

HSE COVID-19

**Testing & Contact Tracing Update
30th of December 2020**



1) Performance of the Testing Infrastructure



Testing and Contact Tracing Headlines – 2,316,611 tests completed to date



1.8 days

Community - median end to end for a not detected result



2.8 days

Community - median end to end for a detected result



97,690+

Total Swabs last week



102,600+

Total number of laboratory tests last week



44,710+

Total number of Contact Tracing calls made last week

Note: The above TaT and volume metrics refer to the seven day date range from 21st – 27th of December.

Performance of the Testing Infrastructure (1/2)

The following metrics and turnaround times refer to the seven days from 21st- 27th of December.

Swabbing

- **c. 97,698 swabs samples** this week – meeting all demand including serial testing.
- This total swabbing figure includes approximately **68,417 taken in the community**, **18,974 taken in hospitals** and **10,307 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 **5 pop up testing site** also in operation (Cleary Centre in Donegal Town, St. Joseph's Limerick, Waterford, Tallaght and Slane)
- Community testing demand has increased by **100%** over the last 6 weeks. There has been a significant increase in community demand of **41% in the last week**.
- **74.5%** of GP referrals are provided with a COVID-19 test appointment within 24 hours.

Laboratories

- Laboratories processed **102,611 tests** across our network of 46 labs.
- The average detected rate over the past week is **approximately 6.6%**, this is an increase of 2.7% since from last week. In most recent days it is above 10%

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 Dublin HSQ.
- Our Contact Tracing teams across Public Health and CTCs completed over **44,718 phone calls** in the last week.
- Close contacts average at **5** per person and rising.

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 21st – 27th of December.

Turnaround

- Swab to lab result for community and acute settings is **22 hours**.
- All calls are completed within **0.9 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 2.8 days for detected results**.
- In the last seven days, in the community, we have delivered a **median end to end turnaround time of 1.8 days for not detected results**.
- In the last 7 days, 6.6% of all tests were detected COVID-19 and approximately 93.4% 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 28th December;



582 facilities have been tested



39,742 tests have been completed



280 detected cases identified (0.70% 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 28th December;



62 facilities have been tested



13,119 tests have been completed



57 detected cases identified (0.43% detected rate).



Monitoring COVID-19 in Schools & Childcare Facilities

School and Childcare Facilities

- As of December 28th, testing is currently ongoing or has been completed **in 1,449 facilities**. This includes schools and childcare facilities.
- **c.41,559 tests** have been carried out as part of this mass testing programme.
- Of these, **1,206 detected cases** have been identified. This is a detected rate of 2.9%.



