

Brief for the scoping consultation to inform the development of Draft National Standards for Home support services



Background

The Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA) is the statutory body established under the Health Act 2007 to drive high quality and safe care for people using our health and social care services. One of HIQA's many functions is to set standards for health and social care services.

It is widely recognised that the majority of people wish to be cared for in their own homes for as long as possible. The future demographic challenges, trends towards increasingly complex care being provided in the home, and the need to focus on a human rights-based approach that facilitates autonomy and choice, underline the need for quality home support services.

HIQA recognises the importance of the quality and safety of home support services to allow people to remain in their own homes for longer. As such, HIQA is developing draft National Standards for organisations who provide home support services in Ireland.

Purpose of the scoping consultation

HIQA is holding this scoping consultation to give people an opportunity to identify the key areas that these draft national standards for home support services should address and to provide examples of good practice. We are also interested in your views on the evidence that should be considered when developing the draft national standards, and key stakeholders who should be consulted. We will carefully assess all feedback received and use it, along with other available evidence, to develop the Draft National Standards.

Context of the development of Draft National Standards for Home support services.

The Programme for Government (2020) commits to the introduction of a statutory scheme to support people to live in their own homes, providing access to high-quality, regulated home care. This scheme is currently under development within the

Department of Health. It is intended that the scheme will provide equitable access to high-quality services, based on a person's assessed care-needs.

HIQA is developing these draft national standards for home support services to complement the primary legislation and minimum requirements (regulations) being developed by the government (see appendix 1). It is envisaged that the standards for Home Support services will cover a wider range of services than those proposed to be covered by the regulations/licensing.

National standards are a set of high-level outcomes that describe how services can achieve safe, quality, person-centred care and support. They are evidence-based and informed by engaging with those who use and provide our health and social care services. The National Standards aim to promote progressive quality improvements in home support services and will give a shared voice to the expectations of the public, people using services, service providers and staff. When developed, the National Standards for home support services will:

- provide a common language to describe what high-quality, safe and reliable home support services look like
- be underpinned by a set of key principles which are used consistently across all national standards (a human rights-based approach, safety and wellbeing, responsiveness, and accountability), all working together to achieve person-centred care and support
- enable a person-centred approach, by focusing on outcomes for people using home support services and placing them at the centre of all that the service does
- help people using home support services to understand what high-quality, safe services should be and what they should expect from a well-run service
- create a basis to measure the quality and safety of a service's performance against the standards, by identifying strengths and highlighting areas for improvement
- promote day-to-day practice that is up to date, effective, and consistent, and based on the best available evidence

- provide a framework for home support service providers to be accountable to those using their services, the public and funding agencies, by setting out how they should organise, deliver and improve the care and support they provide.

Further information

- If you have any questions or queries, please contact us on standards@higa.ie

Appendix 1

Proposed regulatory framework for home support services

The Department of Health intends that the minimum requirements set out in secondary legislation (regulations) will apply in the first stage of roll-out to professional home-support activities that encompass the provision of assistance with personal care; the activities of daily living (ADL). It is currently not proposed to include the broader range of services that are provided in a person's home to support people with care-needs to live independently, for example, services provided by nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists or other healthcare professionals in these regulations.

It is currently envisaged that the initial regulations will refer to 'Home-support' as the provision of physical and personal care to a person of age 18 or older in their home who by reason of illness, infirmity or disability is unable to provide it for themselves without assistance. This includes, but is not limited to:

- a) physical assistance with movement, bodily functions and personal hygiene, such as eating and drinking, toileting, washing, dressing, and oral, skin, hair and nail care
- b) prompting and supervision in relation to the taking of medication and the activities listed in (a) where a person is unable to perform them competently without such prompting and supervision.

Note: It is envisaged that the Standards for Home Support services will cover a wider range of services than those proposed to be covered by the regulations above.