

HSE COVID-19 Test and Trace Briefing

18th of November, 2021

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A circular inset image showing a microscopic view of several coronavirus particles. The particles are spherical with a textured surface and numerous spike-like projections (spikes) extending from them. They are set against a dark, slightly grainy background. The circular inset is positioned on the left side of the slide, partially overlapping the dark teal background.

1. Key Test and Trace Messages



Key Test and Trace Messages

- We have seen a **sustained extremely high demand** for COVID 19 testing at our **community testing centres** in the last number of weeks in particular. This reflects the high prevalence of the disease and other illnesses at this time.
- The community testing service was established initially to support the delivery of 15,000 tests per day – the service has implemented a number of additional measures to increase the daily testing figure to adjust for peak periods up to 20,000 tests per day. In the past week we reached **c.25,326 swabs** (including test centre and outbreak referrals) which is in excess of our surge capacity of 20,000 and Monday 15th November was our busiest day to date in community testing with **over 32,000 referrals** scheduled.
- Our priority is to make sure GPs can refer patients for COVID-19 PCR testing where they feel it is warranted, and that close contacts of confirmed cases who are identified as requiring a COVID-19 PCR test get their test appointment as quickly as possible. Ensuring these two groups are prioritised does mean that those outside these categories may not be able to book a test until the following day.
- In recent days it has been particularly busy in test centres across the country, however, we monitor test appointment slots continually throughout the day and slots often do become available later in the day or the following day.
- We have been working on plans to further increase the volume of COVID 19 testing we can provide to communities. We have agreement in place with a private testing provider –They are operating a testing centre on the HSE's behalf, **located at Dublin airport**. This opened on Monday Nov 15th and reviewing plans for further testing centres in Cork and Limerick.
- We are continuing to **recruit additional staff** to our Community Test Centres. We are also working to put further additional external resources in place to increase our testing capacity including potentially other private service providers.
- It is critical that people who are symptomatic restrict their movements in line with Public Health advice.

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2. Testing Volumes and Turnaround Times



Test and Trace Headlines



1.1 day

Community - median end to end TAT for a not detected result



2.1 days

Community - median end to end for a detected result



c.156,871

Total number of community swabs taken last week



c.193,402

Total number of laboratory tests last week



c.25,683

Calls made to detected cases

Note: The above TaT and volume metrics refer to the seven day date range from 10th – 16th November

Note 2: The above swab figures represent total community swabs. Additional swabs are carried out in private and acute settings.



Test and Trace Volumes

The following metrics and turnaround times refer to the seven days from 10th – 16th November



Total Community Referrals

- There were **c.182,210 community referrals** over the seven-day period (7% increase in comparison to last week).
- This referral figure includes
 - **109 international travel portal referrals** (↓ **42%** compared to last week)
 - **110,565 self-referrals** (↓ **0.4%** compared to last week)
 - **21,287 GP referrals** (↑ **35%** compared to last week)



Total Community Swabs Completed

- During this time period, there were c. **156,871** swabs were completed.



Laboratory Tests and Detected Rate

- During this time period, there was c. **193,402** lab tests reported in community, private and acute settings over the past week.
- The average detected rate over the past week is **approximately 16.6% - Community and Acute and Serial blended. Community on its own is 19.8%**

