



**1<sup>st</sup> April 2021**

Deputy Róisín Shortall  
Dáil Éireann  
Kildare Street  
Dublin 2

**PQ 15629/21 “To ask the Minister for Health if contact tracers have access to passenger locator form data in order to trace close contacts of confirmed cases on arriving flights; 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.

I wish to advise a person travelling to Ireland from overseas must complete a Covid-19 Passenger Locator Form. The information provided on this form, and any updates that the passenger provides, may be used for the following purposes:

- to contact them to verify the information on the form in the 14 days following their arrival
- to provide them with Public Health information or advice relating to Covid-19
- the form may also be used for the purposes of contact tracing in relation to confirmed or suspected cases of Covid-19

The HSE Contact Tracers can access the Passenger Locator Form through an internal process with the HSE's Public Health Data Processing Team (PHDPT) if required. The Departments of Public Health request the boarded manifest from the airline for all flights where a confirmed case is on board. This is requested under the Medical Officer of Health legislation. The flight contact tracing is under the governance of the SPHM (Specialists in Public Health Medicine) in the Department of Public Health who identifies the close contacts.

I wish to advise the primary source of information for contact tracing purposes comes from flight manifests as it is a more accurate record of passenger lists. Departments of Public Health receive these manifests and in the cases where this information is incomplete/not readily available, information is requested from the Passenger Locator Form system, via the PHDPT and is accessible to contact tracers through this team.

The Passenger Locator Form system is also used to track every positive case associated with a flight. While a flight may arrive into Ireland from the EU/UK, the positive cases original country of departure may have been a Category 2 country. The Passenger Locator Form is used to ascertain this on every flight traced and is available for such use for contact tracing purposes as required.

I trust this addresses your question.

Yours sincerely,

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

