



Oifig an Stiúrthóir Cúnta Náisiúnta,
Foireann Míchumais Náisiúnta,
An Chéad Urlár - Oifigí 13, 14, 15,
Àras Phlásóg na Rós, Coimpléasc Gnó na hOllscoile,
Páirc Náisiúnta Teicneolaíochta,
Caladh an Treoigh,
Luimneach.

Office of the Assistant National Director,
National Disability Team,
First Floor- Offices 13, 14, 15,
Roselawn House, University Business Complex,
National Technology Park,
Castletroy,
Limerick.

18th November 2024

Deputy Colm Brophy,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
E-mail: colm.brophy@oireachtas.ie

Dear Deputy Brophy,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the following parliamentary questions, which were submitted to this department for response.

PQ: 45947/24

To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth the estimated cost of providing 1,000 disability home support hours.

PQ: 45948/24

To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth the estimated cost of providing 100 disability intensive support packages

HSE Response

The HSE provides a range of assisted living services including Personal Assistant and Home Support Services to support individuals to maximise their capacity to live full and independent lives.

PA and Home Support Services are provided either directly by the HSE or through a range of voluntary service providers. The majority of specialised disability provision (80%) is delivered through non-statutory sector service providers.

Services are accessed through an application process or through referrals from public health nurses or other community based staff. Individuals' needs are evaluated against the criteria for prioritisation for the particular services and then decisions are made in relation to the allocation of resources. Resource allocation is determined by the needs of the individual, compliance with prioritisation criteria, and the level of resources available. As with every service there is not a limitless resource available for the provision of home support services and while the resources available are substantial



they are finite. In this context, services are discretionary and the number of hours granted is determined by other support services already provided to the person/family.

PA and Home Support hours provided

The HSE is committed to protecting the level of Personal Assistant (PA) and Home Support Services available to persons with disabilities. Table 1 below provides data for PA and Home Support Services delivered to people with a disability from 2020 – to end of Quarter 2 2024.

Table 1: Figures for PA and Home Support Services Delivered to People with a Disability 2020-end of Quarter 2 2024

	2020	2021	2022	2023	End of Q2 2024
PA Services – Number of Hours	1,781,310	1,700,309	1,746,136	1,686,227	925,522
PA Services –No. People availing of service	2,673	2,613	2,669	2,728	2,865
Home Support – Number of Hours	2,939,541	2,949,806	3,369,146	3,544,938	1,882,693
Home Support – No. People availing of service	6,792	6,902	7,164	7,026	7,023

The delivery of PA and Home Support Services has remained steady during the first half of 2024; PA Services delivered 925,522 hours to end Q2, which is ahead of the NSP target by -0.1%, and 8.2% ahead of the same period last year. This is reflective of the allocation in the NSP 2024 of additional personal assistant hours to support persons with a disability in their own communities.

The need for increased services is acknowledged and the HSE continues to work with agencies to explore various ways of responding to this need in line with the budget available. The current level of PA service includes an over 15% increase in PA hours totalling 270,370 hours in the National Service Plans since 2020 as follows:

- 2020 = 40,000 additional hours of personal assistant supports
- 2021 = 40,000 additional hours of personal assistant supports
- 2022 = 120,000 additional hours of personal assistant supports
- 2023 = 70,370 additional personal assistant hours.

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As per the 2024 Service Plan, the HSE aims to deliver an additional 80,000 hours of personal assistant supports in 2024. Information regarding the proposed hours to be delivered in 2025 will be available on publication of the Service Plan for 2025.

Investment

Funding for PA and Home Supports services has increased year and year. Please see the table below. Please note that we don't have this level of detail for years previous to 2018 as we only commenced aligning the breakdown with the Estimates Process in 2018.



Table 2

Service area	2018 Funding €000	2019 Funding €000	2020 Funding €000	2021 Funding €000	2022 Funding €000	2023 Funding €000
PA & Home Support	80,957	84,909	94,885	100,613	109,809	115,191
Total Funding	1,772,300	1,903,625	2,054,500	2,210,900	2,347,380	2,518,552

Costs

The cost of increasing home support hours by 1,000 hours per year for people with disabilities is €31,000 per annum based on rate of €31 per hour.

Please note that these are approximate figures and as stated, are based on a rate of €31 per hour.

Intensive Support Packages

This was a new development initiative put in place in 2020 and then further developed in 2021. The rationale behind the initiative was to demonstrate a person-centred approach to targeted supports designed to maintain the person in their own home and community, reducing a risk of future residential needs.

These intensive transitional support packages, as referred to in NSP 2020, were mainly aimed at children and young people with complex/high support needs experiencing substantial levels of need, but who do not, as yet, require a high cost long term residential placement. The intention being to prevent family breakdown and demand for emergency residential placements by providing access to pre-crisis interventions such as:

- Intensive in-home visiting supports;
- Planned residential respite interventions;
- Specialist behavioural support interventions;
- Access to planned extended day / weekend and summer day based activities.

In 2020, Disability Services committed to provide 144 intensive transitional support packages. However, at end of December 2020, a total of 857 intensive home support packages were developed across the 9 CHOs.

