

Contact Management Programme
Weekly Public Health Report
1st to 7th March



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Introduction

The Contact Management Programme (CMP) was developed by the HSE to support Departments of Public Health by notifying results to people tested for COVID-19 (or a nominated person), and to identify and manage contacts of people known to have COVID-19. This consists of four steps:

1. Informing the case about their diagnosis.
2. Collecting data on close and complex contacts of the confirmed case.
3. Advising close contacts of appropriate management.
4. Undertaking active follow-up of close contacts which includes daily contact by SMS and referral for SARS-CoV-2 test.

This report provides an analysis of close and complex contacts created on the CovidCare Tracker for the week ending 7th March 2021. Close contacts are defined as any person that the case has been in face to face contact with for longer than 15 minutes in any setting or any person who shared a closed space for longer than 2 hours. A complex contact is a situation where the contact is not a known named individual but relates to, for example, a congregate setting where an individual attended while infectious. Further details on close and complex contacts are provided in Appendix 1.

Testing has been offered to close contacts since the 19th May 2020, apart from those close contacts identified between the 1st and 28th January 2021, during which time testing was suspended due to the surge in test and trace activity. The testing approach for the current reporting period is as follows:

- Test 1 was reinstated on 29th January 2021. From 29th January to 9th February 2021, Test 1 was scheduled on day 5 or the date that the close contact was informed, depending on which was earlier. From 10th February 2021, Test 1 is scheduled as soon as possible after the contact is informed.
- Test 1 attendance and results are reported a week in arrears to improve completeness of data and allow for more meaningful interpretation of results.
- Test 2 was reinstated on February 10th 2021. Test 2 is scheduled on the tenth day since last contact with the confirmed case. Test 2 is requested if Test 1 was earlier than ninth day since last contact with the confirmed case and if the result of Test 1 is “not detected” (negative) or inconclusive.
- Test 2 attendance and results are reported two weeks in arrears to improve completeness of data and allow for more meaningful interpretation of results.

Full details of the changing approaches to testing of close contacts over time can be found in Appendix 3.

Analysis is based on the following data sources as of 8.30am, 8th March 2021:

- CovidCareTracker (CCT) - This is a web based information system developed to support process associated with the Contact Management Programme (CMP).
- Swiftqueue - Software for scheduling appointments.
- Lablink – Electronic repository of all Covid-19 test results.

All data are provisional and are subject to change.

COVID19 IDs are used to link CCT data to Swiftqueue and Lablink data. Where a COVID19 ID does not generate a match, attempts are made to link these data sources using a composite patient identifier encompassing first name, last name, date of birth, and date of test.

The data used to calculate close contact rates per 100,000 population were taken from Census 2016.

Contact tracing for cases and contacts on the CovidCare Tracker is a collaborative effort between staff in the CMP and in regional Departments of Public Health.

CMP Weekly Public Health Update - Key Findings

Number of Cases – 1st to 7th March

The total number of cases managed by the Contact Management Programme during the week ending 7th March was 3,626, a decrease of 22% from the 4,659 cases managed the previous week (ending 28th February). This represents 93% of the cases reported on the CovidCare Tracker between the 1st and 7th March.

Number of Contacts – 1st to 7th March

The number of close contacts reported during the week ending 7th March was 7,662 (161 per 100,000 population), an 18% decrease from the 9,322 captured during the week ending 28th February (196 per 100,000 population). Of the contacts created between the 1st and 7th March 95% (7,261) had been informed of their close contact status at the time of report preparation. The mean number of close contacts per case (including cases with zero close contacts) was 2.1, a decrease from 2.2 the previous week. The number of complex contact episodes decreased by 25% to 1,206 between the weeks ending February 28th and March 7th. The number of complex contact episodes associated with Nursing Homes decreased by 89% between the weeks ending February 28th and March 7th.

