

13th October 2020

Deputy John Brady
Dáil Éireann
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

Re: PQ 27124/20

Question: “To ask the Minister for Health the average waiting time for a Covid-19 test in County Wicklow from the initial referral to receiving the test results; and if he will make a statement on the matter”.

Dear Deputy Brady,

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

I wish to advise that we do not have a regional breakdown of turnaround times. The vast majority of tests are processed in one laboratory. I can confirm that the current end to end median turnaround time for detected and not detected results from referral to communication of result is 2 days. We are continuing to keep sharp focus on end-to-end turnaround times, while recognising that some cases are increasingly complex in nature.

There are currently 37 testing centres in operation nationally, a combination of permanent Community Testing Centres and temporary “pop-up” testing centres. Currently all counties in Ireland have at least one testing centre with the exception of County Leitrim where a centre is currently being planned. Centres operate on an appointment only basis, providing appointments for people with suspected Covid-19 symptoms referred by their GP. In addition close contacts of positive cases are referred by the HSE Contact Tracing Team for Covid-19 testing in the centres.

The HSE Covid-19 Community Testing Service is committed to the timely provision of safe, accessible, quality swabbing services within the community setting. Over the past seven days, over 95% of all persons referred for testing were offered a test appointment on the same or next day.

I trust this addresses your question.

Yours sincerely,



Niamh O'Beirne
National Lead for Testing and Tracing