

HSE COVID-19

**Testing & Contact Tracing Update
23rd of December 2020**



1) Performance of the Testing Infrastructure



Testing and Contact Tracing Headlines – 2,213,757 tests completed to date



1.5 days

Community - median end to end for a not detected result



2.1 days

Community - median end to end for a detected result



95,530+

Total Swabs last week



90,820+

Total number of laboratory tests last week



19,500+

Total number of Contact Tracing calls made last week

Note: The above TaT and volume metrics refer to the seven day date range from 14th – 20th December.

Performance of the Testing Infrastructure (1/2)

The following metrics and turnaround times refer to the seven days from 14th – 20th December.

Swabbing

- **c. 95,537 swabs samples** this week – meeting all demand including serial testing.
- This total swabbing figure includes approximately **49,657 taken in the community**, **24,645 taken in hospitals** and **21,235 taken as part of serial testing** of Staff in Food Plants and Residential Care Facilities.
- In the last week, we have had **34 static testing centres** in operation, with **1 pop up testing site** also in operation (Cleary Centre in Donegal Town)
- Community testing demand has increased by **51%** over the last 6 weeks. There has been a significant increase in community demand of **38% in the last week**.
- **91.4%** of GP referrals are provided with a COVID-19 test appointment within 24 hours.

Laboratories

- Laboratories processed **90,826 tests** across our network of 46 labs.
- The average detected rate over the past week is **approximately 3.9%**, this is an increase of 1.2% since from last week.

Contact Tracing

- Contact tracing is carried out in Galway (HSE), Limerick (HSE and Revenue), Cork (HSE), Dublin (Sandyford), Dublin (UCD), Parkgate street/ Merrion Lane and Kells (HSE).
- Our Contact Tracing teams across Public Health and CTCs completed over **19,531 phone calls** in the last week.
- Close contacts average at **4.2** per person, vs. 3.8 last week.

We thank the general public who have all worked to significantly reduce their number of close contacts over the last number of weeks. We should channel these significant efforts over the Christmas period and prioritise who we meet in order to limit the number of our close contacts.

Performance of the Testing Infrastructure (2/2)

The following metrics and turnaround times refer to the 7 day date range from 14th - 20th of December.

Turnaround

- Swab to lab result for community and acute settings is **1.0 days**.
- All calls are completed within **0.7 days (median)** – including all complex cases.
- In the last seven days, in the community, we have delivered a **median end to end turnaround time of 2.1 days for detected results**.
- In the last seven days, in the community, we have delivered a **median end to end turnaround time of 1.5 days for not detected results**.
- In the last 7 days, 3.9% of all tests were detected COVID-19 and approximately 96.1% of tests had a not detected result.

2) Testing Programmes



Serial Testing of All Staff in Residential Care Facilities

Cycle 6 of serial testing has commenced on 9th December and will run for four weeks.

Cycle 6 to date, as of 21st December;



519 facilities have been tested



29,612 tests have been completed



196 detected cases identified (0.66% detected rate).



Serial Testing of All Staff in Food Production Facilities

Cycle 4 of serial food production facilities commenced on 7th of December 2020.

Cycle 4 to date, as of 21st December;



46 facilities have been tested



10,983 tests have been completed



44 detected cases identified (0.40% detected rate).



Monitoring COVID-19 in Schools & Childcare Facilities

School and Childcare Facilities

- As of December 21st, testing is currently ongoing or has been completed **in 1,321 facilities**. This includes schools and childcare facilities.
- **c.37,721 tests** have been carried out as part of this mass testing programme.
- Of these, **1,041 detected cases** have been identified. This is a detected rate of 2.8%.



