

17<sup>th</sup> September 2020

Deputy PA Daly  
Dáil Éireann  
Kildare Street  
Dublin 2

**Re: PQ 22132/20**

**Question : To ask the Minister for Health the number of public health and civil service staff reassigned to track and trace duties both nationally and within County Kerry in tabular form; and the duties and Department that staff have been reassigned from**

Dear Deputy Daly,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

All staff in the eight Public Health Departments are involved in the Track and Trace process. Public Health Departments deal with the contact tracing of infectious diseases, and in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic the Public Health Departments are dealing with the more complex settings where confirmed cases occur, and the management of outbreaks. The routine contact tracing is managed by contact tracing centres.

The HSE currently has the following contact tracing centres in operation:

1. HSE Galway
2. HSE Cork
3. HSE Kells
4. Defence Forces Athlone
5. Defence Forces Cork
6. Defence Forces Dublin
7. UCD
8. Revenue Commissioners Limerick

There are currently approximately 280 people involved in contact tracing across the eight contact tracing centres. These staff are comprised of staff on loan to the HSE from the Defence Forces and Revenue Commissioners, volunteers and staff redeployed within the HSE.

Of the 280 approximately 100 staff are deployed within the HSE. The majority of the redeployed staff are in the West and Dublin, and are supporting contact tracing in Galway and UCD. It is not possible to provide a tabular format, as the position is dynamic with different trained staff being available at different times.

The HSE is currently undertaking an extensive recruitment process to hire a dedicated team of 500 contact tracers. These staff will provide standing capacity to meet a significant volume of confirmed cases on a daily basis. Once these staff are recruited, trained and experienced the redeployed staff will return to their substantive roles.

I trust this clarifies the matter.

Yours sincerely,

*Niamh O'Beirne*

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