



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

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Deputy Patrick Costello
Dail Eireann
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

Dear Deputy Costello

Ref: PQ 32929/20

To ask the Minister for Health the reason applicants with clinical experience and qualifications are considered for Covid-19 work with specific reference to non-clinical tracers applications for the HSE on call for Ireland programme; and if he will make a statement on the matter. - Patrick Costello (32929/20)

I refer to the parliamentary question above which has been referred to the HSE for direct reply.

Contact tracing is part of infectious disease outbreak control used by public health professionals. The authority to conduct contact tracing comes from the infectious disease legislation, and the Medical Officer of Health has the responsibility and authority to investigate and control notifiable infectious diseases.

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, the HSE established the Contact Management Programme (CMP). The CMP was established to provide capacity to the eight departments of public health, by carrying out high volume but lower complexity contact tracing, allowing the departments of public health deal with the outbreaks and more complex situations.

The CMP developed a three step call process.

- Call 1 is calling the person with a confirmed result, asking about their health status, providing them with the public health advice that they need to self-isolate, and asking them to think about who they were in contact with from 48-hours before they noticed their symptoms.
- Call 2 is calling back the person and collecting the names and numbers of their close contacts.
- Call 3 involves calling the close contacts, providing them with the public health advice to restrict their movements, and referring them for a Covid-19 test.

The CMP, under the authority of a Medical Office of Health, has deemed that call 1 requires a clinical person or a person with a similar level of experience. On this basis the HSE has recruited level 1 (clinical) and level 2 (non-clinical) contact tracers to support the process.

Given the unpredictability of the virus, the HSE is also looking at training level 2 tracers to carry out level 1 calls, to ensure we have a flexible workforce. If a contact tracer is trained up to level 1 then they will be remunerated accordingly.

I trust this addresses your question.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kilian McGrane', written in a cursive style.

Kilian McGrane
Contact Management Programme