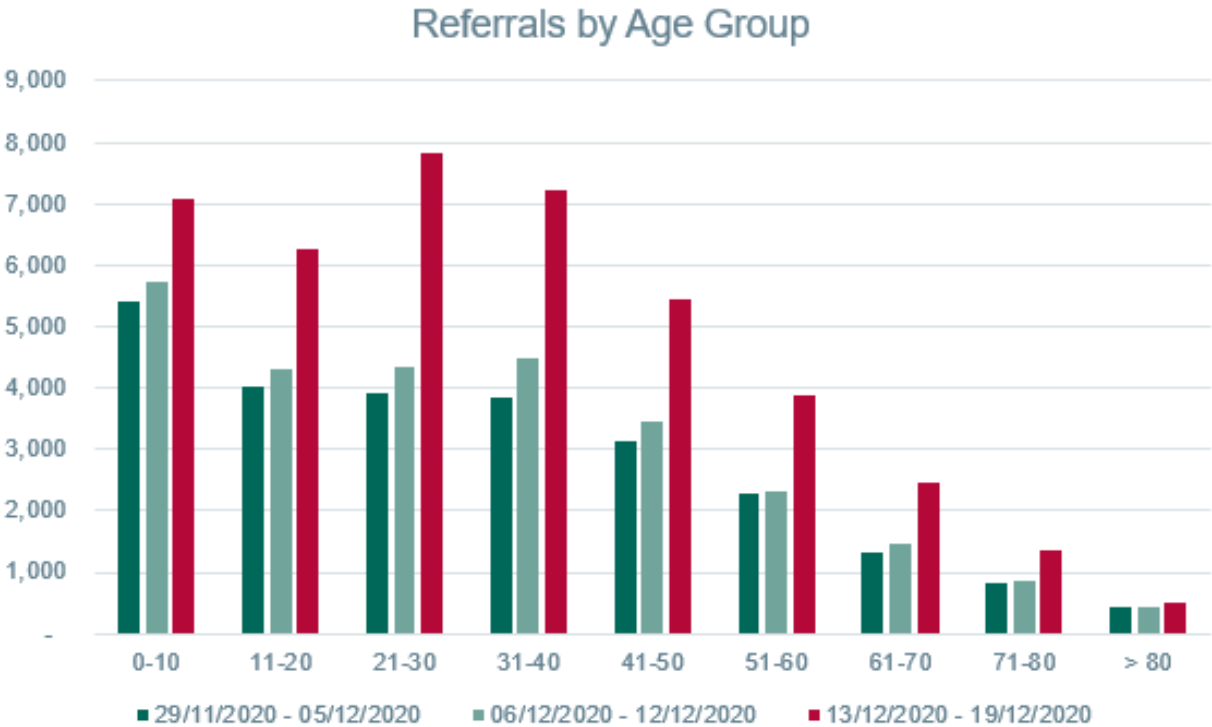
3) Test and Trace Trends



Total Count of Referrals by Age Group

Referrals by Age Group

- The graph shows referrals by age group over the past three weeks.
- This graph gives an insight into the demand for testing of symptomatic individuals and their age profile.
- In the last week, the age groups with the highest percentage of referrals were;
 - the **21-33 age group**, which made up **18.6%** of all referrals. The detected rate of this age group was 7.3%.
 - the **31-40 age group** which made up **17.2%** of all referrals. The detected rate of this age group was 7.3%.



Community Demand over the past 6 weeks

38%



Last week saw a c.**38%** increase from the previous week in demand for testing.

51%



Demand for testing in the community has increased by **51%** in the last six weeks.

In parallel the following testing programmes are ongoing which are not presented in the graph;

