



**5 January 2021**

Deputy David Cullinane  
Dáil Éireann  
Kildare Street  
Dublin 2

**PQ 41177/20 Question: To ask the Minister for Health the targets for hire for the dedicated swabbing and testing workforce identified in the winter plan on a weekly and monthly basis for the period 1 June to 1 December 2020; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -David Cullinane**

**PQ 41178/20/ 20 Question: To ask the Minister for Health the number of hires for the dedicated swabbing and testing workforce identified in the winter plan on a weekly and monthly basis for the period 1 June to 1 December 2020; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -David Cullinane**

**PQ 41179/20 Question: To ask the Minister for Health the total targeted workforce by 1 December 2020 and actual workforce size at 1 December 2020 for the dedicated swabbing and testing workforce identified in the winter plan; and if he will make a statement on the matter.**

**PQ 41183/20/20 Question: “To ask the Minister for Health the targets for hire for the dedicated contact tracing workforce identified in the winter plan on a weekly and monthly basis for the period 1 June to 1 December 2020; and if he will make a statement on the matter.”**

**PQ 41184/20 /20 Question: “To ask the Minister for Health the number of hires on a weekly basis for the period 1 June 2020 to 1 December 2020 for the dedicated contact tracing identified in the winter plan; and if he will make a statement on the matter.”**

**PQ 41185/20/20 Question: “To ask the Minister for Health the total targeted workforce by 1 December 2020 and actual workforce size at 1 December 2020 for the dedicated contact tracing workforce identified in the winter plan; and if he will make a statement on the matter.”**

**PQ 41202/20/20 Question: “To ask the Minister for Health the number of swabbing and testing staff successfully onboarded on a weekly basis for the period 1 October to 1 December 2020; and if he will make a statement on the matter.”**

**PQ 41203/20/20 Question: “To ask the Minister for Health the number of contact tracing staff successfully onboarded on a weekly basis for the period 1 October to 1 December 2020; and if he will make a statement on the matter.”**

**PQ 41204/20 Question: To ask the Minister for Health the total workforce, disaggregated between dedicated new hire and redeployed and seconded from the health service or otherwise, engaged in swabbing and testing on 1 October, 1 November and 1 December 2020; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -David Cullinane**

**PQ 41206/20 /20 Question: “To ask the Minister for Health the total workforce still redeployed and seconded from other aspects of the health service to Covid-19 efforts, by field, that is testing, tracing and so on; and if he will make a statement on the matter.”**

**PQ 41207/20 /20 Question: “To ask the Minister for Health the targets to year-end for the dedicated swabbing and testing workforce; and if he will make a statement on the matter.”**

I refer to the above Parliamentary Questions which has been referred by the Minister for Health to the Health Service Executive for direct response. I wish to apologise for the delay in issuing a response to your above question.

Due to the current demands of the Covid-19 pandemic and the numerous queries we have received to date it has taken longer than I would have liked to respond. As a number of these questions overlap I have outlined our response in one correspondence.

We do not a breakdown for the timeframes outlined above but I wish to confirm our most up to date recruitment and redeployment figures for your information. In early December, an updated census was completed in relation to staff who were redeployed in the Community to Swabbing. I have outlined this below including redeployments to Contact Tracing in tabular form.

<b>Redeployment</b>	<b>Health and Social Care Professionals</b>	<b>Nursing Staff</b>	<b>Admin / Non patient facing personnel</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Community Swabbing Centres</b>	180	120	111	<b>411</b>
<b>Contact Tracing</b>			14	<b>14</b>

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 have outlined below our update in relation to current and intended recruitment figures.

#### **Swabbers**

There is a total of 631 community swabbers have been hired and on-boarded. This is a brand-new role and these staff are now working in our centres nationwide. Recruitment will continue until there are at least 1,000 new people on-board and all those redeployed staff are back in their original community roles.

#### **Contact Tracing**

Overall, c. 741 staff have been hired and retained for contact tracing. These are our new dedicated contact tracing workforce. In addition, we have a further 37 staff, 23 from Revenue Commissioners and 14 from the HSE. This brings total contact tracing staff to 778. This number will continue to grow until it gets to 1,000 or 800 WTE.

As we are currently in surge we have over 100 Defence Forces personnel and 100 HSE Environmental Health Officers supporting the service since the end of December.

I trust this addresses your questions.

Yours sincerely,



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**Niamh O'Beirne**  
**National Lead Testing and Tracing**