Contact Tracing

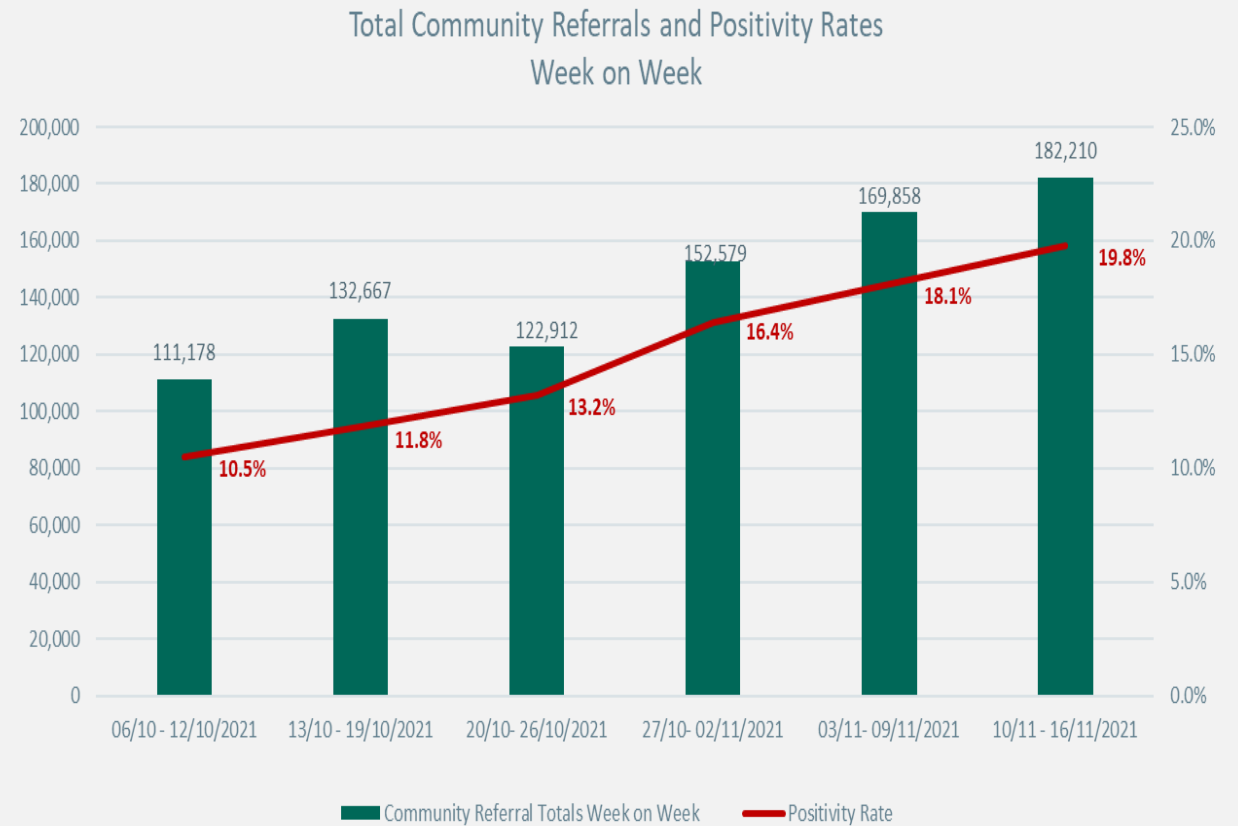
- Over the last 7 days, of those tested with close contacts, the average number **close contacts was 3.4 per person.**
- From 10th – 16th November, a total of 25,683 calls were completed to inform individuals of their detected COVID-19 test result.
- From 10th – 16th November, contact tracing was completed for c. 24,682 individuals that had a confirmed COVID-19 case
- In addition, c. 4,064 calls were made to close contacts.





Total Community Referrals

- From the 10th – 16th November, there were **c.182,210 Community Referrals** (including walk-ins, international travel and self-referrals)
- This weekly total has **increased by 7%** in comparison to the same time-period last week
- The graph to the right shows a weekly breakdown of total community referrals over the past 7 weeks and corresponding positivity rate.



