



**Health  
Information  
and Quality  
Authority**

An tÚdarás Um Fhaisnéis  
agus Cáilíocht Sláinte

Easy-to-read guide to the

# **Draft National Standards for Home Support Services**

## **November 2024**



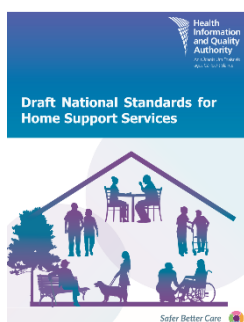
*Safer Better Care*



## About this document



The Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA) is developing draft National Standards for Home Support Services.



This is an easy-to-read version of the standards.

You can read it, and then provide feedback to the public consultation.



This document contains images from Photosymbols.

## How to use this document



This information is written in a way that is easy-to-read. We use pictures to explain some ideas.

There might be some words in this document that are new to you. These are in **bold blue writing** and explained in a box under the word.



You can ask for help to read this document.

Sometimes it is useful to read the document with a friend, family member or support person.



You do not need to read this whole document at once.

We have broken down the document into 6 main sections.

You can read these 1 section at a time.

## Section 1

### About the National Standards for Home Support Services



Many people in Ireland want to be supported to live at home for as long as possible.



Home support services can provide care and support for these people.

The care and support could be:



- Bathing, dressing, eating and using the toilet.



- Help with cooking, house cleaning and washing clothes.



- Help with shopping for groceries and making phone calls.

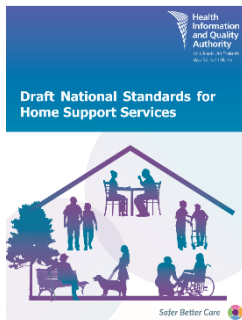


- Support with medication.



- Support to take part in social activities inside and outside the home.

We want to make sure that people get a good home support service.



We are developing these standards to show what home support services need to do to provide good and safe care and support to people.



They help staff to know what to do when supporting and caring for you.



The standards will also tell you about the care and support that you should get from home support services.



To write the standards we looked at how home support services work in other countries.

We looked at research studies.



We also talked to many people to find out what they think should be included in the standards.

We talked to:



- People who use home support services, their families and carers.



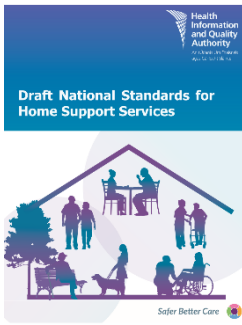
- Advocates.



- Home support providers.



- The Health Service Executive.



The standards are based on what people told us, experiences from other countries and research studies.

The Standards are also based on four principles:

- **Human Rights-based Approach (Respect human rights)**

- People should treat you with dignity and respect.

- **Safety and Wellbeing**

- People should support your safety and wellbeing.

- **Responsiveness (Good and timely support)**

- You have the right care and support at the right time.

- **Accountability (Well-managed service)**

- The service you receive is well managed.





## Section 2

### What are national standards?

We explain the standards briefly here, and then we go into more detail on the following pages.



Rights

#### **Standards under the Human Rights principle:**

These standards are about how home support services can protect, advocate and support your rights.



#### **Standards under the Safety and Wellbeing principle:**

These standards are about how home support services make sure you are safe, well, and free from harm or abuse.



#### **Standards under the Responsiveness (good and timely support) principle:**

These standards are about how home support services provide care from trained staff.



## **Standards under the Accountability (well-managed service) principle:**

These standards are about how home support services are well managed and have good **policies and procedures.**

**Policies** are the rules for your home support service to follow to make sure you receive the right support.

**Procedures** show how policies should be put into practice.

## Section 3

### Standards under the Human Rights principle

These Standards are about how home support services can protect, advocate and support your rights.

**Here are some examples of what should happen:**



Rights

My rights are explained to me in a way that I can understand.

My rights are respected and supported.



I have access to the right care and support based on my needs and preferences.

I am free from **discrimination**.

**Discrimination** is when you are treated less well than another person because of your gender, civil status, family status, religion, sexual orientation, age, disability, race or membership of the Traveller community.

For example discrimination is when a person with a disability is not treated the same as a person without a disability.



