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15th April 2021

Deputy Joan Collins
Dáil Éireann,
Kildare Street,
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Re: 16190/21 To ask the Minister for Health the locations in which Covid-19 infections are initiating; the breakdown of same; the number of positive infections from 1 to 22 March 2021; and the locations and groups in which infections are initiating, for example, in workplaces, students, indoor gatherings, outdoor gatherings, retail, schools and so on.

Dear Deputy Collins

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

Data were extracted from the Health Protection Surveillance Centre's (HPSC) Computerised Infectious Disease Reporting System (CIDR) on April 9th 2021 at 10:00 am. CIDR is a dynamic system and case details may be updated at any time. Therefore, the data described here may differ from previously reported data and data reported for the same time period in the future.

This response describes data on confirmed COVID-19 cases associated outbreaks notified between March 1st and 22nd 2021.

Note: Public Health report outbreaks to HPSC and link cases to these outbreaks. Due to the surge in case numbers in late December 2020/early January 2021, there were delays in outbreak creation and case linkage. Therefore, some outbreaks are being notified some time after they occurred.

In addition, public health colleagues continue to prioritise reporting of outbreaks in key settings e.g. Residential Care Facilities, hospitals, schools etc. Consequently, the number of private house outbreaks and cases linked to these outbreaks are underestimated.

These data describe cases linked to outbreaks only.

Linkage of cases to outbreaks does not necessarily imply that transmission occurred in the setting or location of the outbreak.

In the time period March 1st to 22nd 2021, 1,303 outbreaks were notified to HPSC. Of these, 352 outbreaks were late notifications and were estimated to have occurred between October 2020 and January 2021. Most of these outbreaks were in private houses (n=239) or among extended family groups (n=43). These outbreaks are excluded from the following analysis.

There were 3,924 confirmed cases of COVID-19 linked to the remaining 940 outbreaks notified in this time period (Table 1). Almost half of cases (n=1,788) were associated with private house outbreaks (n=626).

Forty workplace outbreaks were notified in this time period with 362 linked cases. This included six outbreaks in meat processing plants with 131 linked cases and five outbreaks relating to the construction sector with 34 linked cases.

Thirty-six school outbreaks with 173 linked cases and 35 childcare facility outbreaks with 278 linked cases were reported during the time-period. While there were two outbreaks with four linked cases associated with universities/colleges, 23 additional outbreaks with 67 linked cases involved 3rd level students associated within community and private house settings.

There were 20 outbreaks in residential institutions with 206 linked cases and thirty-four outbreaks related to healthcare settings with 185 linked cases reported during the time period. (Table 1)

The remaining outbreaks were associated with a variety of settings. (Table 1)

Table 1: Outbreaks of COVID-19 March 1st and 22nd 2021 and linked cases by outbreak location

Outbreak location	Number of outbreaks	Number of confirmed linked cases
Private house (excl. third-level students)	626	1788
Extended family	52	478
Workplace	40	362
Commercial	16	129
Construction	5	34
Defence/Justice/Emergency services	2	6
Health and Dental	1	3
Manufacturing	2	9
Meat/Poultry production and processing	6	131
Office	1	2
Other	5	30
Other food/beverage production and processing	2	18
School	36	173
Childcare facility	35	278
Third-level students	25	71
University/College	2	4
Community outbreak	5	18
Private house	18	49
Residential institution	20	206
Centre for disabilities	3	11
Centre for older people	1	5
Children's / TUSLA residential centre	4	31
Direct provision centre	4	67
Homeless facility	4	67
Mental health facility	1	3
Other	2	13
Prison	1	9
Healthcare settings	34	185

Hospital	16	113
Other healthcare service	16	49
Nursing home	2	23
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Community outbreak (excl. third-level students)	21	161
Retail outlet	11	40
Social gathering	11	45
Restaurant / Café	7	23
Travel related	7	19
Religious/Other ceremony	6	57
Transport	4	15
Other	2	14
Guest house / B and B	1	2
Not Specified	1	4
Sporting activity/fitness	1	3
Total	940	3924

#Residential disability services, residential mental health facilities, hospices, homeless hubs/hostels, prisons, direct provision centres, etc.*Outbreaks where there is spread beyond private house and extended family to include a wider social circle, but where is no link to a specific event or location. ^Social gatherings refer to specific social events or gatherings rather than general socialising or mixing of social groups e.g. refers to house parties, garden parties, other similar celebrations. This category does not include outbreaks related to religious events. †Outbreaks that do not have a suitable category in the Outbreak Location dropdown should be classified as 'Other'

If you require any further information or clarification please do contact us.

Yours sincerely,



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