



26th February 2021

**Deputy Dara Calleary
Dáil Éireann
Kildare Street
Dublin 2**

PQ 10327/21 “To ask the Minister for Health the estimated weekly cost of contact tracing in relation to Covid-19 cases; and if he will make a statement on the matter.”

Dear Deputy Calleary,

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

Contact Tracing is a key function of Public Health investigation and control of covid-19. The HSE's Contact Management Programme (CMP) was established in March 2020, as part of our wider National Test and Trace function. We have a number of Contact Tracing Centres (CTCs) within the CMP, they are currently located in Galway, Limerick, Cork and Dublin.

The work of the CTCs involves contacting people who have tested positive for covid-19; identifying and following up with their close contacts; providing appropriate public health advice, including monitoring for signs and symptoms of the virus and requesting them to restrict their movements and to self-isolate as applicable. It also involves referring individuals for a test where applicable. All these activities as carried out by staff in the CTCs are key to controlling and interrupting the transmission of covid-19. Contact Tracing is conducted seven days a week service from 8.00am to 8.00pm.

The estimated staff costs for contact tracing in 2020 is approximately €6.3m. We have estimated the cost per week to be approx. €121,153. However; please note the overall cost, including estimates of costs per week, is subject to fluctuation; the contact tracing service must be scalable to respond to likely forecast demand for testing and tracing. The level of activity required will drive costs. Activity in the first months of 2021 will result in likely higher actual costs than those related to the summer months of 2020 for example, when the service was less busy.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,

**Niamh O'Beirne
National Lead Testing and Tracing**