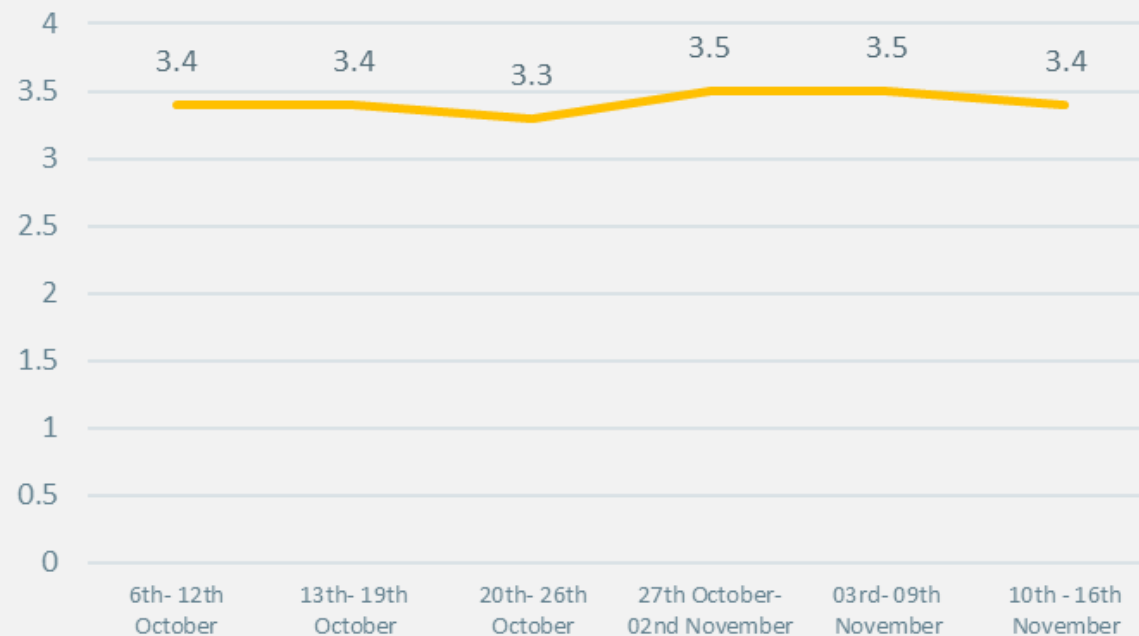


Close Contacts Trend

3.4

Over the last 7 days, of those tested with at least one close contact, the mean number of close contacts per person was **3.4**

Mean Close Contacts: Week on Week Average



A circular inset on the left side of the slide shows a microscopic view of several coronavirus particles. The particles are spherical with a textured surface and numerous spike-like protrusions. They are set against a dark, smoky background within the circle. The entire slide has a dark teal gradient background.

3. Testing Programmes



Serial Testing in Nursing Homes

In Cycle 18 (Commenced 8th November);



