



Home Care Coalition
Pre-Budget Submission 2024

#HomeCareCrisis



Executive Summary

The Home Care Coalition is a group of 23 charities, not-for-profit organisations and campaigners including organisations who work with older people, people with disabilities and people with long-term illnesses, organisations working directly with carers, and groups working in the primary care sector.

The Coalition was established with the aim of ensuring the implementation of an adequately resourced, rights-based, and person-centred, statutory home care scheme, with equality of access and availability to home support services across the country.



In Budget 2024 the Home Care Coalition calls for Investment of €1.05 billion to provide viable and sustainable Home Support Services into 2024

This is explained in the following calculations:

- a) In 2023 the overall home care budget allocation was €723 million.¹ Factoring in the Economic and Social Research Institute's projected increase of 31.8%, representing the increased demand for home support through the new statutory home support scheme, the overall home care budget for 2024 would require a further €230 million, bringing the total to **€953 million.**²
- b) Immediate action is needed to address the staffing crisis in the home care and disability sectors which is threatening their viability, including a formal agreement to address the disparity of pay and conditions for Section 39 funded organisations, address inflation and the significant resource implications of the new Statutory Home Support Regulations including additional compliance costs. The Coalition estimate this would add a minimum of 10% to the cost. A further uplift of 10% requires an additional **€95.3 million.**
- c) The home care budget investment for 2024 requires **€1.05 billion** in total.

Why are we calling for €1.05 billion to provide viable and sustainable Home Support Services into 2024?

The crisis in the recruitment and retention of home support workers and the level of unmet need is having a detrimental affect on older people, people with disabilities and older people with disabilities.

The population is ageing, the number of people with disabilities and disabling conditions is increasing giving rise to an increased need for home support services.

The Sláintecare vision promises to provide new models of care that allow people to stay healthy in their homes and communities for as long as possible, and avoiding the premature transition into long-term residential care.³

The funding and delivery of home support services must be human rights compliant and support people to have choice and control over their lives under Article 19 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, UN CRPD and the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, MIPAA.⁴

There are real and tangible risks to people if we don't invest – more people will be waiting for assessment of needs without vital home care supports, many will have insufficient levels of support and will be more likely accessing acute hospital services.

Risks to organisations if we don't invest – delivering quality person-centred services will continue to be impacted and smaller to medium not-for-profit agencies with a historic independent living ethos will be forced to leave the home support sector and closures may follow.



Key Statistical Evidence on why we are calling for €1.05 billion to provide viable and sustainable Home Support Services into 2024

As of May 2023, **6,400 people were on the waiting list for Home Support**, mainly due to a lack of home support workers.⁵ This figure does not include those with unmet need who have yet to be assessed.

According to research by ESRI, Ireland has the second highest unmet level of need for home care out of 11 European countries.⁶

Siptu's Communications Officer, Aideen Carberry, reports that the pay gap is significant in homecare. '[For section 39] it's a nine-point salary scale, starting at €14.42 per hour, and at the top of the scale €15.07 per hour'. In comparison, a HSE-employed home support worker has 'a starting point of €15.64'. 'So you are looking at starting on more in the HSE than you'd even be receiving in the section 39 funded sector at the top. And at the top of the HSE scale, you are looking at in excess of €20 per hour.'⁷

The Health Service Capacity Review states that

“Capacity requirement for home care is set to experience significant growth to 2031, **with an additional 11,000 (70%) Home Care Packages, 130 (70%) Intensive Home Care Packages, and 7.2 million (69%) Home Help Hours anticipated**”⁸



Census 2022 evidence a rising number of people having a long-lasting condition or disability, accounting for 1,109,557 people or 22% of the population. The proportion of people experiencing a long-lasting condition or difficulty to **any extent** generally increased with age.

This ranged from 4% of people aged 0-4 years to 76% among people aged over 85. The percentage of each age group which experienced a long-lasting condition or difficulty to a great extent increased sharply after the age of 74.

Among those aged 85 and over, just under half (48%) experienced a long-lasting condition or difficulty to a great extent.





Background

The Home Care Coalition acknowledges that funding for the Home Support Scheme has increased significantly in recent years. Home care support spending has risen by €228 million since 2020, to €723 million in 2023.⁹ An additional €50 million in funding was allocated in the last Budget.¹⁰ This was further to a budget increase of roughly €150 million in 2021.¹¹

In addition, the establishment of the National Home Support Office in 2022, the completion of the pilots of the statutory scheme, and progress towards regulation of the forthcoming statutory scheme have been welcomed.

The 2023 HSE targets for home support services were originally for the delivery of:¹²

▶ 24.26m hours to 56,145 older people to continue to support older people to live at home and in their communities' and in keeping with the roll out of Slaintecare.

