

## **Citizens' Assembly on Gender Equality**

### **Personal experience panel – January 2021**

#### **Brendan Courtney**

There is a real need to acknowledge “Carers” - mostly family carers, a lot of whom don't identify as carers and are mostly made up of women.

In 2019, I launched the Report *Caring and Unpaid Work in Ireland* (for the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission). The gender gap in unpaid work time in Ireland is the seventh highest amongst the EU 28. Countries with a wide gender gap have been identified as having systems where the provision of care falls primarily on the family, as it does in Ireland.

Short term: Stop Planning to fail! - every year the Minister for Health underfunds the home care budget, and it does not address the backlog and so you have massive waiting lists of people (HSE approved) still waiting on their home care packages (6k last year).

Medium Term – Allow the Fair Deal Scheme for Home-care packages - in train but still not available - a Home-care package (similar to the Fair Deal Scheme package) is still not available.

Long Term - Everyone who needs home-care should be entitled to it without the Fair Deal Scheme and for free, plus relax building laws to allow people to downsize so they can remain in their own areas.