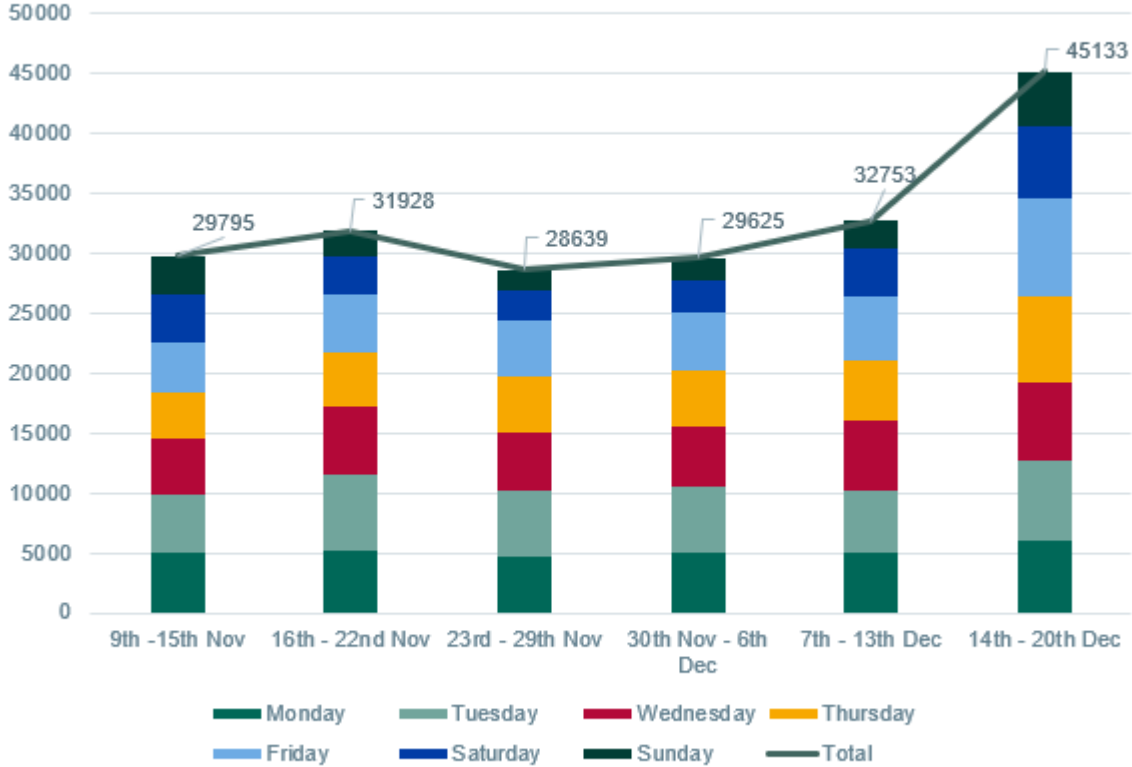


Tested staff in Residential Care Facilities (tested over 16,429 staff from 14th – 20th December)



Tested staff at Food Plants (tested over 4,806 Food Plant Staff from 14th – 20th December)

Community Testing Demand



Contact Tracing Volumes over the past 6 weeks



103%



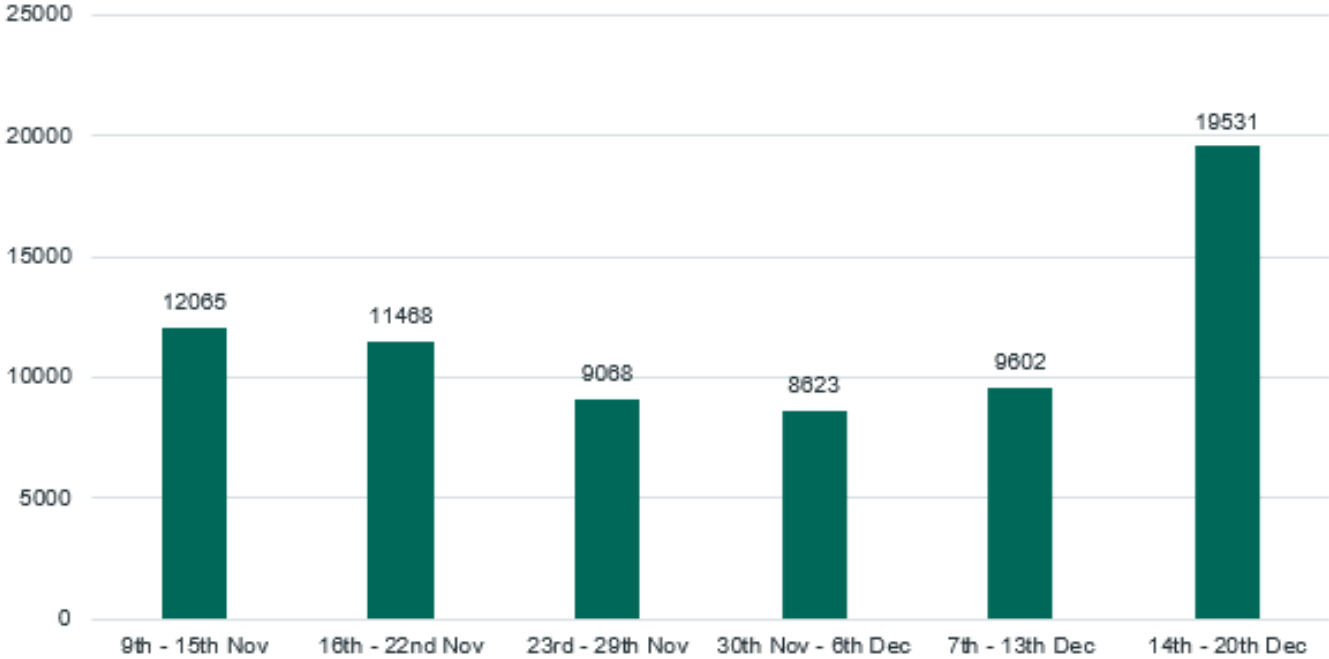
The volume of calls has increased by **103%** in the last week.

