



National Director, Community Operations  
Dr. Steevens Hospital, Dublin 8, DO8 W2A8  
Tel: 01 6352596 Email: communityoperations@hse.ie

Stiúrthóir Náisiúnta, Oibríochtaí Pobail  
Ospidéal Dr. Steevens' Baile Atha Cliath 8, DO8 W2A8  
T 01 6352596 R: communityoperations@hse.ie

18<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Deputy Violet-Anne Wynne  
Dáil Éireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.

**PQ 12497/21 - To ask the Minister for Health the position regarding deployment of HSE speech and language therapists as contact tracers; if they will be returning to their pre-Covid-19 roles as speech and language therapists; when it is likely to occur; and if he will make a statement on the matter.**

**- Violet-Anne Wynne**

Dear Deputy Wynne,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted to the Minister for response.

The redeployment of staff has mainly impacted on Primary Care and in particular therapy / clinical staff and there has been a corresponding loss of productivity in core services, this has led to an increase in the number of patients on a waiting list for therapy services.

The table below represents the total number of speech and language therapists who were reassigned to support *Contact Tracing Services* as at November 2020. It should be noted that there were also 96 SLT's redeployed to testing services in the November census.

The redeployment of staff was required to address the pressures caused by the second wave of the pandemic which commenced in Sept / Oct 2020 and the subsequent third wave in December.

	Contact Tracing
Number of Speech & Language Therapists	1

As the pace of the third wave diminishes we are developing plans to address service continuity to return staff including Speech and Language Therapists back to core front line duties.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Maurice Farnan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a horizontal line drawn underneath the name.

Maurice Farnan

A/A.N.D. Community Operations