Close Contact Attendance and Positivity Rates at Test 1* - 22nd to 28th February

Of the close contacts created between 22nd and 28th February, 5,727 (85%) of those referred for a Test 1* appointment attended for testing. Results were available at the time of report preparation for 5,613 close contacts, 1,341 (23.9%) of whom were positive. Various sub-categories of close contacts were considered; by age, positivity rates remain highest in those 0-4 years (31.3%) and by circumstances of contact, positivity rates remain highest in household close contacts (31.9%), with persistent increases observed **since the reintroduction of testing on the 29th January** across all age groups and circumstances of close contacts. The observed increase in Test 1 positivity rates in close contacts aged 0 to 4 years, 5 to 8 years, and 9 to 12 years (31.3%, 28.7%, and 27.9% respectively) suggests that positivity rates in school-related close contacts are likely to be higher in the coming weeks, than they were before schools closed at Christmas. However, this will need to be interpreted in light of the recent increases observed across all age groups, circumstances, and regions prior to re-opening of schools, and also in the context of positivity in the relevant age cohorts and in other

circumstances of close contact, in particular household, as data on close contacts in schools settings are presented in future reports.

Close Contact Attendance and Positivity Rates at Test 2* - 15th to 21st February

For the close contacts created between 15th and 21st February, 3,433 (79%) of those who were referred for a Test 2* appointment attended for testing. Results were available at the time of report preparation for 3,174 close contacts, 248 (7.8%) of whom were positive. The increase in proportion of Test 2 results that are positive is notable in context of increasing proportion of positive Test 1 results so that overall a much higher proportion of close contacts test positive. As with Test 1, high positivity rates were seen in those aged 0 to 4 years (14.4%), 5 to 8 years (16.2%) and 9 to 12 years (17.5%). Of close contacts where the circumstances of contact were recorded as household 10.7% had a positive Test 2.

**Note: Attendance and results are reported a week in arrears for Test 1 and two weeks in arrears for Test 2 to improve completeness of data and to allow for more meaningful interpretation of results.*

CMP Weekly Public Health Update – 1st to 7th March

Number of Cases Managed on the CovidCare Tracker (CCT) by Week

The total number of cases managed by the Contact Management Programme during the week ending 7th March was 3,626, a decrease of 22% from the 4,659 cases managed the previous week (ending 28th February). This represents 93% of the cases reported on the CovidCare Tracker between the 1st and 7th March. Further information on cases is available via the Health Protection Surveillance Centre.

