

HSE COVID-19 Testing and Tracing Briefing

21st of October, 2021

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Testing Volumes and Turnaround Times

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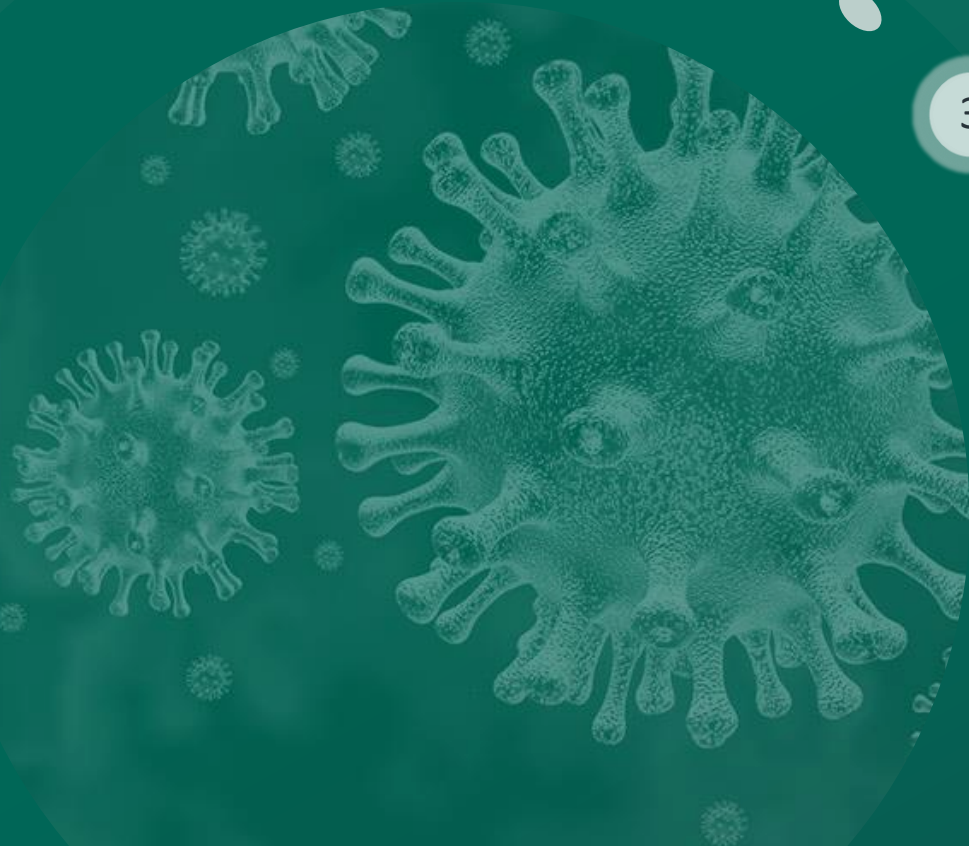
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Testing and Tracing Headlines



1.0 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. 117,386

Total number of community swabs taken last week



c. 154,558

Total number of laboratory tests last week



c.23,994

Calls made to close contacts last week

Note: The above TaT and volume metrics refer to the seven day date range from 13th – 19th October

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 13th – 19th October



Total Community Referrals

- There were **c.131,637 community referrals** over the seven-day period. (18% in comparison to last week)
- This referral figure includes
 - **271 International travel referrals** (↓35% in comparison to last week)
 - **88,129 referrals** from the **self-referral portal** (16.1% in comparison to last week)
 - **14,484 GP referrals** (8.33% compared to last week)



Total Community Swabs Completed

- During this time period, there were c. **117,386** swabs were completed.



Laboratory Tests and Detected Rate

- During this time period, there was c. **154,558** lab tests reported in community, private and acute settings over the past week.
- The average detected rate over the past week is **approximately 9.6% - Community and Acute and Serial blended. Community on its own is 11.8%**

Contact Tracing

- Over the last 7 days, of those tested with close contacts, the average number **close contacts was 3.4 per person.**
- From 13th – 19th October, a total of 13,537 calls were completed to inform individuals of their detected COVID-19 test result.
- From 13th – 19th October, contact tracing was completed for c. 13,416 individuals that had a confirmed COVID-19 case
- In addition, c. 23,994 calls were made to close contacts.