▶ intensive home supports for 1,150 people to support acute hospital discharge and long-term residential alternative' including older people and disabled people under and over 65 years.

▶ Provide 140,000 personal care hours (Complex Case Home Support Packages) for service users discharged from the National Rehabilitation Hospital' which will include disabled people under and over 65 years.

However, the HSE Service Plan for 2023 also notes that

“While every effort will be made, delivery of this target will be challenging given the dependency on the recruitment of additional healthcare support assistants across the sector”.

The 2023 target of 24.26 million hours was reduced midway through the year by over 1.9 million hours of home support. An announcement in July stated that “In order to allow the HSE to offer an increased rate to home support providers, the Department of Health sanctioned an adjustment of targets in the National Service Plan 2023 for the provision of 23.9 million hours of home support, to a revised target of 22 million hours. This adjustment is to support the delivery of key recommendations of the cross-departmental Strategic Workforce Advisory Group set up to help address the shortage of care workers, such as payment for travel time, the payment the National Living Wage at a minimum and addressing historic legacy rates”.¹³

At a time when older people and people with disabilities are in greater need of home support hours including the 6,400 people on a waiting list and those with unmet need, due in part to the staff recruitment and retention crisis, the target adjustment reflects a significant cut to people’s home support hours.



In response to the adjustment in funding for the remainder of 2023, Home Care Coalition member, ALONE's CEO, Seán Moynihan responded 'Home support workers provide vital support to older people and people with disabilities. They must be properly paid to make this significant difference in people's quality of life and wellbeing. Home support saves the Government money by keeping people well and safe at home for longer. The reduction in hours will result in 'care cramming', whereby necessary care will be rushed or not provided. We continue to wait for the implementation of the statutory home care scheme so that older people and people with disabilities can get the care they need, when they need it. To achieve this, we must implement the recommendations of the Strategic Workforce Advisory Group. But it shouldn't be the people in need of care who have to pay for this.'¹⁴

Demand for home support services is increasing. The ESRI's report on the Demand for the Statutory Home Support Scheme projects '12.5 per cent of all over-65s living at home in Ireland' could be accessing home support through a new statutory scheme.¹⁵ In the research into the new statutory home support scheme, funding for home support for people with disabilities was not taken into account, citing a lack of data in this area and neither was the additional cost of disability for people under or over 65 years factored into the research into potential co-payments.^{16 17}





Budget 2024

The Home Care Coalition is calling for Budget 2024 to deliver a sustainable home support service which provides quality care to service users, and pay parity among home care workers, ahead of the introduction of the statutory scheme. There are several strands to the requirement for funding increases in Budget 2024 to the home support service which will bring significant resource implications to service providers from the new regulations:

▶ To deliver additional hours of support in line with the health and social care needs of the growing population of people with disabilities and older people including changing needs over time.¹⁸

▶ To provide a fair rate of pay for home care workers, including remuneration for time spent travelling between service-users' homes, to enable recruitment and retention.

▶ To standardise rates of pay and benefits across HSE and Section 39 funded home care workers (in line with TASC recommendations) to ensure the viability and sustainability of the not-for-profit providers.¹⁹

▶ To increase operational funding to fully deliver on the recommendations of the Strategic Workforce Advisory Group, including (for example):²⁰

▶ A national campaign to raise the profile and promote the training opportunities available for a career as a Health Care Assistants and Home Support Workers.

▶ European level recruitment events.

▶ Development of a medium-term (3-5 year) recruitment plan to give further effect to the recommendation on increasing direct provision of home support.

▶ ICT solutions to be implemented to improve the efficiency of provision.

In March 2021, the ESRI projected potential demand once the statutory home scheme is in place. Using 2019 figures, they found 53,652 people using public home support, but if waiting list demand was met, plus allowing for people moving from private to public provision once a scheme is in place, the total demand the model comes to 70,700, which is an increase of 31.8%.²¹

To increase pay and conditions, pay for travel, address inflation, etc. adds another percentage to costs. The Coalition estimate this would add a minimum of 10% to the cost.

Based on the €723 million Budget allocation for 2023, an increase in demand of 31.8% (ESRI scenario) would require a further €230 million, bringing the total to €953 million.

A further uplift of 10% for inflation, higher pay, travel, etc. would bring this up by a further €95.3 million to €1.05 billion.

As the unit cost per hour of home care is increasing, an increase in funding in Budget 2024 may not represent an increase in hours provided but simply maintenance of the current scheme.

Therefore, we must see clear commitments to both increased hours of support being provided, and increased funding for the service, in this year's Budget, particularly considering the Department of Health's readjustment in the funded hours for home support through the new HSE Home Support Tender cutting 1.9 million hours to the remainder of 2023. This is a precedent that should not be repeated due to the adverse impact on older people and disabled people, including those in inappropriate settings, who are waiting for home support services.