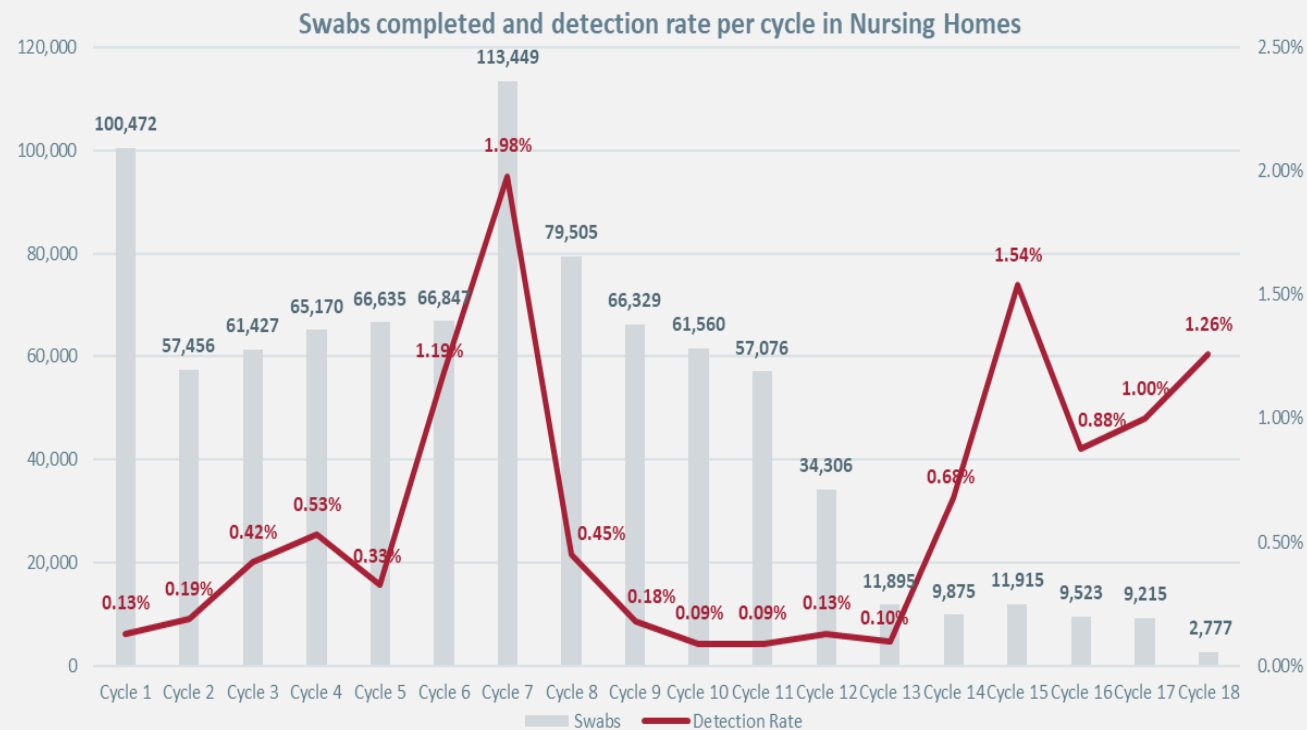
109 facilities have been tested



2,777 tests have been completed



35 detected cases identified
(1.26% detected rate)





Serial Testing in Mental Health Facilities

In Cycle 10 (Commenced 11th October);



5 facilities have been tested

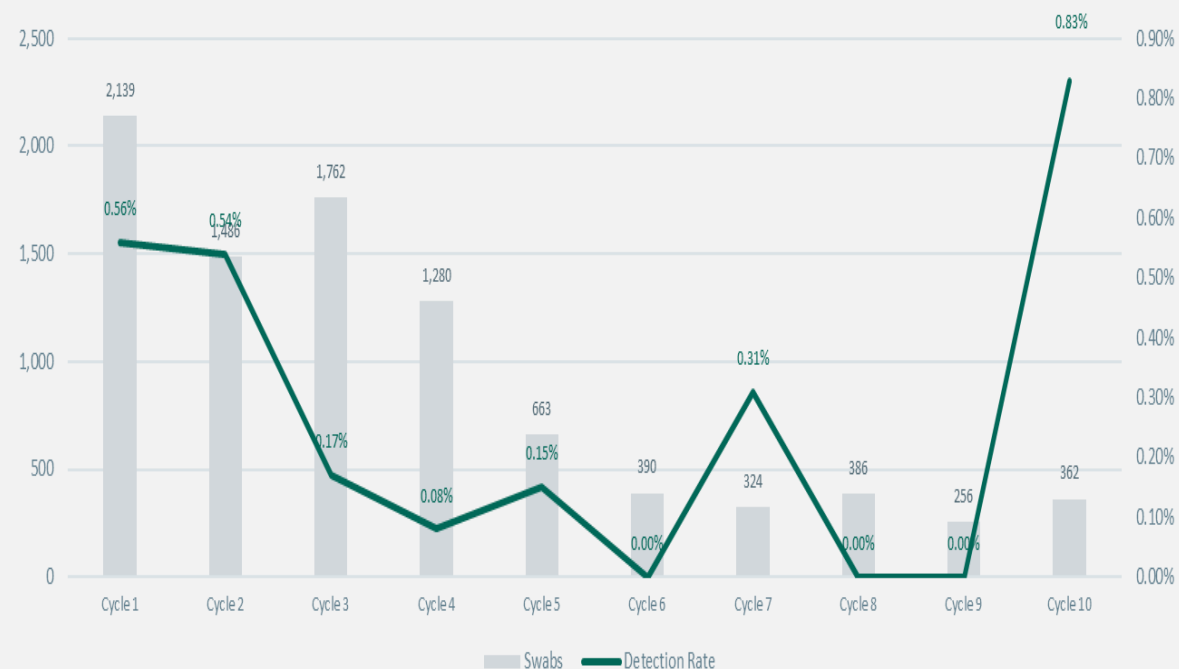


362 tests have been completed



3 detected cases identified
(0.83% detected rate)