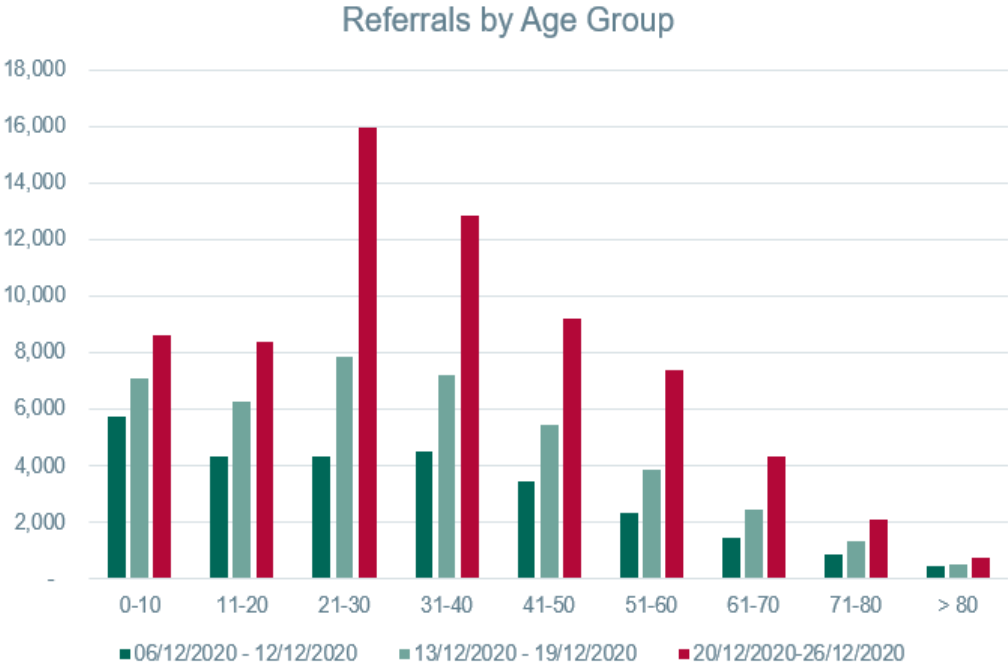
3) Test and Trace Trends



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 **21-30 age group**, which made up **22.9%** of all referrals. The detected rate of this age group was 8.9%.
 - the **31-40 age group** which made up **18.5%** of all referrals. The detected rate of this age group was 7.6%.



Community Demand over the past 6 weeks

41%



Last week saw a c.41% increase from the previous week in demand for testing.

100%



Demand for testing in the community has increased by 100% in the last six weeks.

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

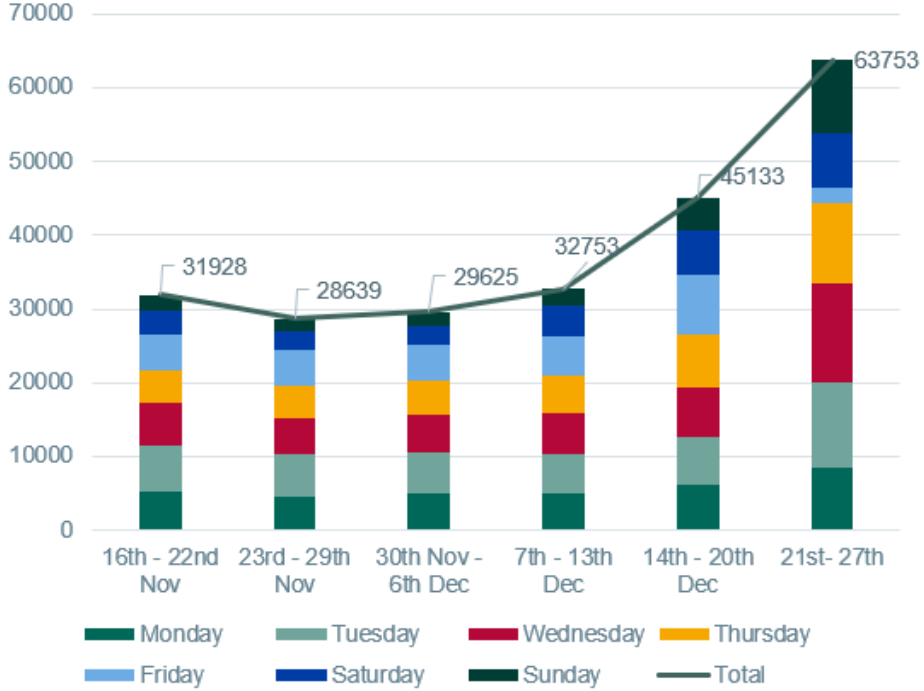


Tested staff in Residential Care Facilities (tested over 8,171 staff from 21st – 27th of December)



Tested staff at Food Plants (tested over 2,136 Food Plant Staff from 21st – 27th of December)

