



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.

12th September 2024

Deputy Niamh Smyth,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
E-mail: niamh.smyth@oireachtas.ie

Dear Deputy Smyth,

The Health Service Executive 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: 35214/24

To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth if funding will be provided for a service (details supplied); and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Details supplied: Is there any community funding for such a service or community based scheme to provide a companion for a wheelchair users to get out the odd night to theatre and some social events. They live alone and are very capable but would like the odd social event to look forward to and would require someone reliable to bring them.

HSE Response

The HSE provides and funds a range of community services and supports to enable each individual with a disability, including an acquired disability to achieve his or her full potential and maximise independence, including living as independently as possible. Services are provided in a variety of community and residential settings in partnership with service users, their families and carers and a range of statutory, non-statutory, voluntary and community groups. Services are provided either directly by the HSE or through a range of voluntary service providers. Voluntary agencies provide the majority of services in partnership with and on behalf of the Health Service Executive.

Disability services are provided based on the presenting needs of an individual rather than by the diagnosis of the individual or the actual type and cause of disability or service required. Services are provided following individual assessment according to the person's individual requirements and care needs. Services provided include Residential and Respite Services, Day Services, PA and Home Support Services, and Therapeutic Supports.



Personal Assistant and Home Support Services

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.

While there is no centrally maintained waiting list for PA and Home Support services, the local HSE CHO areas are aware of the needs in their respective areas and work with the local Service Providers to respond within the resources available.

The HSE is committed to protecting the level of Personal Assistant (PA) and Home Support Services available to persons with disabilities. The HSE has consistently, year on year, increased the number of hours of PA and Home Support Services delivered to people with a disability.

Community Funded Schemes

In addition there are Community Funded Schemes which is a collective name for all of the many products, supports, supplies, appliances and aids that are provided through community services. There is an extensive range of assistive technology products and services provided to hundreds of thousands of individuals living with a wide variety of different medical conditions, under the CFS.

Further information is available at:

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/2/primarycare/community-funded-schemes/aids-and-appliances/>

Organisations

There are many organisations funded by the HSE which provide services to people with a disability including those who are wheelchair users. These organisations and services are mainly funded through Disability Services, Primary Care, Mental Health, Health and Wellbeing and Social Inclusion.

Enquiries should be made with the local health services – Primary Care and Disability services who will provide further information on what is available locally and what services are provided.

For example, the Irish Heart Foundation- the National Heart and Stroke Charity, is in receipt of funding from the HSE via Health and Wellbeing Services. This organisation is a source of valuable information and support to people are living with the effects of a heart or stroke injury and it supports numerous Stroke Support Groups throughout the country.

Acquired Brain Injury Ireland (ABII) aims to enable people with ABI to live an independent life in the community, by providing and maintaining a supportive living environment.

Headway Ireland (HI) is a not-for-profit Irish charity that provides rehabilitation services to adults (18+) who are affected by brain injury such as a stroke. Services include a Lo-call National Information and Support Helpline, Day Rehabilitative Services, Group Work, Individual Client Work, Rehabilitative Training Services, Psychological Services, and a Community Integration Service providing one-to-one support.



Other Services

The Age Friendly Ireland Shared Service supports cities, counties and towns across Ireland to prepare for the rapid ageing of our population by paying increased attention to the environmental, economic and social factors that influence the health and well-being of older adults. Local Age-friendly programmes work to provide walkable streets, housing and transportation options, access to key services and opportunities for older people to participate in community activities. By doing so, these communities are better equipped to become great places, and appropriate lifelong homes, for people of all ages.

<https://agefriendlyireland.ie/>

Age Action is Ireland's leading advocacy organisation for older people and ageing. As well as informing and influencing policy it provides practical programmes to support older people to age in place and combat digital exclusion through their Care and Repair, Getting Started and Information Service.

<https://www.ageaction.ie/>

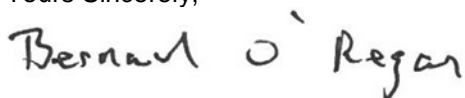
In addition, Volunteers Ireland runs a Community Volunteers programme which offers a new way to bridge the gap between communities that need support and the people who want to help.

Further information can be also obtained at the Local Authorities regarding local Volunteer Centres which are part of the national network of volunteer centres, supported by Volunteer Centres Ireland.

Please see link to Volunteers Ireland:

<https://www.volunteer.ie/>

Yours Sincerely,



Bernard O'Regan
Assistant National Director
National Disability Team

