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16th November 2020

Deputy Darren O'Rourke
Dáil Éireann,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2

Re: PQ number 32522 To ask the Minister for Health the number of cases of Covid-19 transmission that have been identified as having taken place in gyms and swimming pools in each month to date 2020; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy O'Rourke,

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

This response describes data up to 11th November 2020. Data were extracted from the Health Protection Surveillance Centre's (HPSC) Computerised Infectious Disease Reporting System (CIDR) on November 12th at 9:26 am. CIDR is a dynamic system and case details may be updated at any time. Therefore, the data described here may differ from previously reported data and data reported for the same time period in the future.

Gyms and pools in Ireland were closed from late-March to the end of June 2020 and closed once again on October 21st 2020. Six outbreaks of COVID-19 linked to gyms (involving 48 cases in total) were reported to HPSC between the start of July and late October. Three were reported in September and three were reported in October. The number of COVID-19 cases linked to these gym outbreaks ranged from two to sixteen, with an average of eight linked cases per gym outbreak.

One additional COVID-19 outbreak in October was reported as a private house outbreak, but both cases associated with this outbreak had attended a gym and had been identified as close contacts of a gym instructor who was positive for COVID-19 infection.

This may be an underestimate of cases acquired in gyms as many cases of COVID-19 are reported as community-acquired, with the case not knowing how they were infected.

No COVID-19 outbreaks associated with swimming pools have been reported to HPSC to date.

If you require any further information or clarification please do contact us.

Yours sincerely,

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