

30th Nov. 2021

Deputy Fergus O'Dowd,
Dáil Éireann,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2

Issued via email to: fergus.odowd@oireachtas.ie

PQ 55662/21

Question: To ask the Minister for Health if further discussions have taken place in respect of the much needed provision of a full-time Covid test centre for Drogheda, County Louth; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

PQ 57159/21

Question: To ask the Minister for Health if a Covid-19 test centre will be opened for the Drogheda urban, rural and east County Meath local electoral areas in view of the increasing and very significant level of Covid-19 positive cases reported in one of the largest populations densities in the country; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy O'Dowd,

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 has operated a Community Testing Centre in Louth since March 2020. In line with the National Test and Trace Operational Model, a long term location was established to serve the people of Co. Louth. This site is located in Ardee and was selected following a detailed evaluation as it best met defined criteria including suitability and sustainability of the location as a long term testing centre, as well as the location of centres relative to observed travel times, noting travel times from both Dundalk and Drogheda less than 25 minutes.

This site has consistently offered in excess of 600 appointments per day. Testing Centres are continuously evaluated to ensure that capacity meets demand, including extension of opening hours and addition of testing stations to existing sites. As a result the Ardee site has been further scaled in line with increased demand and site has in recent times offered in excess of 750 appointments per day.

The HSE continually evaluate options to augment capacity in specific areas experiencing very high level of demands through the use of pop-up Testing Centres. A pop-up testing centre was in operation the 27th and 28th November, in Drogheda adding additional capacity for PCR testing to the area.

The HSE Covid-19 Community Testing Service is committed to the timely provision of safe, accessible, quality swabbing services within the community setting. To note Covid-19 testing is one part of the strategy in relation to managing the pandemic. It is key that the public follow Public Health guidance in relation to prevention of the spread of Covid-19.

I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely,



Damien McCallion
National Director
National Lead Test & Trace and Vaccination Programme