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15/11/2023

Ms Catherine Smyth,
Committee Secretariat,
Public Accounts Committee,
Leinster House,
Dublin 2.

Re: Ref (S1484 PAC33)

Dear Catherine,

I refer to your recent correspondence to Mr. Bernard Gloster, Chief Executive Officer, Health Service Executive, regarding waiting times for those assessed and waiting for home support and whether this will be impacted by budgetary constraints or other measures in the coming year.

Please find below for the attention of the Public Accounts Committee members a briefing note on this matter as requested.

If any further information is required, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Ray Mitchell
Assistant National Director
Parliamentary Affairs Division

Briefing Note for the Public Accounts Committee

The population in Ireland is aging, with the latest population projections indicating a 38% increase in the over 65 population and a 68% increase in the over 85 population by 2031. Home support aims to enable older people to continue living in their own homes with confidence, security and dignity, and the Government has stated its aim to improve community-based services to make this possible (HSE, 2018). There is a recognition that for many older people who need support, their preferred option is to remain at home for as long as possible (HIQA, 2022).

Home support is a non-statutory service and access to the current service is based on assessment of the person's needs by the HSE and having regard to the available resources and the competing demands for the services from those people with assessed needs.

Waiting List

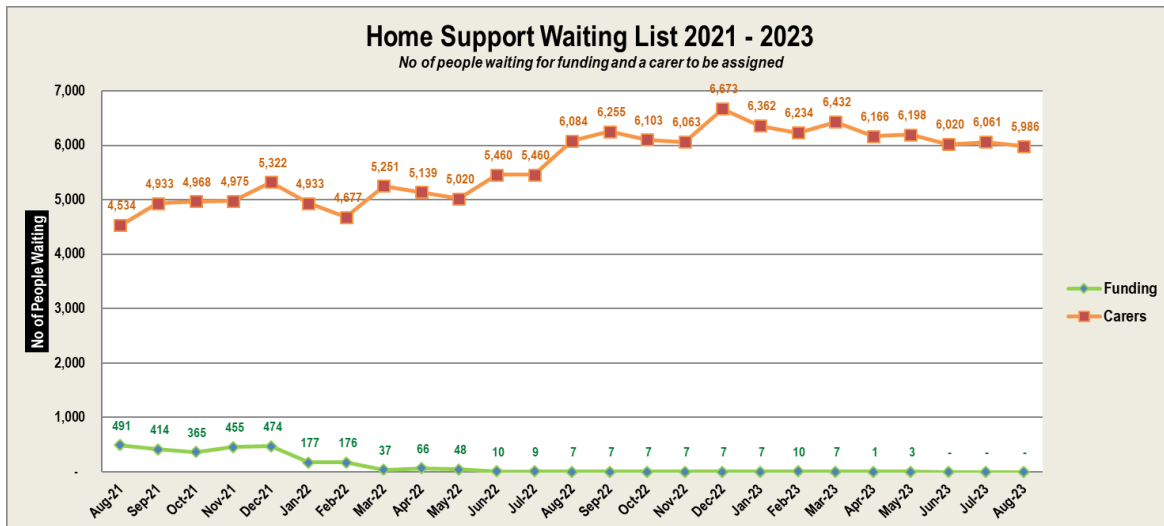
The number of clients assessed and waiting for care staff to deliver new or additional home support stands at 5,986 as at end August 2023 (latest available data) of which 3,084 clients are waiting to commence a new service and 2,902 waiting on provision of additional service. Data is not collated at national level in relation to waiting times; waiting lists are managed based on the assessed needs of the person and are impacted by the level of need of the individual requiring a service and the resources available in terms of available home support staff.

Table 1: Home Support Waiting List as at 31st August 2023

CHO	WAITING LIST - AUGUST 2023			
	Funding	Carers		
	Total	New	Additional	Total
National Total	-	3,084	2,902	5,986
CHO 1	-	259	395	654
CHO 2	-	199	387	586
CHO 3	-	300	366	666
CHO 4	-	1,011	637	1,648
CHO 5	-	289	685	974
CHO 6	-	90	147	237
CHO 7	-	438	30	468
CHO 8	-	482	239	721
CHO 9	-	16	16	32

Note: Due to the ongoing FORSA industrial action, the September figures are not available at this time.

The graph hereunder demonstrates increasing trend in the number of clients assessed and waiting for care staff to commence or increase a home support service over the period 2021 to 2023.



2024 Forecast/Predicted Demand for Home Support Services

The 2023-projected outturn is 21.7m hours. Demand for Home Support increases at a rate of approximately 4% per year.

The HSE is currently engaged in the process to agree a National Service Plan for 2024. The level of funding allocated to Home Support and the targeted hours associated with that funding will determine the HSE's ability to meet demand for this service in 2024.

**Health Service Executive
November 2023**