Test and Trace Turnaround Times

The following metrics and turnaround times refer to the 7 day date range from 13th – 19th October.

1.0 day



Median end to end
turnaround time for a **not
detected** result

2.2 days



Median end to end
turnaround time for a
detected result

21 hrs



Combined median time from
swab to lab result in
community and acute setting

14.5 hrs

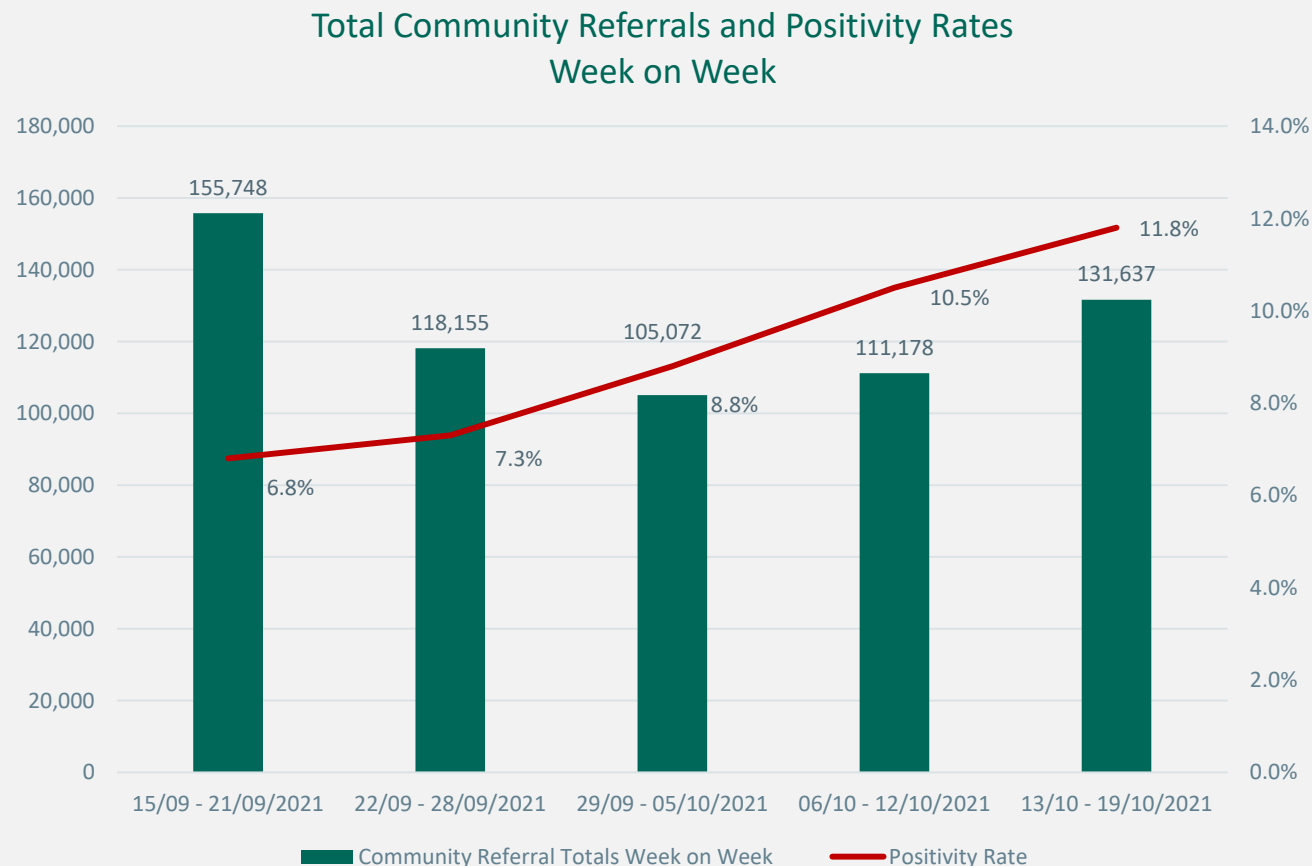


Median time taken to
**complete contact tracing
calls**



Total Community Referrals

- From the 13th – 19th October, there were c.131,637 Community Referrals (including walk-ins, international travel and self-referrals)
- This weekly total has **increased by 18%** in comparison to the same time-period last week (06th – 12th October; c.111,178 total referrals)
- Positivity has risen to 11.8% in community and 9.6% overall. Some counties have positivity as high as 19%
- Referrals have risen in all ages groups