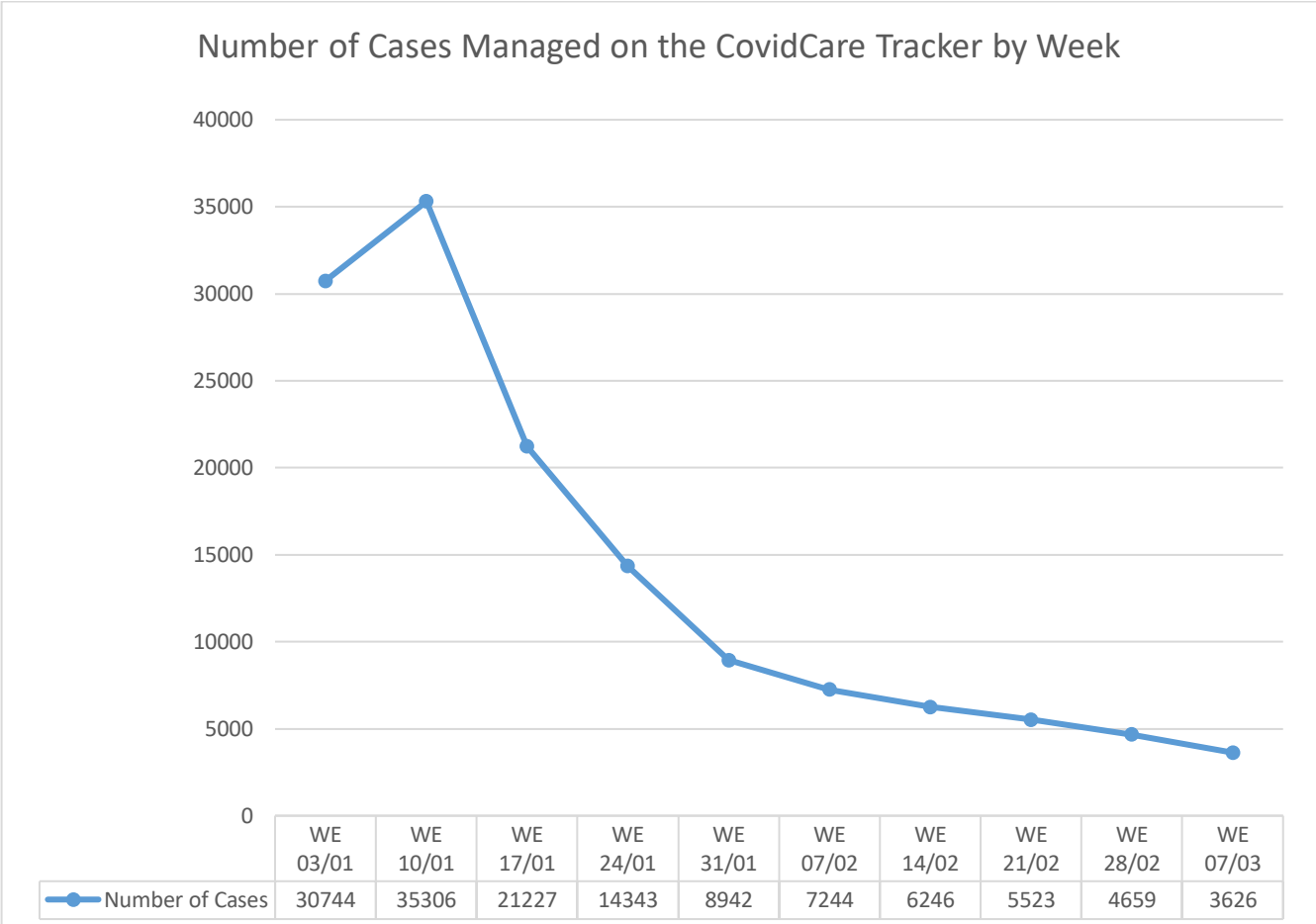


Figure 1.1 - Number of Cases Managed on CCT per Week

Number of Close Contacts by Week

The number of close contacts reported during the week ending 7th March was 7,662 (161 per 100,000 population), an 18% decrease from the 9,332 captured during the week ending 28th February (196 per 100,000 population). To date, 5,192 close contacts have received a phone call, 1,528 used the ‘Request a Test’ self-service online portal for close contacts and 541 were informed by an SMS from the CMP (total 7,261). This represents 95% of the contacts created between the 1st and 7th March.

