



27<sup>th</sup> October 2020

Deputy Louise O'Reilly,  
 Dáil Éireann,  
 Leinster House,  
 Kildare Street,  
 Dublin 2.

**PQ 26319/20 - To ask the Minister for Health the number of therapist hours going to testing centre duties by each CHO in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter**

-Louise O'Reilly

Dear Deputy O'Reilly,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted to the Minister for response.

Please see below Table 1 listing the number of staff and testing hours in community testing.

**Table 1:**

	CHO 1	CHO 2	CHO 3	CHO 4	CHO 5	CHO 6	CHO 7	CHO 8	CHO 9	Total
Number of therapy staff deployed in Community Testing	65	82	16	48	21	16	54	113	15	430
Number of testing hours per month	2,438	3,075	585	1,802	788	615	2,025	4,243	549	16,119

- The above data reflects the redeployed workforce position in Test Centres as at September 2020
- This calculation is based on each staff member currently operates on the basis of 37.5 hour working week.

The HSE Covid-19 Community Testing Service is committed to the timely provision of safe, accessible, quality swabbing services within the community setting. In order to respond to the pandemic, it was necessary utilise existing staff through redeployment.

The HSE has recently commenced a recruitment campaign for staff to support community testing and tracing facilities for Covid-19. The recruitment of Community Swabbing staff will support the return of Occupational Therapists, Speech and Language therapists and other clinical staff to their substantive roles.

The key document in terms of returning staff to their substantive posts is titled “Service Continuity in a Covid Environment. A Strategic Framework for Delivery”.

This framework document was prepared in June 2020 and provides the framework for staff to return to their substantive posts from Covid related work.

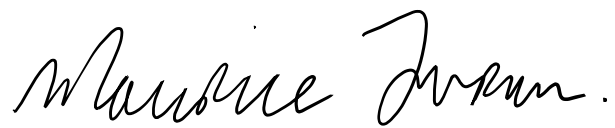
A link to the document is provided below:

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/news/newsfeatures/covid19-updates/service-continuity-in-a-covid-environment-a-strategic-framework-for-delivery1.pdf>

The HSE is working to ensure timely access to children and adults requiring therapy services, and to reduce long waiting times for these important services. The spread of COVID-19 is posing significant challenges for many service areas, including all Therapy Services. In light of these unprecedented challenges together with the Government’s guidance on social distancing and on ‘Cocooning’ for those aged over 70, the HSE has had to reassess its operation of Community Therapy Services nationally, to ensure that the assessed needs of those clients with the highest priority are met.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,



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Maurice Farnan  
A/A.N.D. Community Operations