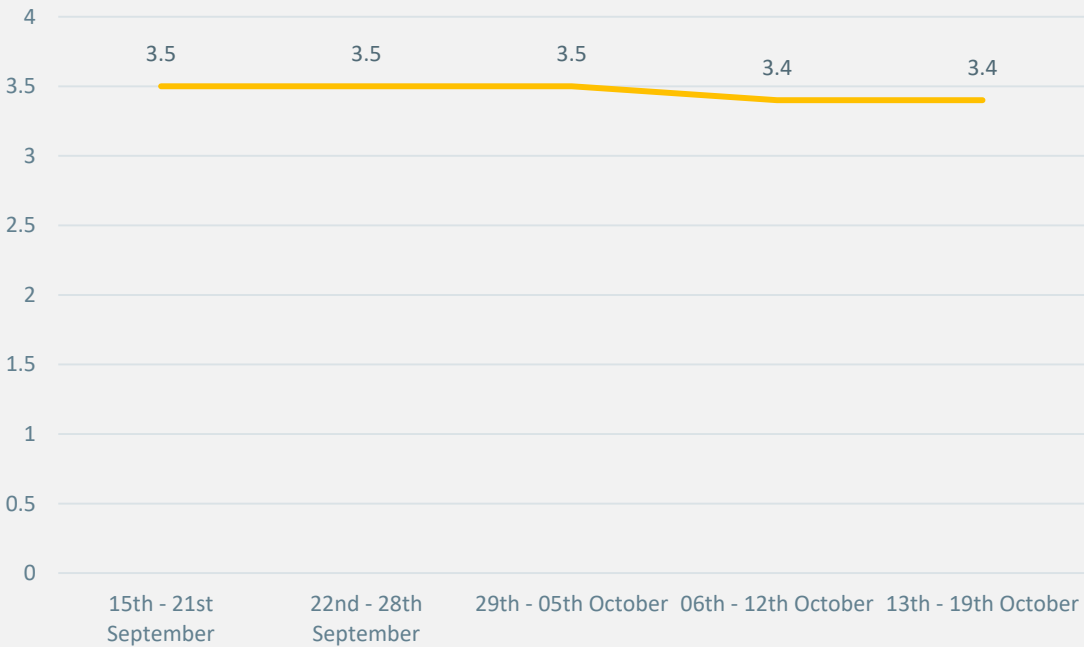


Close Contacts Trend

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



The source of the close contact trend graph is the IIS Test and Trace Dashboard

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 within the circular frame.

1. Antigen Testing



Antigen Testing Programmes and Antigen Portal

1. Antigen Testing in Early childhood and third level

- The antigen programme for Early childcare and 3rd level education has been running since 26th July.
- A total of 29 sites have been involved in the programme -16 sites have finished, 12 sites are currently active and 1 more college is commencing again next week. All positives detected were confirmed by PCR
- All sites are now reporting their results on the online system.

2. Antigen staff self-testing in Residential Care Facilities (RCFs)

- A staff self-testing programme in Residential Care Facilities (RCFs) for Older Persons has been developed and will run for 4 weeks initially in facilities in Galway, Mayo, Roscommon, Wicklow and Dublin North City and County.
- Its aim is to test the operational feasibility of using antigen self-testing within this sector as a tool to support case finding and potentially contribute to the reduction in the number or size of outbreaks.
- Over 3,500 results have been reported with 2 positives.
- So far there have been no outbreaks have occurred in facilities where we have had antigen testing ongoing

3. Antigen Testing Results Portal

- To date **16,662** results have been entered with an average of 758 per day for the last 7 days.
- Of these, there were **11,646 positive antigen tests reported**, 64% of this cohort were fully vaccinated.
- There was a total of **5,016 negative tests reported**, of these 94% of this cohort were fully vaccinated.