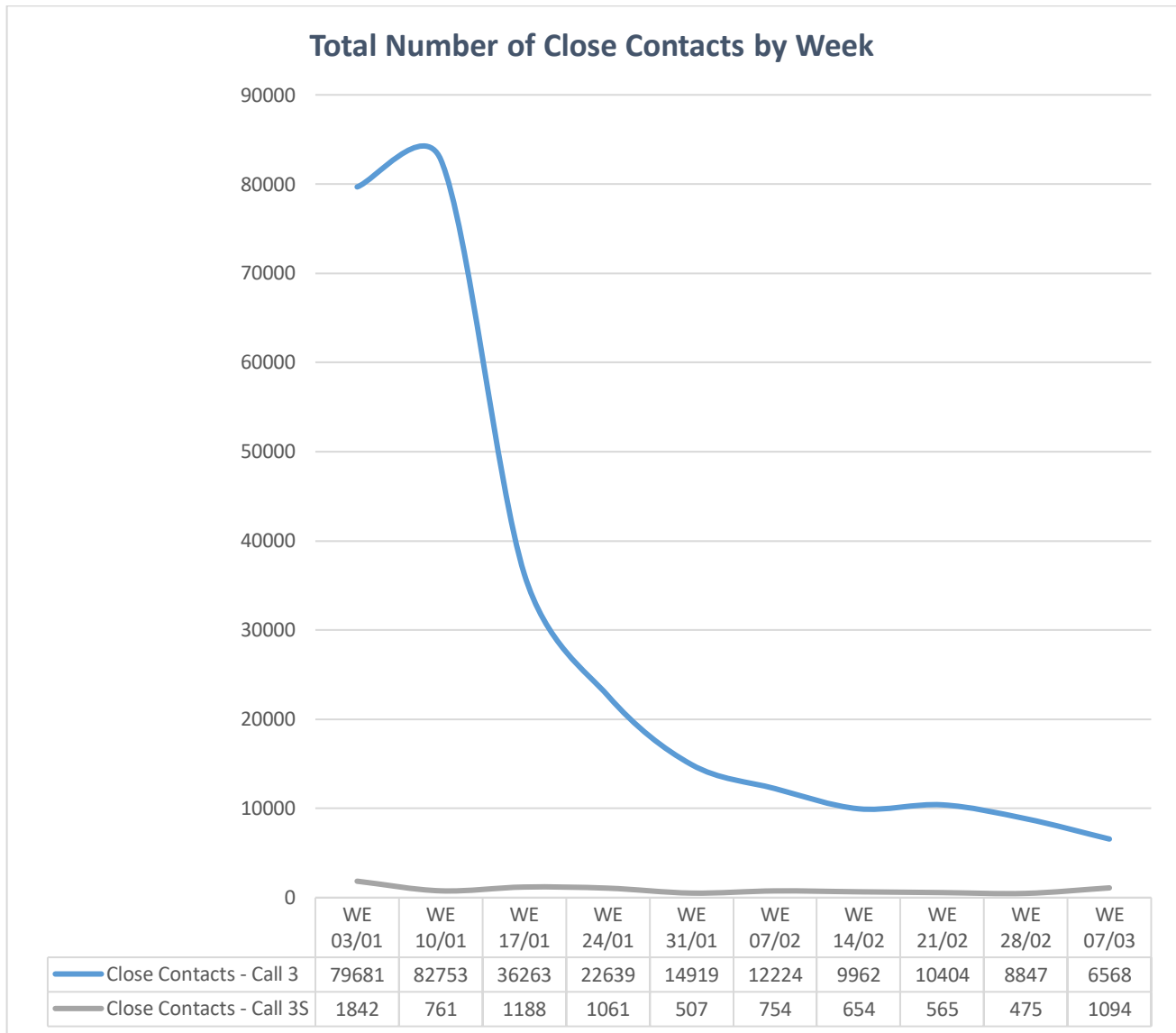


Figure 1.2 - Close Contact Numbers

Note: Close contacts related to flights and certain educational settings (schools and crèches) have been managed via a separate pathway (3S or Settings Contacts) since the 31st of August and the 23rd of September respectively. Further details are provided in Appendix 2.

Attendance at Testing

Of the close contacts created between 22nd and 28th February who were referred for a Test 1* appointment, 5,727 (85%) have attended for testing. Of the close contacts created between 15th and 21st February who were referred for a Test 2* appointment 3,433 (79%) have attended for testing.

