



7th December 2020

Deputy Verona Murphy
Dáil Éireann
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

Re: 38435/20 Question: “To ask the Minister for Health the number of contact tracers presently operating within the Covid-19 test and trace system; and if he will make a statement on the matter”.

Dear Deputy Murphy,

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

The HSE currently has access to c.736 staff for contact tracing at present. This includes 675 people who make up our new dedicated contact tracing workforce. In addition, there are currently 61 staff redeployed to contact tracing, 38 are HSE staff, none of whom were involved in front line community work. There are also 23 staff redeployed from the Revenue Commissioners. We will continue to recruit until we get to 800 WTE, this may be in excess of 1,000 people due to part time working.

The Operating Model for Testing and Tracing takes into account the evolving needs and future potential service demands in the context of Covid19 surges in disease transmission. We are currently recruiting a permanent workforce in addition to leveraging the clinical and operational expertise embedded in our community services. We will continue to build agility in our system to meet the increasing community demand of which includes the nationwide recruitment campaign for swabbers and contact tracers, standing up temporary swabbing sites and making process improvements to our end to end test and trace system.

I trust this addresses your question.

Yours sincerely,

Niamh O'Beirne
National Lead Testing and Tracing