Community Testing Demand



Contact Tracing Volumes over the past 6 weeks

129%



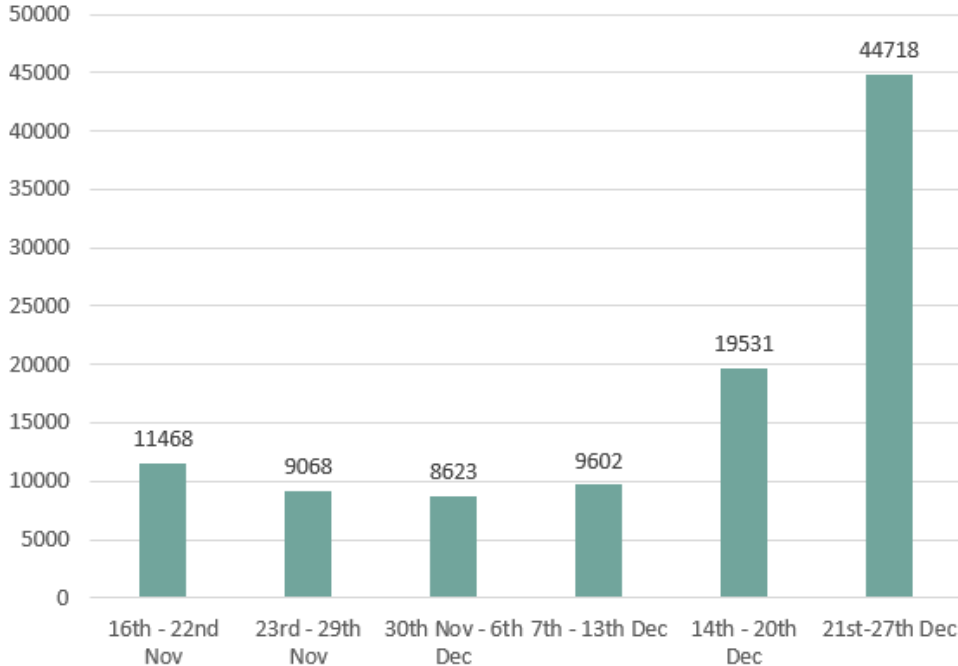
The volume of calls has increased by **129%** in the last week.

290%



The last six weeks saw a c.**290%** increase in the number of contact tracing calls made.

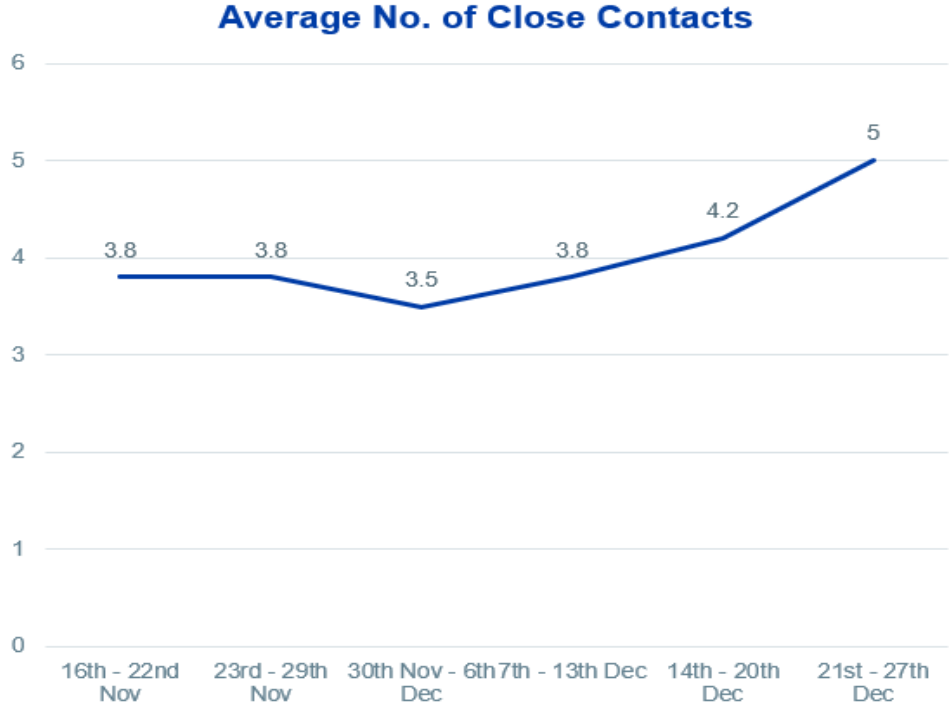
Total Contact Tracing Calls



Close Contacts Trend

Average number of Close Contacts Trend.