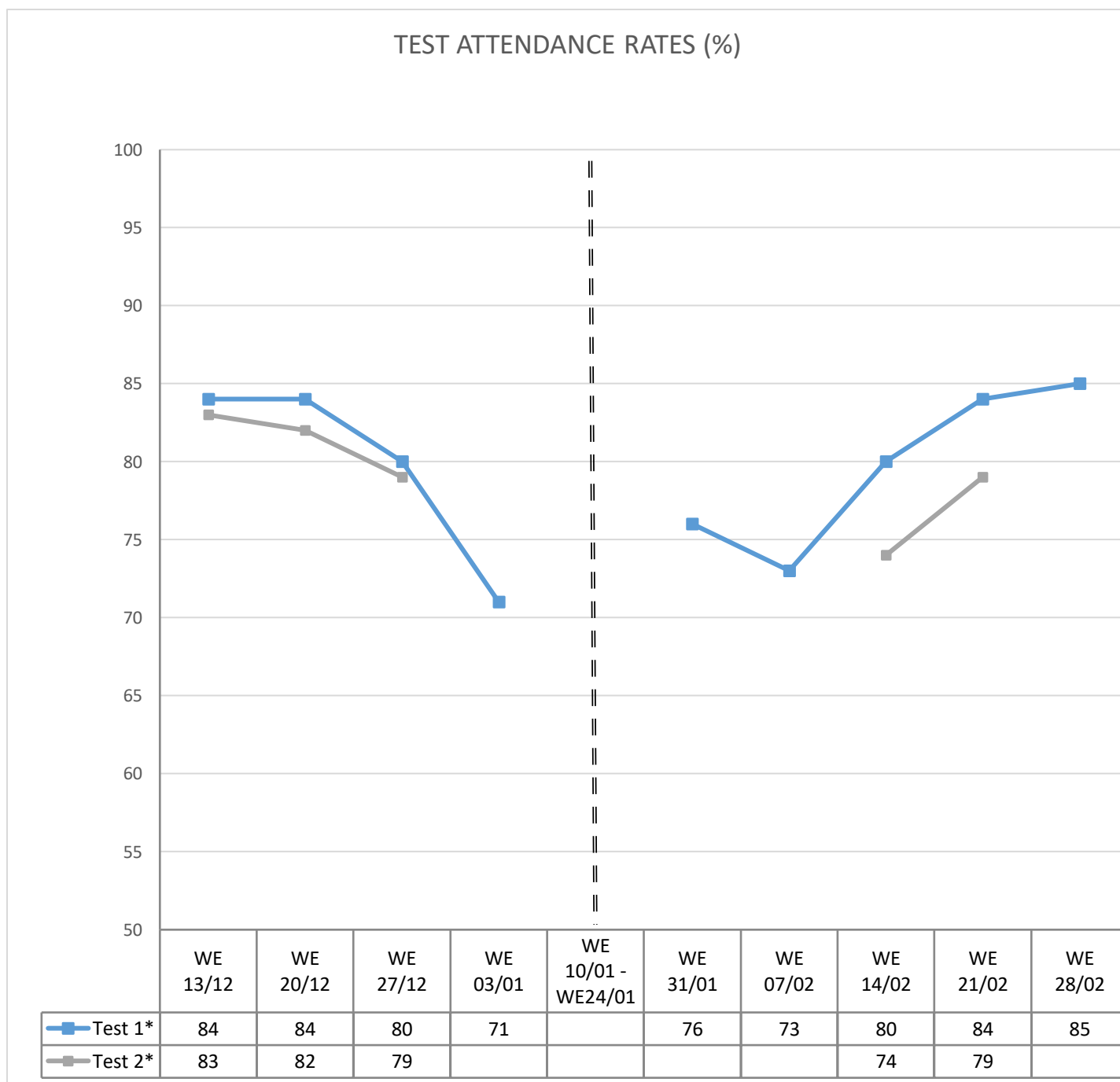


Figure 1.3 - Close Contact Attendance Rates at Test 1* and Test 2*

*Note: Test 1 refers to the Day 0 test for close contacts informed before 5pm on the 23rd December 2020 and from the 10th February 2021. From 5pm on the 23rd December 2020 to the 31st December Test 1 was scheduled on Day 5. Test 2 was suspended from 23rd December. All testing of close contacts was suspended between 1st and 28th January 2021 with Test 1 resuming from 29th January 2021 and Test 2 resuming from 10th February 2021. Attendance and results are reported a week in arrears for Test 1 and two weeks in arrears for Test 2 to improve completeness of data and allow for more meaningful interpretation of results. The break in testing from the 1st to 28th January is illustrated by the dashed lines in Figures 1.3 and 1.4. Further details can be found in Appendix 3.

Close Contact Positivity Rates - Overall

The percent positivity rates over the past ten weeks are shown in Figure 1.4 with the number of results reported to date, number of positive results and positivity rates for Test 1 and Test 2 presented in Tables 1.1 and 1.2 respectively. Positivity rates are based on the results returned to date and are subject to change.