Swabs completed and detection rate per cycle in Mental Health facilities





Serial Testing in Food Production Facilities

In Cycle 15 (Commenced 18th October);



67 facilities have been tested

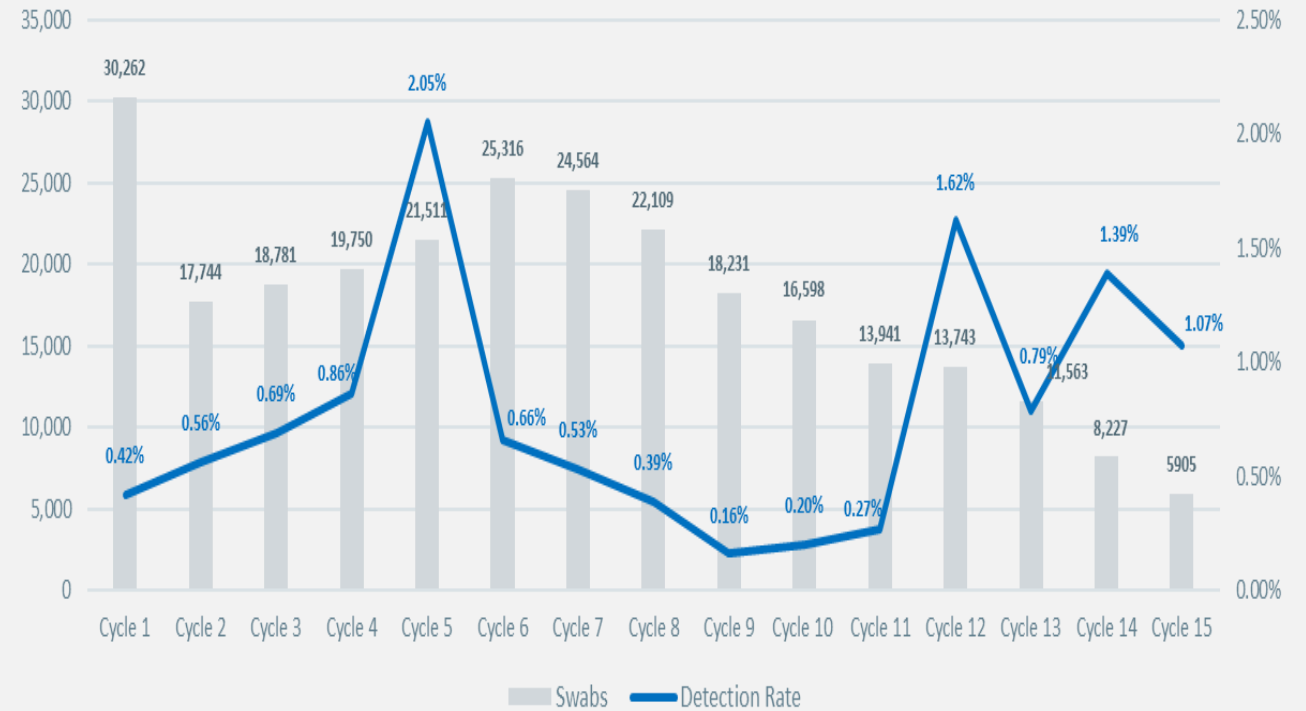


5,905 tests have been completed



63 detected cases identified
(1.07% detected rate)

Swabs completed and detection rate per cycle in Food Production facilities



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4. Recruitment



Recruitment as of 08th November

787

Staff supporting Contact Tracing

Of these 787 staff;
721 of these staff have been hired
and retained as part of
dedicated workforce to support
the contact tracing function

The remaining 66 staff are redeployed
from the HSE and other Public Service
Roles