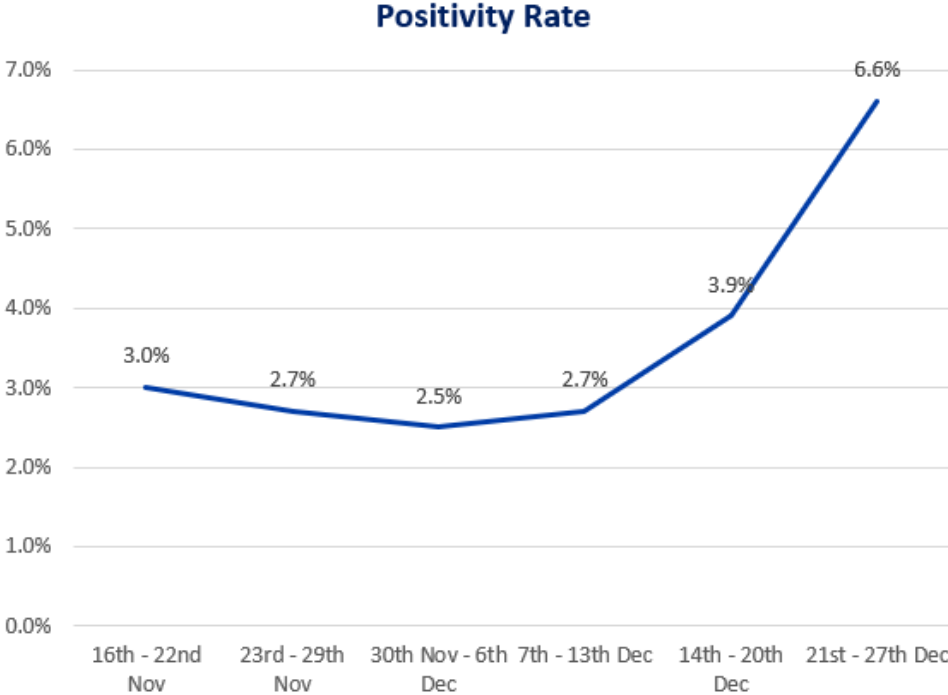
- Last week, the average number of **close contacts per person is 5.**
- The average number of close contacts has been increasing for the last four weeks with some individuals having 10-15 close contacts.



Positivity Trend

Positivity Rate

- This week **the positivity rate has increased to 6.6%.**
- This is an increase of 2.7% from the previous week, where the positivity rate was 3.9%.

