HSE COVID-19

Testing & Contact Tracing Update
29th of October 2020
1) Performance of the testing infrastructure
Testing and Contact Tracing Headlines – Over 1,579,944 tests completed to date

Note: The above TaT and volume metrics refer to the seven day date range from Tuesday 20th October – Monday 26th October.
Performance of the Testing Infrastructure (1/2)

The following metrics and turnaround times refer to the seven days from 20th October – 26th October.

Swabbing
- We took c.112,156 swabs samples this week – meeting all demand including serial testing.
- This total swabbing figure includes approximately 72,307 taken in the community, 20,208 taken in hospitals and 19,641 taken as part of serial testing of staff in food plants and healthcare workers in residential care facilities.
- In the last week, we have had 33 testing centres in operation, with 6 pop up testing sites also in operation.
- Community testing requirements have increased by a factor of 1.3 over the last 6 weeks. An increase has also been seen of 3.5% in the last week.
- 93% of GP referrals result in swabs being taken the same day or next day.

Laboratories
- Laboratories processed 111,660 tests across our network of 46 labs.
- The average detected rate over the past week is approximately 5.7%, this is a decrease of 1.6% detected since this time last week.
- Lab demand on particular days this week was in excess of 17,000 tests.

Contact Tracing
- There are contact tracing centres open in Galway, UCD, Dublin, Limerick and Cork
- Our Contact Tracing teams across Public Health and CTCs completed over 41,552 phone calls in the last week.
- Close contacts average at 3.9 per person –
- Incorrect phone numbers being provided and multiple calls being required to get through to people is adding to CTC workload and impacting turnaround.
Performance of the Testing Infrastructure (2/2)

The following metrics and turnaround times refer to the 7 day date range from 21st – 27th of October.

Turnaround

• Swab to lab result for community and acute settings is **1.1 days**
• All contact tracing is completed within **1.8 days (median)** – including all complex cases. This has reduced to **1 day over the last three days**.
• In the last seven days, we have delivered a **median turnaround time from referral to communication of result in community settings of 2 days**.
• It is important to note that approximately 93.8% of all tests that are processed are not detected and in the last 7 days, approximately 6.9% of all tests were detected. Process and system improvements are being made continuously to meet increasing capacity requirements, to improve data quality and optimise turnaround times.

Other key messages

The 1.8 days required to complete all contact tracing is due to a number of factors;

• There is an increase in the number of calls being made, with an increase of 13,926 calls on last weeks' volumes.

The median has though reduced to **1 day in recent days**.
2) Testing Programmes
Cycle 4 of the serial testing of all staff within residential care facilities commenced on 14\textsuperscript{th} of October.

In Cycle 4;

- **555 facilities have** been tested to date
- **30,404** tests have been completed
- **182 detected cases identified** (0.60% detected rate).
Serial Testing of Staff in Food Production Facilities

Cycle 2 of the serial testing of staff within food processing facilities commenced on 12th of October.

In Cycle 2;

- **40 facilities have** been tested to date
- **8,440 tests have been completed**
- **72 detected cases identified** (0.85% detected rate).
Monitoring COVID-19 in schools

Monitoring COVID-19 in school settings

- Public health have conducted risk assessments in response to detected cases linked to schools and as of October 28th, **testing is currently ongoing or has been completed in 757 schools.**
- c.18,390 staff/students have been identified and are undergoing Day 0 and/or Day 7 testing.
- Of these, **538 detected cases** have been identified. This is a detected rate of 2.9%.

Schools and COVID-19

Although the transmission of COVID-19 in the school setting is something which is widely spoken about, the data has shown that there where an index case has been identified as associated with a school setting and public health testing is carried out thereafter, to date, there has been a low detected rate of this type of testing. At present the detected rate is at 2.9%. Post Primary is lower at 2%.
3) Demand Management
Community demand over the past 6 weeks

1.3

Demand for testing in the community has increased by a factor of 1.3 in the last six weeks.

3.5%

Last week saw a c.3.5% increase from the previous week in demand for testing.

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

- Tested staff in RCFs for Older Persons (tested over 15,589 staff from 19th – 25th of October)
- Tested staff at food plants (over 4,307 food plant facility staff from 19th – 25th of October)
Our National Contact Tracing centre is receiving an increasing number of calls each week and as the detected rate is also rising each week, this is putting significant pressure on our resources to meet demand.

3.7

The volume of calls has increased by a factor of 3.7 in the last six weeks.

49%

Last week saw a c.49% increase from the previous week in the number of contact tracing calls made.
Level 5
Since Thursday 22nd of October we are now at level 5 of the 'Living with COVID' roadmap.

Although this is a difficult time for the public, retailers and the economy in general, the restrictions associated with level 5 will likely have an impact in combating the upward trends we have seen to date.

Average number of close contacts trend
One of those trends is the average number of close contacts we have seen per detected case. This has remained steady in recent weeks, between 4.5 and 6.

This week we have seen a slight drop, on average those who have received a detected COVID 19 result have had 3.9 close contacts.
Forecast Lab Demand

- High testing volumes are continuing to be forecast for the next seven days.

- We are continuously monitoring this demand, which changes hourly, and implementing all possible mitigations to ensure end to end turnaround time remains within our target of <3 days.

Forecasted lab demand

- Community
- Acute
- RCF Serial Testing
- Food Production Facility Testing
- Outbreak estimate
- Lab Capacity
- Additional Surge Lab Capacity
4) Building agility into the test and trace system
Conclusion

- Our median turnaround time from referral to communication of result, for detected and not detected tests over the past seven days in community settings is **2 days**.

- We have seen an increase in demand for testing, with a factor of **1.3 increase** in community in the last six weeks.

- We have reached over **1,579,944** lab results completed to date as of **27th of October**.

- We continue to build agility in our system to meet the increasing community demand, examples of this include a nationwide recruitment campaign for swabbers and contact tracers, standing up temporary swabbing sites and making process improvements to our end to end test and trace system. Recruitment is a key focus.