In 2021, €6m in funding was allocated to Intensive Support packages. Disability Services committed to developing 358 additional intensive support packages and by year end had put in place 497 intensive support packages. This included 437 new packages and 60 packages approved in 2020 against additional Q4 funding, which were maintained in 2021.

The significant increase on the NSP targets was thought to be indicative of the requirement for additional in-home services to compensate for the reduction in the delivery of traditional respite services as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

However, the HSE acknowledges that the delivery of these Intensive Support Packages exceeded the targets agreed as part of the service planning process in both 2020 and 2021. It is also acknowledged that a number of packages recorded in the 857 referenced above may have been focused purely on hours of support and did not contain the more holistic elements around behaviour support and family-centred planning. Again, the impact of the pandemic and the need to enhance core levels of service during closures of and service reductions in day services and respite played a significant role here.

In accordance with the NSP 2022, the HSE was allocated funding to provide 422 in home respite supports for emergency cases; this included 402 packages put in place in 2021, which have been maintained in 2022, plus 10 new supported living packages and 10 new intensive support packages to support transitions and discharges from acute services and the National Rehabilitation Hospital. At end of December 2022, 18 new intensive support packages and 19 new supported living packages were developed. As per the 2022 National Service Plan, funding for this was provided under all new measures – Disability Services.



In accordance with NSP 2023, Disability Services committed to the provision of 447 in home respite supports for emergency cases; this includes 420 packages put in place in 2022 which have been maintained in 2023, plus 27 additional in-home respite packages to children and young adults outlined in NSP 2023.

In 2023, we also developed a further 45 in home respite supports for Priority 1 cases, which added to the packages put in place in 2022 and were maintained in 2023, brings the number of in home respite supports for Priority 1 emergency cases delivered during the year to 465.

In accordance with NSP 2024, Specialist Disability Services is committed to providing 469 intensive support packages for priority 1 cases. This includes packages put in place in 2023 which have been maintained in 2024.

Please also note that these intensive support packages would be provided in addition to the traditional services that we deliver, such as Day Services; Respite Services; Personal Assistance and Home Support Services.

The need for increased services is acknowledged and the HSE continues to work with agencies to explore various ways of responding to this need in line with the budget available.

Costs

The first and full year cost, including staff and operating cost, of providing 100 additional intensive support packages for people with disabilities who have high/complex support needs is as follows:

Based on 8 hrs per day 7-days per week – 56 hrs per week and inclusive of premia at €31 per hour, this would be

100 intensive support packages =	€9,700,000 (first year costs)	€11,264,400 (full year costs)
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These are approximate figures and based on a rate of €31 per hour.

Future Planning

With regard to demographic pressures and future demand for intensive support packages, the Action Plan for Disability Services 2024 – 2026 advises that around 550 additional intensive support packages (for children and adults) is required to be put in place over 2024-2026, to limit need for high-cost residential care places.

There is significant unmet need currently and the projected changes in the size and age profile of the disability population will add to unmet need over the coming decade.

The Disability Capacity Review Report shows that, overall, the disability population is expected to grow up to 2032, with a change in the overall age structure that will affect demand for disability services. The central projection forecasts that the number of adults with a disability would grow by around 10% to 2027 and by 17% in 2032 over the 2018 level.

The fastest growth will be for young adults (up a third by 2032) and over 55s (up a quarter by 2032). The importance of early intervention and effective services for children and young people is important in this context to meet their needs now and to mitigate the requirement down the line of increasingly complex need coming through in young adults including earlier residential service, which is also seen in current DSMAT figures.

As the future course of birth rates is unknown, projecting the future size of child population is an uncertain exercise. The Disability Capacity Review considered the Central Statistics Office's analysis of population projection called M2F2 and indicated that:

- There will be a steady decline to 2032 in the number of under-6s and projects a 15% drop to 2032 relative to 2018
- A small increase of about 3% for those aged 6 -17 years in the mid-2020s, declining to around 91% of the 2018 level by 2032
- The school leavers age group of 18-19 year olds is projected to rise steadily by about 20% of 2018 levels to the late 2020s and then to decline to about 15% above the 2018 level. This reflects the baby boom of the first decade of the millennium.



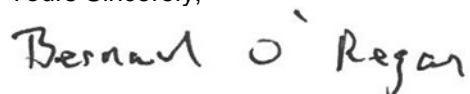
There is some evidence of a higher share of children and young people presenting with more complex needs which is evident in the changing profile of children accessing CDNTs and school leavers, with more complex medical and behavioural support needs

This change in demographics, increased life expectancy and changing needs for those with both a physical and sensory disability, and an intellectual disability has led to a significant increase in the need for disability services across all settings

The Disability Capacity Review advises that up to €15 million per year by 2032 – equivalent to 600,000 additional hours - is needed to meet the requirements for Personal Assistants and Home Support.

Each CHO continues to actively manage applications for support from service users with high levels of acuity/safeguarding risks, through active case-management and inter-agency cooperation

Yours Sincerely,



Bernard O'Regan
Assistant National Director
National Disability Team