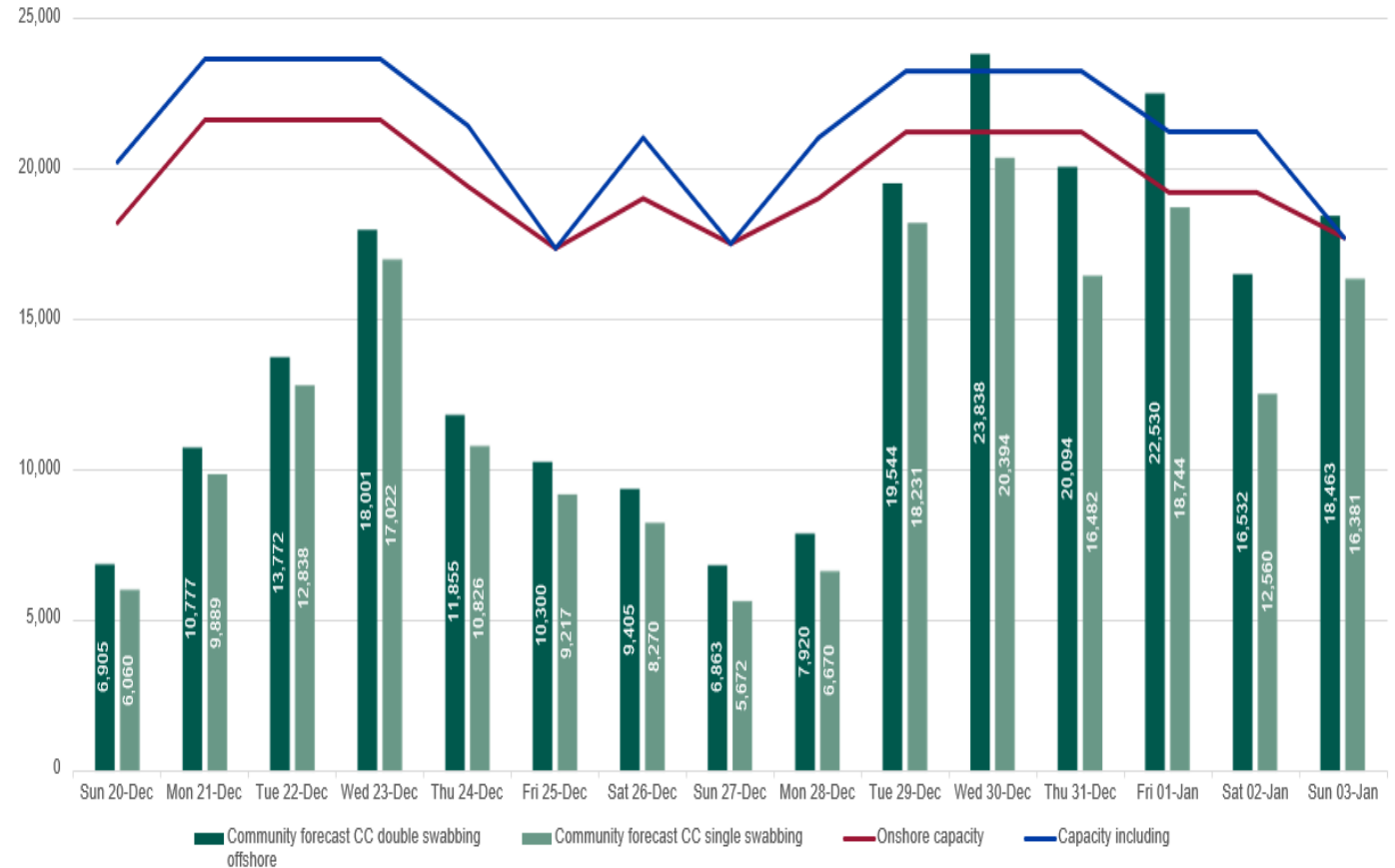


Christmas period forecast – 20th Dec to 4th Jan

Forecast Testing Demand

- At present, forecasts show that community demand for testing will meet and exceed our onshore available lab capacity on particular days.
- We have available offshore lab capacity which can be used to address this surge.
- We are continuously monitoring forecasted testing demand, which changes hourly, and implementing all possible mitigations to ensure end to end turnaround time remains within our target of <3 days.

Community laboratory capacity v demand estimate (20th Dec – 3rd Jan)



*Projected volumes provided by IEMAG
 Community forecast CC double swabbing refers to swabbing of close contacts twice
 Community forecast CC single swabbing refers to swabbing of close contacts once



4) Enhancements to the test and trace system



CCT Book a Test Portal

HSE Book a COVID-19 test

Book a COVID-19 test

Use this service to book a free COVID-19 test if you got a close contact text from the HSE.

If you think you are not the intended recipient of this message, or do not wish to book a test in this manner, you should do nothing and you will get a call from the HSE, which may take a few days.

If you are using this service to book a test on behalf of someone else, answer the questions for the person named in the text message.

Booking your test should take about 3 minutes to complete.

Before you start

Do any of these statements apply to the person named in the text message?

Select all that apply and then click the 'Next' button.

- Previously tested positive for COVID-19
- Had a COVID-19 test within the last 24 hours
- Is caring for someone with COVID-19 who cannot self-isolate
- Is currently not in Ireland
- Is a hospital in-patient
- None of the above

We use the information you provide here to book your test and understand the spread of COVID-19. By using this service you agree to the HSE using this information for these purposes. Your personal details will not be shared for any other purpose.

[Next](#)

HSE Book a COVID-19 test

Avoid other people

Before we book your COVID-19 test, we need to remind you to avoid other people. There is a chance you have COVID-19 and could pass it on.

What you need to do depends on whether you have symptoms of COVID-19 or not.

Common symptoms of COVID-19 include:

- a fever (high temperature - 38 degrees Celsius or above)
- a new cough - this can be any kind of cough, not just dry
- shortness of breath or breathing difficulties
- loss or change to your sense of smell or taste - if you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

If you have symptoms

Self-isolate (stay in your room) if you have symptoms of COVID-19.

Stay indoors and completely avoid other people. If you live with other people, stay on your own in a room with a window you can open.

If you do not have symptoms

Restrict your movements (stay at home) if you do not have symptoms of COVID-19.

This means staying at home as much as possible to avoid contact with other people. This is sometimes called quarantine.

I understand what I need to do now to stop the spread of COVID-19.

[Next](#)

HSE Book a COVID-19 test

Thank You

Thank you for giving us your details.

What happens next:

If we have all the information we need, you will receive a test appointment text message within one day.

If we need further information, a contact tracer will call you, which may take a few days.

