



18th July 2024

Deputy Richard Boyd,
Dáil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

Dear Deputy Boyd,

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 28808/24

To ask the Minister for Health the estimated cost of clearing homecare package waiting lists. -Richard Boyd Barrett

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. While there may be delays between the approval of funding and the availability of carers to commence delivery of home support hours in certain regions, significant work is underway to address these challenges. The HSE advertises on an ongoing basis for Health Care Support Assistants (HCSAs) and recruits as many suitable candidates, where possible.

The HSE is funded to deliver home support services in line with NSP 2024. As of 31st May 2024 YTD (latest available preliminary data), **9,406,331** Home Support hours were delivered nationally to **53,379** people, an increase of +7.9% in the number of hours delivered when compared to the same period last year. On 31st May 2024, the total number of people assessed and waiting on funding to be allocated was **zero**, while the total number of people assessed and waiting for a carer to be assigned stood at **4,702**.

The projected full year cost of providing a Home Support package to all clients on the waiting list, based on average number of hours per client per week and average overall hourly rate (as at 31st May 2024) would be in the region of **€64m**.

Please note data is preliminary in nature and may be subject to change with a data return rate of 96.9%.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathleen Jordan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'K' and a trailing flourish.

Kathleen Jordan

Head of Service – Home Support

Services for Older People – Access and Integration