

Question 682: Is additional funding being considered for voluntary and community groups that source meals for older/vulnerable/low income persons during the Covid crisis e.g. meals on wheels; men's sheds, Dormant accounts Funding.

–Dara Calleary TD

REPLY

Minister for Rural and Community Development (Michael Ring)

The Government is aware of the challenges facing community and voluntary organisations and is committed to working closely with the sector in managing through these, recognising that it will require a whole of Government approach.

An initial measure put in place by my Department is the COVID-19 Emergency Fund. The €2.5m fund was announced on 9th April and provides immediate and urgently needed funding to community and voluntary groups that are participating in the Government's "Community Call" initiative, which is being led by the Local Authorities in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Groups providing frontline services such as Meals on Wheels will be prioritised within the available funding. The Local Authorities are administering this fund and are providing further details to groups in each area.

Officials from my Department are continually liaising with representatives of the Local, Community and Voluntary Sectors, and with other Departments in relation to the challenges faced at this time.

Further detail about the COVID-19 Emergency Fund including allocations by local authority area are available at <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/bee6ea-minister-ring-announces-25-million-fund-for-community-groups-involve/>