

21st December 2020

Deputy Pa Daly
Dáil Éireann
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

Re: PQ 40983/20 Question: To ask the Minister for Health further to Parliamentary Question No. 1378 of 3 November 2020, the number of the targeted 700 new contact tracing staff that have been successfully on-boarded and are able to engage in contact tracing. -

PQ 40984/20 /20 Question: “To ask the Minister for Health further to Parliamentary Question No. 1378 of 3 November 2020, the number of persons engaged in swabbing duties who are redeployed from other areas of the HSE compared to those who have been newly hired to the role in tabular form”

Dear Deputy Daly,

I refer to the above Parliamentary Question which has been referred by the Minister for Health to the Health Service Executive for direct response.

Contact Tracing

The HSE currently has access to 731 staff at present, with 694 persons who are the new dedicated workforce for routine contact tracing with the remainder redeployed from the Revenue Commissioners (23) and HSE staff (14). We will continue to grow this until we receive 800 WTE, this may be in excess of 1,000 people due to part time working. We plan to have capacity to do 9,000 calls per day in our standing capacity, anything in excess of this will involve deploying surge capacity.

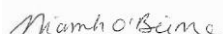
Swabbing

We have hired and on-boarded c.616 new community swabbers so far. This is a brand new role and these staff are now working in our centres all around the country. We will continue to hire until we have c.1,000 new people on-board (c. 900 WTE's). We plan to have the capacity to swab up to 25,000 per day. In early December, an updated census was completed in relation to staff who were redeployed and there was 411 left in swabbing with 180 of these being allied health professionals and 120 nursing.

Staff will return to their posts within the community as the process of recruiting dedicated staff continues in swabbing and contact tracing for the Testing and Tracing Programme.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,



Niamh O'Beirne
National Lead Testing and Tracing