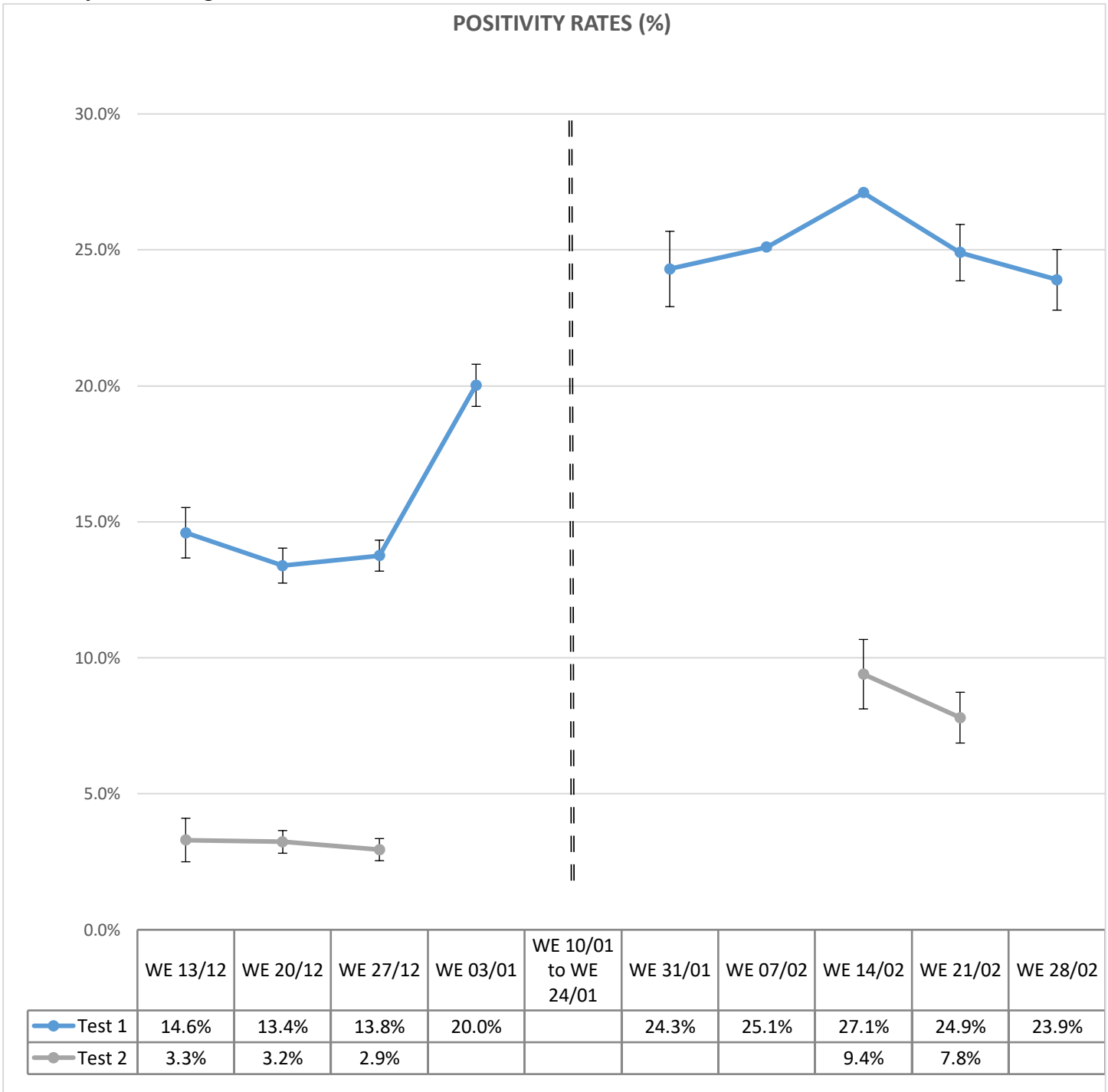


Figure 1.4 - Test 1* and Test 2* Positivity Rates by Week of Contact Creation with 95% Confidence Intervals

**Note: Test 1 refers to the Day 0 test for close contacts informed before 5pm on the 23rd December 2020 and from the 10th February 2021. From 5pm on the 23rd December 2020 to the 31st December Test 1 was scheduled on Day 5. Test 2 was suspended from 23rd December. All testing of close contacts was suspended between 1st and 28th January 2021 with Test 1 resuming from 29th January 2021 and Test 2 resuming from 10th February 2021. Attendance and results are reported a week in arrears for Test 1 and two weeks in arrears for Test 2 to improve completeness of data and allow for more meaningful interpretation of results. The break in testing from the 1st to 28th January is illustrated by the dashed lines in Figures 1.3 and 1.4. Further details can be found in Appendix 3.*

For the close contacts created between 22nd and 28th February, Test 1 results were available at the time of report preparation for 5,613 close contacts, 1,341 (23.9%) of whom had a positive result.