About the Home Care Coalition

Purpose of the Home Care Coalition

The Home Care Coalition is a group of charities, not-for-profit organisations and campaigners including organisations who work with older people, people with disabilities and long-term illnesses, organisations working directly with carers, and groups working in the primary care sector. The Coalition was established with the aim of ensuring the implementation of an adequately resourced, rights-based, and person-centered, statutory home care scheme, with equality of access and availability to home support services across the country.

Membership of the Home Care Coalition

Membership as of 2023 is made up of:

- Acquired Brain Injury Ireland
- Age Action
- Age and Opportunity
- ALONE
- Alzheimer Society of Ireland
- Care Alliance Ireland
- Cheshire Ireland
- Cystic Fibrosis Ireland
- Disability Federation of Ireland
- Family Carers Ireland
- The Great Care Co-Op
- Irish Association of Social Workers

- Irish Heart Foundation
- Irish Motor Neuron Disease Association
- Irish Wheelchair Association
- Migrant Rights Centre Ireland
- Multiple Sclerosis Society of Ireland
- Neurological Alliance of Ireland (NAI)
- National Women’s Council of Ireland
- Northside Homecare
- Sage Advocacy
- Senior Citizens’ Parliament
- Third Age



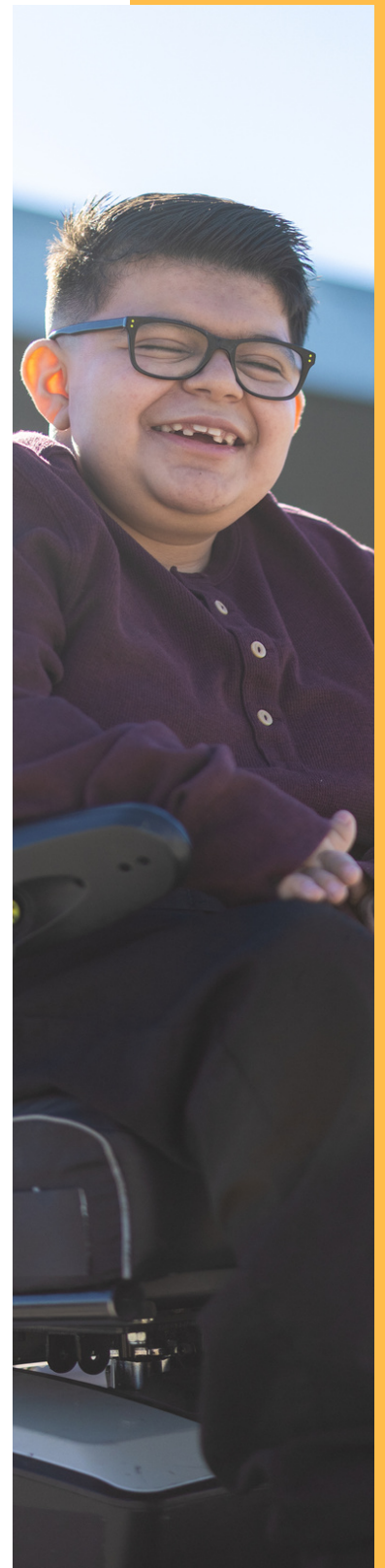
The Coalition is Chaired by an independent chairperson, who is currently Maurice O'Connell.

ALONE contributes an ongoing secretariat to the Coalition who arranges meeting links, provides minutes of each meeting, and chairs the Coalition subgroups.

Organisations can be considered for membership of the Coalition by emailing their interest to the Chair or the Secretariat of the Coalition.

The Work of the Home Care Coalition

- Sharing information among members, engaging with officials in the Department of Health, HSE and other relevant public bodies, engaging with elected officials and representatives.
- Contributing to Coalition activities such as collective submissions to Government Departments, press releases and publications, as representatives of their service users and/or membership base.
- Sharing information about ongoing experiences of the home support scheme and blockages that may be occurring, to inform activities both collectively and as individual organisations.
- Sharing items to be considered for further action by the Coalition or its subgroups, or for the Coalition to raise with the Department of Health.
- Informing ourselves, as individual organisations and as a collective, about items relating to regulations, legislation, financing, and other elements of the forthcoming statutory home support scheme.
- Two subgroups were formed by the Coalition in 2022 to consider two issues considered pressing by the membership. These subgroups consider **Campaigning** and **Financing of the Statutory Home Support Scheme**. The subgroups support the Coalition by carrying out work relating to these topics and making recommendations to the Coalition.





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2023
50
YEARS
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Our Voice.



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Responding to the Opportunities
and Challenges of Ageing in Ireland