and ensure that there are carers available to support timely discharge of patients; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Colm Burke**

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. The volume and type of service provided to each client is based on individually assessed care needs and will vary dependent on the needs identified and the resources available to meet those needs.

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. In the context of increasing demand, priority is given to those being discharged from acute hospitals who are in a position to return home with supports and to those in the community with acute needs. Funding approval is expedited across the system to ensure minimum waiting times.

The allocation of home support hours is determined on a client by client basis and based on the clinically assessed care needs of those clients, as determined by relevant health care professionals. All discharges from acute settings are managed through local discharge coordinators and home support managers in collaboration with the client themselves, their families and their care team.

Yours sincerely,

*Kathleen Jordan*

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