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26th April 2021

Deputy Holly Cairns
Dáil Éireann,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2

Re: PQ19386 To ask the Minister for Health if the P1 variant of Covid-19 has been detected in any meat plant; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Cairns,

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

Up to the end of week 14, 2021, 8000 cases of confirmed COVID-19 notified to the Health Protection Surveillance Centre's (HPSC) Computerised Infectious Disease Reporting System (CIDR) have an available whole genome sequencing (WGS).

One outbreak with a location of a meat processing plant has four linked cases who have a confirmed P.1. VOC.

A summary report of COVID-19 virus variants in Ireland is available [here](#).

Notes

- WGS sequencing data were provided by National Virus Reference Laboratory (NVRL). Epidemiological data on these cases were extracted from the Health Protection Surveillance Centre's (HPSC) Computerised Infectious Disease Reporting System (CIDR) on 20/04/2021.
- CIDR is a dynamic system and case details may be updated at any time. Therefore, the data described here may differ from previously reported data and data reported for the same time period in the future.
- WGS is carried out by the NVRL and partners. Current whole genome sequencing capacity is approximately 1,000 specimens per week.
- Of note, there is a time lag between specimen date and WGS results becoming available.
- The epidemiological date is the earliest of onset date, date of diagnosis, laboratory specimen collection date, laboratory received date, laboratory reported date, event creation/notification date
- All medical practitioners, including clinical directors of diagnostic laboratories, are required to notify the Medical Officer of Health (MOH)/Director of Public Health (DPH) of any confirmed, probable or possible cases of COVID-19 that they identify. Laboratory, clinical and epidemiological data, on notified COVID-19 cases, are recorded on CIDR.
- The interim case definition for variants of concern (VOC) for public health response and an overview of the procedures for laboratory detection of mutations or variants of concern at NVRL are available [here](#).
- Further information on VOCs is available [here](#).

If you require any further information or clarification please do contact us.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Cuddihy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a period at the end.

**Dr John Cuddihy,
Interim Director of HPSC,
25-27, Middle Gardiner St.,
Dublin 1.
MRN: 016227**