Feedback

- **Ease of use** – Tests are very easy to use at home; information provided was very useful and easy to understand
- Consensus that nasal swabs for self-tests are **much less unpleasant** than nasopharyngeal swabbing
- Participation rates varied among sites from very high (100%) to quite low in others (15-20%)
- The roll-out of the **online system** for reporting results has been a **key enabler** for the HSE Antigen Programme and has reduced the administrative burden of tracking and collating results
- An Antigen programme of limited size and duration can be **stepped up relatively quickly** with the process and resources developed to date



Challenges

- Significant administrative burden in signing up participants, distributing test kits and following up with reminders to continue testing or report results
- Large scale roll-out of the Antigen Testing Programme requires significant planning and resources in relation to distribution logistics, communications and operational management

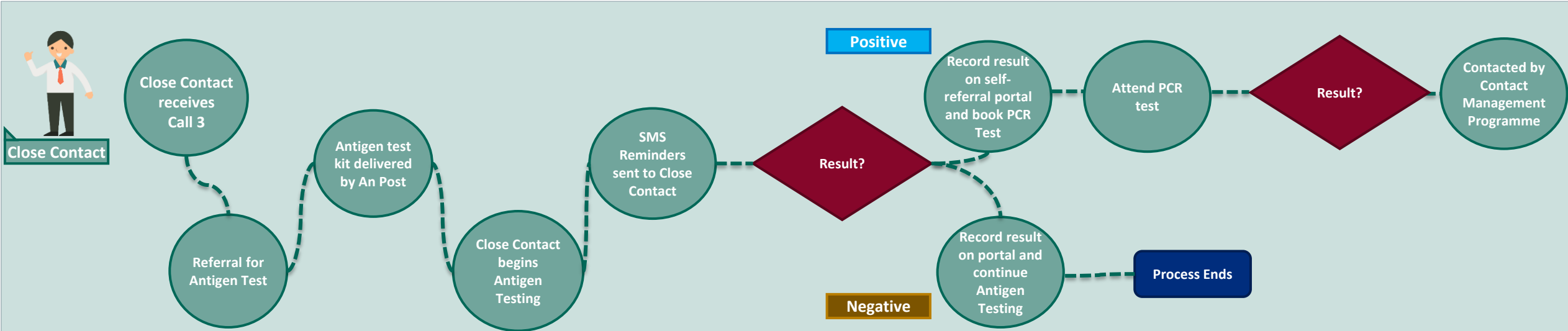


Vaccinated Close Contact - Antigen Testing

- The HSE is working towards ensuring that close contacts who are fully vaccinated and asymptomatic will receive antigen test kits which they can do at home
- The HSE hopes to have this programme in place by the end of next week
- Contact Tracing teams will identify those close contacts who will require a PCR test and those that can be provided with antigen test to do at home
- Antigen tests will be delivered directly to people's home and they will be required to do the tests every second day
- People will be asked to report their antigen results on the HSE website – if their antigen test is positive, they will need to book a PCR test. If they develop symptoms at any time they need to adhere to public health advice, self-isolate and book a PCR test.



Close Contact Asymptomatic Pathway for Antigen Testing



Patient Journey: Antigen

A large, semi-transparent circular graphic on the left side of the slide. Inside the circle is a detailed, light-colored illustration of several coronavirus particles. The particles are spherical with a textured surface and numerous spike-like protrusions (glycoprotein spikes) extending from them. Some particles are larger and more prominent, while others are smaller and scattered in the background.

