



Health Protection Surveillance Centre

25-27 Middle Gardiner Street

Dublin, Ireland,

D01 A4A3

Ph +353 1 8765300

Fx +353 1 8561299

info@hpsc.ie

www.hpsc.ie

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Deputy Peadar Tóibín
Dáil Éireann,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2

Re: PQ 41476/21 To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons who contracted Covid-19 in a hospital setting on a monthly basis since 1 March 2021

Dear Deputy Tóibín

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 reported epidemiology of COVID-19 in Ireland is normally based on the notifications to the Computerised Infectious Disease Reporting (CIDR) system at the Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC). The cyber-attack on the HSE on May 14th 2021 prevented the routine notification of COVID-19 cases, associated deaths and outbreaks of COVID-19 to CIDR from May to August 2021. Reporting of COVID-19 cases to CIDR was re-established in September 2021. As an interim measure, provisional data on COVID-19 case notifications were prepared based on the information captured by the HSE COVID Care Tracker.

While progress has been made with the recommencement of reporting on CIDR, not all sub-processes are fully operational, and this includes sub-processes that validate data used to identify hospital acquired COVID-19 cases on CIDR. Additionally, HPSC is unable to accurately match the definition used for identifying hospital acquired COVID-19 cases using the HSE COVID Care Tracker. In this context, at this time, HPSC can only provide accurate data on hospital acquired COVID-19 cases for March and April 2021.

COVID-19 hospital acquired infection case definition

Case definition for hospital acquired COVID-19 cases as agreed by the COVID-19 Expert Advisory Group (EAG) and AMRIC oversight group:

- Onset of clinical features of COVID-19 7 days or more after admission should be regarded as hospital acquired COVID-19
- Onset of clinical features of COVID-19 between days 3 and 6 after admission are considered hospital acquired cases of COVID-19 if epidemiologically linked to hospital exposure
- Onset of clinical features of COVID-19 on day 1 or 2 after admission are considered community acquired unless epidemiologically linked to hospital exposure during a recent hospital admission
- If onset of clinical features cannot be defined, a case by case assessment is required taking account of the date of sampling relative to the date of admission, the ct value of the test result and epidemiological evidence of a link to hospital exposure.

<https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/casedefinitions/>

The number of patients notified to HPSC who are reported as patients who contracted COVID-19 in the hospital setting was derived by applying the case definition above to all COVID-19 patients reported as hospitalised to CIDR.

In March 2021, there were 97 COVID-19 cases reported to HPSC that matched the case definition of hospital acquired COVID-19 as outlined above.

In April 2021, there were 54 cases reported to HPSC that matched the case definition of hospital acquired COVID-19 above.

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

Yours sincerely,



Dr Lois O'Connor MB MICGP MPH MFPHMI, IMC 021192
Interim Director of HPSC,
25-27, Middle Gardiner St.,
Dublin 1.