

Media Statement

22 December 2009

Western Trust Report attack on Homecare Staff

The Western Health and Social Care Trust (Western Trust) is today, 21 December 2009, reporting an incident where Homecare staff were subject to an attack during the weekend's heavy snowfall in the Ballymagoarty area.

The incident occurred on Sunday night when two carers were making a regular visit to a client in the area. During the sustained attack the carers and their vehicle were pelted with snowballs and subject to intimidation. No injuries were sustained but both carers were shaken by the incident.

Alan Corry Finn, Director of Primary Care and Older Peoples Services commented: "Homecare staff are part of the local community. These carers are dedicated to keeping these critical services going despite the snowy weather and it is deeply disappointing to hear that they have been subject to such an attack.

"Such weather conditions create a challenge for services delivered into people's homes such as homecare. Our carers work hard to ensure that essential services continue despite the difficulties created by snowy/icy conditions and should be able to go about their work in a safe environment.

He concluded: "Thankfully this is an unusual event. We will continue to monitor the situation and consider the safety risk to our staff. I would ask those involved to respect carers when they are in the area. If our staff are not safe they will not be able to deliver care to people who are often elderly or vulnerable and depend on these carers to provide vital homecare services."

Ends.....

Provided by the Communications Department: (028) 7161 1188 or (028) 8283 5197.