62%



The last six weeks saw a c.**62%** increase in the number of contact tracing calls made.

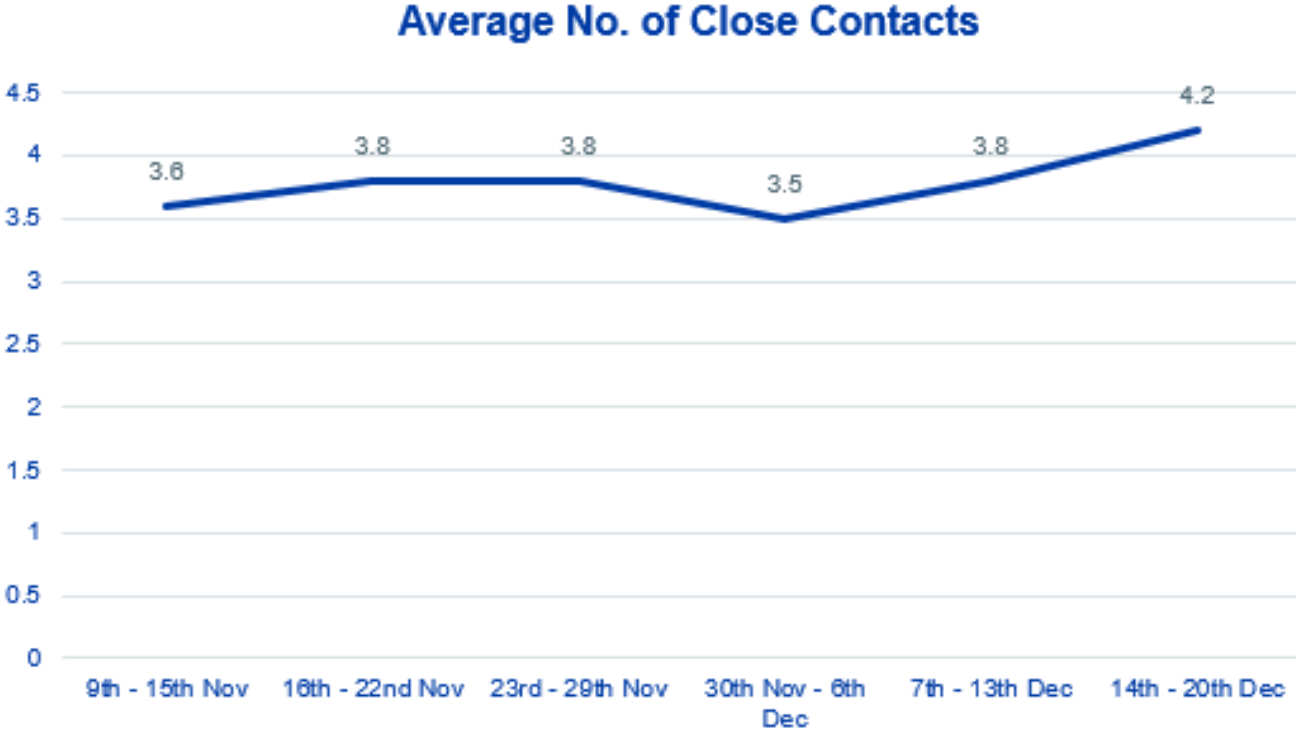
Total Contact Tracing Calls



Close Contacts Trend

Average number of Close Contacts Trend.