4. Testing Programmes



Serial Testing in Nursing Homes

In Cycle 17 (Commenced 11th October);



105 facilities have been tested

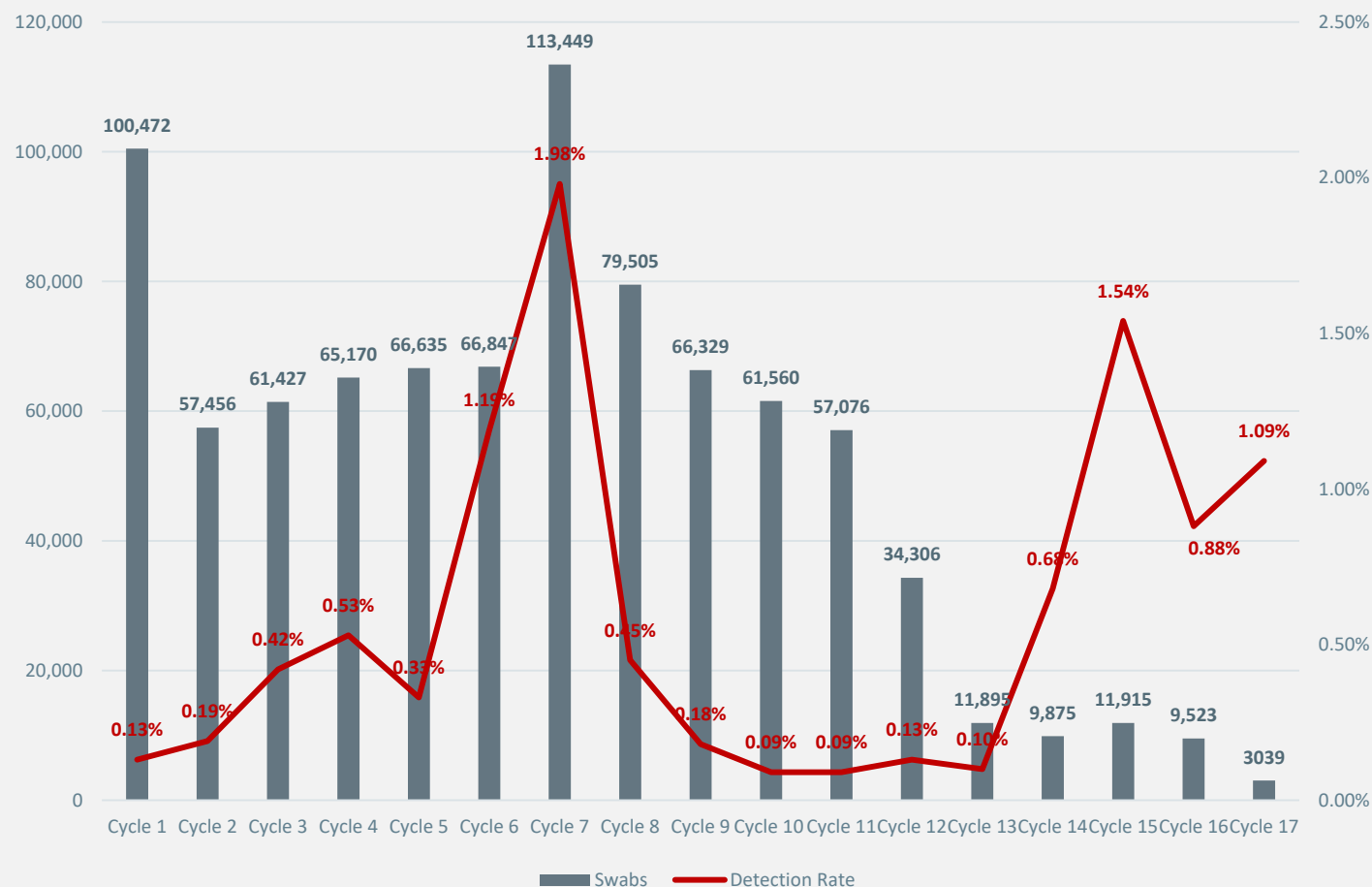


3,039 tests have been completed



33 detected cases identified
(1.09% detected rate)

Swabs completed and detection rate per cycle in Nursing Homes





Serial Testing in Mental Health Facilities

In Cycle 10 (Commenced 11th October);



