



1st April 2021

Deputy Róisín Shortall
Dáil Éireann
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

PQ 15628/21 “To ask the Minister for Health the job descriptions of clinical and non-clinical contact tracers, respectively; the differences in the two roles; and if he will make a statement on the matter.”

Dear Deputy Shortall,

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

The HSE's Contact Management Programme (CMP) has now developed its own dedicated workforce for contact tracing and has also put in place sustainable and effective arrangements with other organisations (internal and external to the HSE) to support us in times of surge. To effectively limit the spread of Covid-19, a Contact Tracing system should complete the tracing process within 24 hours of receiving the index patient's diagnosis. To achieve this Key Performance Indicator (KPI), the CMP has recruited a dedicated workforce of Contact Tracers located in various Contact Tracing Centres throughout Ireland (Cork, Dublin, Galway and Limerick). The majority of the staff in Contact Tracing Centres are employees of CPL Healthcare and recruitment was carried out in line with best practice, balanced against the immediate urgent need for Contact Tracers to support the management of Covid-19 in a more sustainable way.

I wish to advise the job descriptions and the differences in the roles of clinical and non-clinical contact tracers as requested, it is important to set out the following in the first instance, in terms of the work carried out by contact tracers on a daily basis. Within the CMP, when a detected (positive) result is received for a patient who has been tested for Covid-19, telephone-based Contact Tracers currently undertake three types of calls:

Call 1: Inform the patient that they have tested positive for Covid-19 and provide information on how to protect themselves and others.

Call 2: Collect information about people they have been in close contact with to identify those who are at risk of infection.

Call 3: Close contacts are then called and given advice on what to do if they become unwell or develop symptoms. This helps to stop the spread of the virus.

Calls 1 & 2 are currently carried out by Level 1 Contact Tracers whereas Calls 3 are currently carried out by a mix of Level 1s and 2s. This is subject to change and is in line with Public Health recommendations. Where a negative result is received, service users are notified via a text message (SMS).

There are some key skills required for the role of contact tracing (for both clinical and non-clinical roles) such as;

- Enhanced communication skills and telephone manner
- Ability to compassionately empathise with the patient's experience
- Ability to remain calm while under pressure
- Ability and willingness to work autonomously with minimal supervision
- Attention to detail and commitment to maintaining the confidentiality required
- An ability to input data in the HSE's Contact Tracing software (training provided)



Clinical experience is not necessary for all contact tracing roles and full training is provided by the HSE. All CPL Healthcare employed staff, clinical and non-clinical; have access to the same pay rates and conditions across the contact tracing services.

Further information on the roles and specific pay scales are set out below:

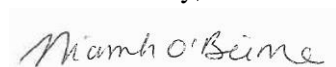
Level 1 Clinical Contact Tracers: Level 1 Contact Tracers are clinically qualified in the areas of health and social care, medicine, nursing, or patient and client care. The HSE are particularly interested in applications from those with relevant clinical backgrounds and who can work full time, as this allows us to be most agile in terms of our ongoing response to this global pandemic, particularly given the constantly changing environment we are all operating in. Interested people with a clinical background can apply for contact tracing roles through CPL Healthcare. Clinical Contact Tracers are recruited for their clinical experience/ background and are paid at an Assistant Staff Officer rate of €28,749 to €43,628, dependent on relevant experience.

Level 2 Non-clinical Contact Tracers: Level 2 Contact Tracers do not need a clinical qualification. These roles are full time. People interested in becoming a Level 2 Contact Tracer can send an email with a CV attached to CPL Healthcare. They should indicate where they are interested in working e.g. Dublin, Galway, Limerick or Cork (locations of the Contact Tracing Centres). The team at CPL Healthcare will contact them if there are possibilities for employment.

Non Clinical Contact Tracers are paid at a Clerical Officer Salary rate as they do not need to have clinical backgrounds/ experience for the services they provide - this ranges from €24,601 to €39,087 and again positioning on the scale would depend on relevant experience.

I trust this addresses your question.

Yours sincerely,



Niamh O'Beirne
National Lead Testing and Tracing