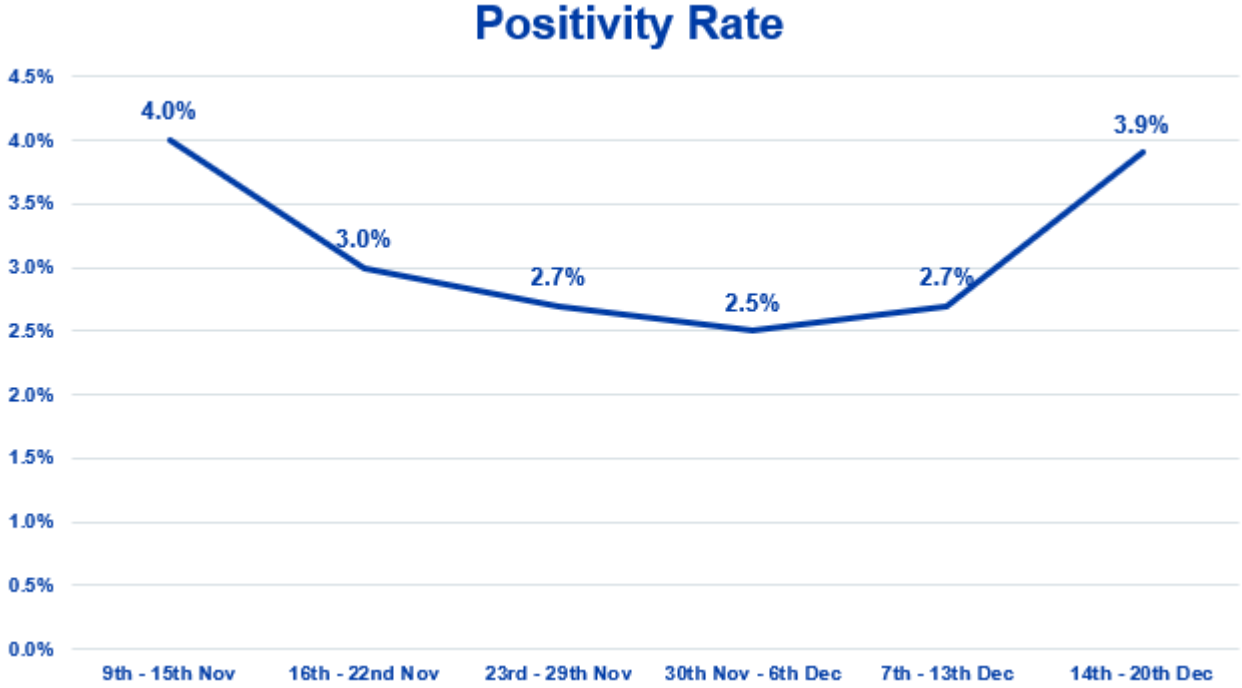
- There remains little change in the number of close contacts per person in the last six weeks, however a notable increasing trend in the last 3 weeks ranging from 3.5 – 4.2 close contacts per person.
- Last week, the average number of **close contacts per person is 4.2**.



Positivity Trend

Positivity Rate

- This week **the positivity rate has increased to 3.9%.**
- This is an increase of 1.2% from the previous week, where the positivity rate was 2.7%.



4) Enhancements to the test and trace system



Recruitment across Swabbing and Contact Tracing

Recruitment

The HSE is focusing efforts and increasing resources across our test and trace system, in both swabbing and contact tracing.

Swabbing

As of 21st December, 631 community swabbers have been hired and on-boarded so far, this plus the deployed staff gives access to c.1,000 swabbers.

Contact Tracing

As of 21st December, c. 748 staff have been hired and retained for contact tracing. In addition, we have a further 37 staff from Revenue Commissioners (23) and 14 from HSE. This brings total contact tracing staff to 785.

There will be no onboarding planned for week commencing 21st and 28th December 2020 due to scarcity of resources to hire in the run up to Christmas.



Christmas and the Test and Trace System

- Test and Trace will continue to operate over the coming Christmas and New Year's period (24th of December – 4th of January).
- This includes referral, swabbing, laboratory, results communication and contact tracing activity.
- Serial Testing activity will also continue for Residential Care Facilities for older persons and Food Production facilities. There is an agreed testing schedule which accounts for operational periods over the Christmas break.



GP Out of Hours

GP out of hours service are open to arrange COVID-19 testing this Christmas and New Year

- The HSE and IMO have worked together with GP Cooperatives to agree a new set of measures enhancing the COVID-19 assessment and referral process for GP out of hours service, commencing on 21st December until the end of March 2021.
- We encourage people to contact their GP Out of Hours Service immediately for a COVID-19 test referral if they develop symptoms in the evening, weekends or on a public holiday. Both the GP assessment and COVID-19 test are free of charge.



Conclusion



Our median end to end turnaround time is **2.1 days for detected cases** and **1.5 days for not detected cases**.



In the last week, we have seen an increase in demand for community testing, by approximately **38%** from this time last week.



As of 21st of December, there are over **2,213,757** lab results completed to date.