3 facilities have been tested

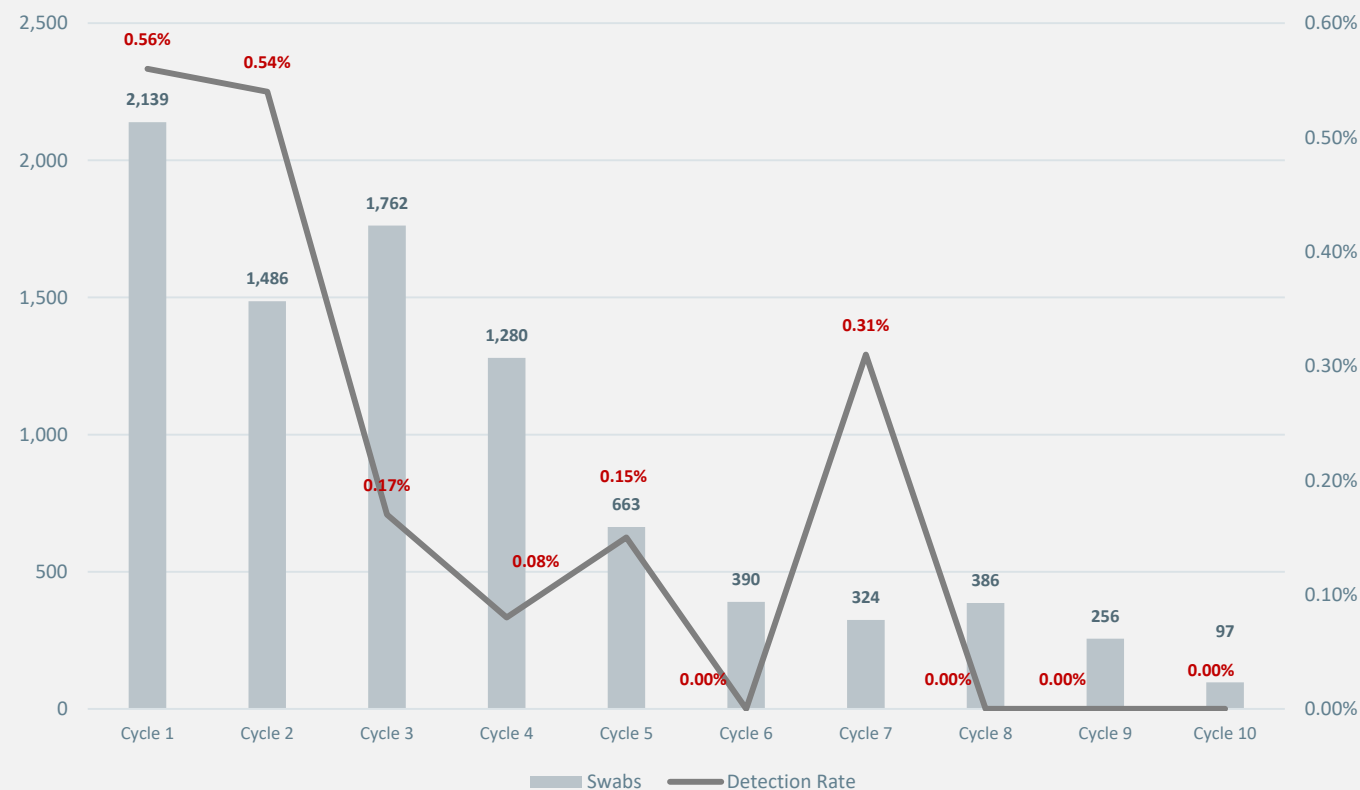


97 tests have been completed



0 detected cases identified
(0.00% detected rate)

Swabs completed and detection rate per cycle in Mental Health facilities





Serial Testing in Food Production Facilities

In Cycle 14 (Commenced 20th September);



