



16th Dec. 2021

Deputy Aengus Ó Snodaigh,
Dáil Éireann,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2

Issued via email to: aengus.osnodaigh@oireachtas.ie

PQ Number: 59626/21

Question: To ask the Minister for Health if his attention has been drawn to temporary HSE Covid-19 test centres using inaccurate and or misleading Eircodes.

PQ Number: 59627/21

Question: To ask the Minister for Health if the HSE has been instructed not to use an alternative postcode (the alternative Loc8code) for their temporary Covid-19 testing or vaccination centres by the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications.

PQ Number: 59778/21

Question: To ask the Minister for Health if his attention has been drawn to the fact that a number of temporary HSE Covid-19 test centres do not have and cannot have an Eircode; if his attention has been further drawn to the fact that the HSE has licensed an alternative location code (developed in Cork called Loc8code) and this has been successfully implemented in the National Ambulance Service's IT system in view of the fact that an Eircode cannot be allocated to temporary dwellings; the reason the HSE is not using a location coding system that it has already paid for, for these temporary sites; and if the HSE has been requested to not use an Eircode by the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications.

Dear Deputy Ó Snodaigh,

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

The HSE has provided a network of Community Testing Centres across the country since the commencement of the pandemic. Currently, a total of 41 Community Testing Centres are established with at least 1 Community Testing Centre operating in each county ensuring that well in excess of 90% of the population have access to a Community Testing Centre within a 45 minute travel time. The HSE continually evaluate options to augment capacity in specific areas experiencing very high level of demands through the use of pop-up Testing Centres. These centres are established on a temporary basis at specific locations and operated by the National Ambulance Service and/or by Community Healthcare Organisation staff.

Persons may be referred for a Covid-19 PCR test by their GP, as a result of having been identified as a close contact of a confirmed Covid-19 case or through self-referral for testing through the on-line self-referral portal. Additionally, Testing Centres have also facilitated walk-in testing for persons without a pre-assigned appointment.

All scheduled appointments for a Covid-19 PCR test at a Community Testing Centres are issued by SMS and include the full address and Eircode of the Testing Centre (static site or pop-up site). The HSE website where persons can book themselves an appointment for a Covid-19 PCR test contains the Testing Centre full address and Eircode details. Sites that offer walk-in PCR testing are also advertised with their full address and Eircode.

Community Testing Centres do not currently employ the use of Loc8 codes which are used by the National Ambulance Service with the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system for dispatching emergency responses for locations that don't have a postal address/mapping. The use of Eircodes by the Community Testing Centre allows the service user to use Google Maps or other applications on their smartphone or other devices to get detailed directions to the centre.

I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely,



Damien McCallion
National Director
National Lead Test & Trace and Vaccination Programme