I am supported to make my own choices.

I am supported to decide the home support plan that is right for me.



I can tell people what I think about the services I am receiving at any time.

My feedback can be good or bad.

## **What should your home support service do?**

Your home support service should:



Provide information in a way you can understand.

Treat you with dignity, respect and kindness.



**Rights**

Provide information about advocacy services that can help you to achieve your rights.



Let you make choices.

Offer you care and support when and how you need it.



Understand and respect where you come from and the community you belong to.

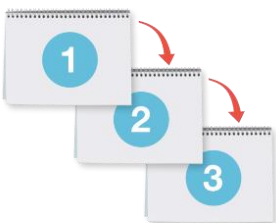


Allow you to take part in your personal support plan.



Offer different ways for you to provide feedback.

Listen to the things that you or your family have to tell them.



Be prepared to change the way they work, if there is a problem.

## Section 4

### Standards under the Safety and Wellbeing principle

These standards are about how home support services make sure you are safe, well and free from harm or abuse.

#### Here are some examples of what should happen:



My needs are looked at and the service estimates the support I need.

I feel **empowered** to be independent.

**Empowered** means having power and control over your own life.



I am supported to stay healthy, happy and well.

I am supported to live a full life.



My goals and preferences are respected.



I am supported to be safe and free from harm and abuse.

## What should your home support service do?

Your home support service should:



Provide care and support that will help to keep you healthy, happy and well.



Provide care and support based on your needs, goals and preferences.

Provide an easy-to-read and accessible version of your personal support plan.

Make sure to update your care plan regularly as your needs may change.



Make sure that the timing of home support visits are agreed with you.



Make sure you are **safeguarded** from harm and abuse.

**Safeguarded** means protecting you from being harmed or badly treated.



Have a good process in place to look at, manage, report and learn when things go wrong.



## Section 5

### Standards under the Responsiveness (Good and Timely) principle

These standards are about how home support services provide care and support from trained staff.

**Here are some examples of what should happen:**



The staff who care for and support me are well trained and are good at their job.



The staff who care for and support me take time to get to know me as a person. They:

- listen to me
- speak to me kindly.



My personal support plan is right for me because it is based on my emotional, social and physical needs.



I get the same care and support at every visit from the staff I know, or from a small number of staff.



If the staff who support me change, the reason why is explained to me.



All staff involved in my personal support plan work together to make sure I receive the right care.

## **What should your home support service do?**

Your home support service should:



Make sure staff are well trained and are good at their job.



Make sure staff know how to look at your needs and what you want.



Support and supervise staff in their job.  
Make sure that there is enough staff available to provide your care or support.



Provide information about changes in your personal support plan or staff.



Work with you, your family and other organisations in the community, if that is what you need.

## Section 6

### Standards under the Accountability (Well-managed service) principle

These standards are about how home support services are well managed and have good policies and procedures.

#### Here are some examples of what should happen:



My home support service has good managers and staff.



My home support service has good **policies and procedures** to make sure I get the right care and support.

**Policies** are the rules for your home support service to follow, to make sure you receive the right support.

**Procedures** show how policies should be put into practice.



If needed, I know who to contact at night time and at the weekends.



If needed, my family or supporters participate in decision-making around my care and support.



I know that my information is kept private.



My home support service always tries to improve the service provided to me.



My opinions are important and taken into account in my personal support plan.

## What should your home support service do?

Your home support service should:



Follow all policies and procedures.



Have a good process in place to manage staff, finances, your safety and also staff safety.



Use your opinion and feedback to improve supports.



If needed, only share your information according to the law.

## How do I give feedback?

If you would like to give your feedback on the draft *National Standards for Home Support Services*, you can do so by:



Filling out a **short survey** at this [link](#). The survey has a number of short questions that you can answer to share your views on the standards



You can also download the easy-to-read survey form at the HIQA website [here](#). When you have completed the survey, you can email it to us at [standards@hiqa.ie](mailto:standards@hiqa.ie)



Sending the completed survey back to us by **post**. The address to use is:  
HIQA, George's Court, George's Lane,  
Smithfield, Dublin 7. D07 E98Y.

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