71 facilities have been tested

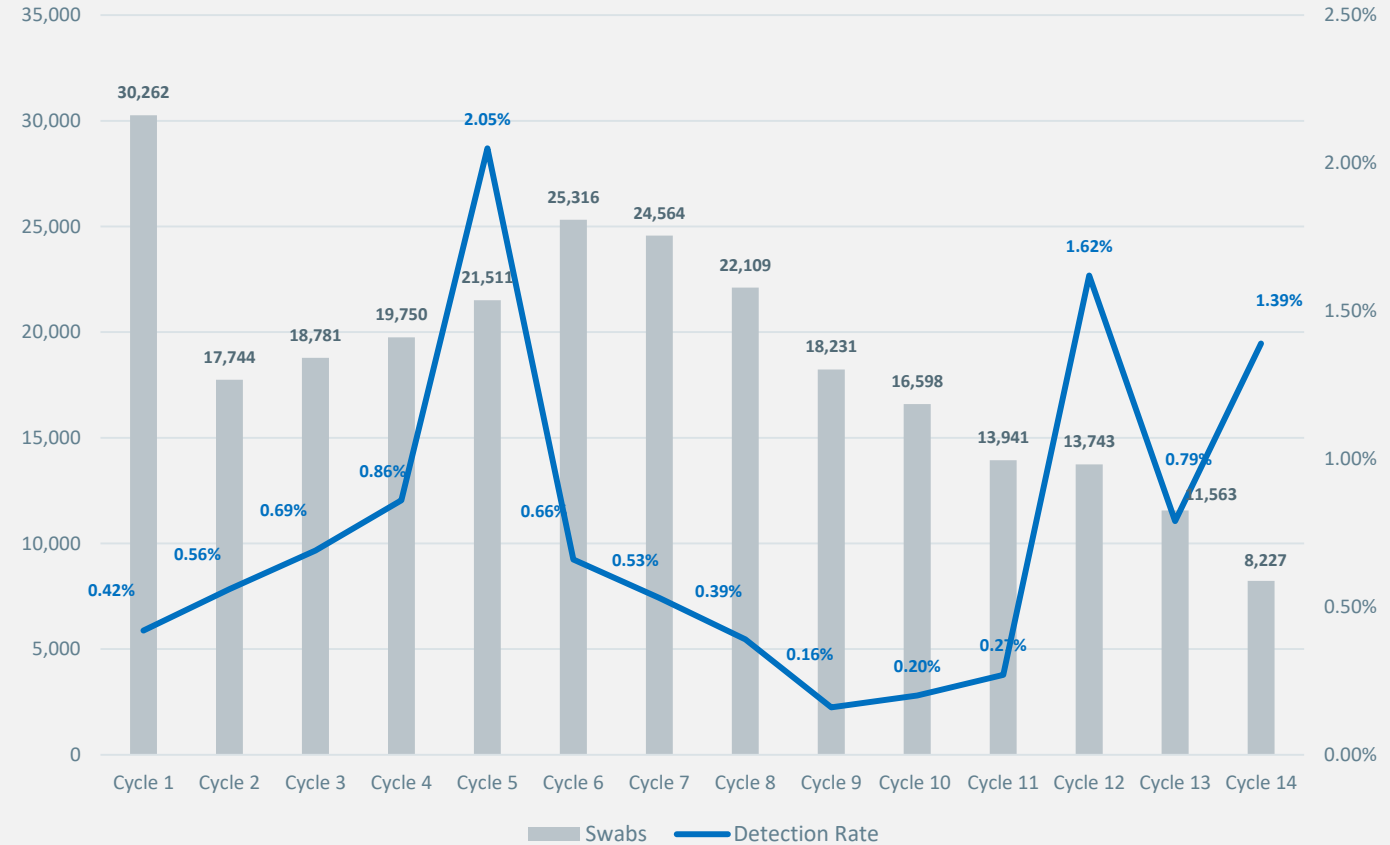


8,227 tests have been completed



114 detected cases identified
(1.39% detected rate)

Swabs completed and detection rate per cycle in Food Production facilities



A large, semi-transparent circular graphic on the left side of the slide. Inside the circle is a detailed, light-colored illustration of several coronavirus particles, showing their characteristic spherical shape and numerous spike-like projections (resembling a crown or 'corona'). The background of the slide is a solid dark teal color.

5. Recruitment



Recruitment as of 18th October

784

Staff supporting Contact Tracing

Of these 784 staff;
752 of these staff have been hired
and retained as part of
dedicated workforce to support
the contact tracing function

The remaining 32 staff are redeployed
from the HSE and other Public Service
Roles

