



29th July 2024

Deputy Bernard J. Durkan,
Dáil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

Dear Deputy Durkan,

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 29692/24

To ask the Minister for Health to clarify, further to Parliamentary Question No. 622 of 16 April 2024, if there are home care staff in Ireland currently approved to administer eye drops for blind and vision impaired people currently in receipt of home care hours; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Bernard J. Durkan

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 type of support that is provided includes personal care and, where appropriate, essential household duties. The Home Support Service which people receive is based on the client's assessed care needs as determined by an assessment which is undertaken by clinical staff. The support provided and associated personal support/care plan, will be determined by the assessed level of dependency, the client's ability to undertake activities of daily living and other support structures in place. As outlined above, assessments are based on individual care needs and referral to other health and social care professionals may be made should it be deemed necessary. The management of medication in respect of each individual client is determined through the assessment of care needs and HCAs/ home support workers may provide assistance with prompting the Service User to take medicines and must record all prompts in the Schedule of Services / Home Support Care Plan record.

These parameters are specific to Home Support Services funded through Services for Older People.

Regarding Medication Management:

- Home Support Workers may only provide assistance with prompting the Service User to take medicines and must record all prompts in the Schedule of Services/Home Support Care Plan record.
- Assistance with prompting to take medicines is only performed with the informed consent and authorisation of the service user and or / their representative as per the Home Support Care Plan agreed with the Contracting Authority & the service provider where service is provided by external agencies on behalf of the HSE.

Please see attached link for more information regarding current guidelines on Medication Management for home care staff in Ireland.

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/olderpeople/authorisation-scheme-service-specifications-v1.pdf>

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 long tail on the 'n'.

Kathleen Jordan
Head of Service – Home Support
Services for Older People – Access and Integration