Remember:

- If you have symptoms, self-isolate (stay in your room).
- If you do not have symptoms, restrict your movements (stay at home).

More information:

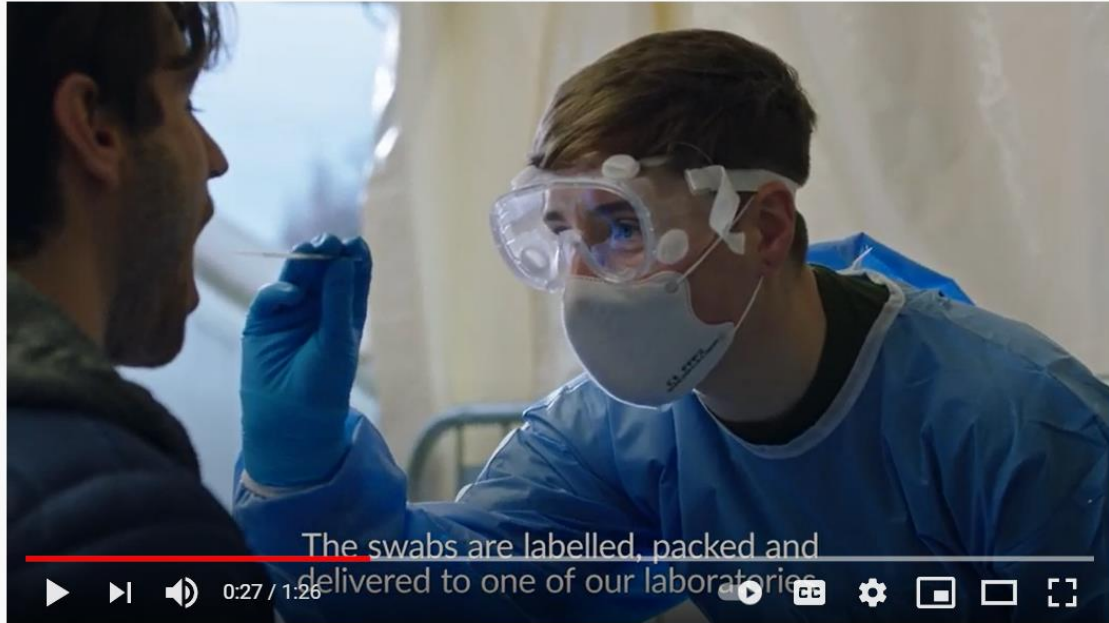
- What you need to do as a close contact.
- What happens during the COVID-19 test.
- Contact the HSE.

We may phone you to provide you with further advice about COVID-19 or to talk to you about your experience of using this online service.

Book a COVID-19 Test Online

- Close contacts of a positive case can now book a test online.
- Once a test is booked, you will receive a test appointment text message within one day.
- For people who don't want to book online or don't complete the online booking, our contact tracers will call you instead.

HSE Test and Trace Video



HSE COVID-19 Test and Trace is open this New Year's Day

When you need a test for COVID-19, our health service works hard to make this as quick and safe as possible for you.

Our new Test and Trace video sets out step by step how test and trace works from swabbing, testing to contact tracing.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HkRFa_GmNaU&feature=youtu.be

Recruitment

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, 23 from Revenue Commissioners and 14 from the HSE. This brings total contact tracing staff to 785.



Christmas and the Test and Trace System

- Test and Trace will continue to operate as normal during **New Years Day** and this weekend. This includes referral, swabbing, laboratory, results communication and contact tracing activity.
- On **Christmas Day** all centres were open for a minimum of **5 hours** – operational performance was very good and as expected fewer people requested tests on Christmas day and St. Stephens Day (referrals were lower).
- Our **turnaround times** have been **maintained** despite the increase in demand for testing, the rise in positivity and the no. of close contacts among positive cases.
- The number of **unanswered calls** also impacts on throughput and we have found that over Christmas we have **less people picking up our calls**. Anecdotally, we are also finding that people on +0044 numbers are not answering our calls. In one centre alone on 27th December, there were **three unanswered call for every successful call made**. This pattern is continuing this morning across all CTCs.
- 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.



Conclusion



Our overall (acute, community and serial) median end to end turnaround time is **2.5 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 **41%** from this time last week.



As of 28th of December, there are over **2,316,611** lab results completed to date.