



31<sup>st</sup> December 2020

Deputy Róisín Shortall  
Dáil Éireann  
Kildare Street  
Dublin 2

**Re: PQ 43464/20 Question: “To ask the Minister for Health further to Parliamentary Question No. 1470 of 3 November 2020, the number of HSE staff currently redeployed to the testing and tracing system from other areas of the health service; the number from each specialty that are redeployed in tabular form; the additional breakdown of specialties for those redeployed from the health and social care professions; and if he will make a statement on the matter”.**

Dear Deputy Shortall,

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

In early December, an updated census was completed in relation to staff who were redeployed in the Community and there were 411 left in Community Swabbing with 180 of these being Allied Health Professionals and 120 nursing. There are 14 HSE staff redeployed to Contact Tracing. Please see below in tabular form as requested:

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

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.

I trust this addresses your question.

Yours sincerely,

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