



4th May 2021

Deputy Louise O'Reilly
Dáil Éireann
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

PQ 22522/21 “To ask the Minister for Health if persons working in the Covid-19 testing centres as volunteers or paid workers have access to high quality face masks of a similar grade to that used in a clinical setting; and if he will make a statement on the matter.”

PQ 22434/21 “To ask the Minister for Health if persons working in the Covid-19 testing centres as volunteers or paid have access to high-quality masks of a similar grade to that used in a clinical setting; and if he will make a statement on the matter.”

Dear Deputy O'Reilly,

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

I wish to advise staff and volunteers at Covid-19 testing centres have access to high quality face masks of a similar grade to that used in a clinical setting. This includes surgical masks / FFP2 masks and is part of the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) which is provided.

The type of PPE is based on Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC) guidance - Current recommendations for the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for Possible or Confirmed Covid-19 in a pandemic setting which was updated in February 2021.

For more information on the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) please see the HPSC website at the below link:

<https://www.hpsc.ie/az/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/guidance/infectionpreventionandcontrolguidance/ppe/Current%20recommendations%20for%20the%20use%20of%20PPE.pdf>

I trust this addresses your questions.

Yours sincerely,

Niamh O'Beirne
National Lead Testing and Tracing