



15th March 2021

Deputy Patricia Ryan
Dáil Éireann
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

Re: PQ 11904/21 “To ask the Minister for Health the number of antigen and PCR tests carried out by the HSE for Covid-19 to date in 2021; and if he will make a statement on the matter”

Dear Deputy Ryan,

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 can advise that the HSE has conducted 1.24m PCR tests from 1st January 2021 to 7th of March 2021. The HSE has completed validation on a number of antigen tests for usage, and validation of additional antigen tests is ongoing. I can advise that over 7,000 antigen tests have been conducted by the HSE to date. Supplies of antigen test kits are available to acute hospitals and community outbreaks.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) have advised that RT-PCR is the optimum test for the detection of SARS-CoV-2 and we continue to ensure that antigen tests are available within the health system and the HSE carefully monitors emerging evidence of the global use of antigen testing as part of the pandemic response to SARS-CoV-2 on an ongoing basis.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,

Brian Lee
Assistant National Director -
Head of Operations Monitoring and Improvement