SARS-CoV2 Test 1* Results by Week

Contact Creation Date	Number of Results Reported	Positive Results	Positivity Rate
WE 2712	14131	1944	13.8%
WE 0301	10234	2049	20.0%
WE 1001	N/A	N/A	N/A
WE 1701	N/A	N/A	N/A
WE 2401	N/A	N/A	N/A
WE 3101	3851	934	24.3%
WE 0702	7360	1850	25.1%
WE 1402	6127	1661	27.1%
WE 2102	6692	1668	24.9%
WE 2802	5613	1341	23.9%

Table 1.1 – Test 1 Results by Week of Contact Creation*

Of the close contacts created between 15th and 21st February, Test 2 results were available at the time of report preparation for 3,174 close contacts, 248 (7.8%) of whom had a positive result.

SARS-CoV2 Test 2* Results by Week

Contact Creation Date	Number of Results Reported	Positive Results	Positivity Rate
WE 2012	6870	222	3.2%
WE 2712	6548	193	2.9%
WE 0301	N/A	N/A	N/A
WE 1001	N/A	N/A	N/A
WE 1701	N/A	N/A	N/A
WE 2401	N/A	N/A	N/A
WE 3101	N/A	N/A	N/A
WE 0702	N/A	N/A	N/A
WE 1402	1999	187	9.4%
WE 2102	3174	248	7.8%

Table 1.2 – Test 2 Results by Week of Contact Creation*

**Note: Test 1 refers to the Day 0 test for close contacts informed before 5pm on the 23rd December 2020 and from the 10th February 2021. From 5pm on the 23rd December 2020 to the 9th February Test 1 was scheduled on Day 5. Test 2 was suspended from 23rd December. All testing of close contacts was suspended between 1st and 28th January 2021 with Test 1 resuming from 29th January 2021 and Test 2 resuming from 10th February 2021. Attendance and results are reported a week in arrears for Test 1 and two weeks in arrears for Test 2 to improve completeness of data and allow for more meaningful interpretation of results. Further details can be found in Appendix 3.*

Close Contact Positivity Rates by Age, Region and Circumstances of Contact

The total number of Test 1 results, number of positive results and positivity rate by age group, region and by circumstances of contact are presented for the contacts created between 22nd and 28th February in Tables 1.3 – 1.5. Similar data are presented in Tables 1.6 – 1.8 for Test 2 results for the contacts created between 15th and 21st February. A higher positivity rate has been observed at Test 1 and Test 2 in all age groups, regions and circumstances of contact since the reinstatement of testing in late January 2021.

SARS-CoV2 Test 1* Results by Age Group – Contacts Created 22/02/2021 to 28/02/2021

Age Group	Number of Results Reported	Positive Results	Positivity Rate
0 to 4	463	145	31.3%
5 to 8	334	96	28.7%
9 to 12	348	97	27.9%
13 to 18	551	135	24.5%
19 to 24	881	183	20.8%
25 to 34	811	193	23.8%
35 to 44	713	163	22.9%
45 to 54	678	175	25.8%
55 to 64	533	91	17.1%
65 to 74	198	36	18.2%
75+	103	27	26.2%
Total	5613	1341	23.9%

Table 1.3 – Test 1 Results by Age of Contact – 22/02/2021 to 28/02/2021*

SARS-CoV2 Test 1* Results by Region – Contacts Created 22/02/2021 to 28/02/2021

Region	Number of Results Reported	Positive Results	Positivity Rate
East	2320	614	26.5%
Midlands	550	150	27.3%
Midwest	652	129	19.8%
Northeast	588	154	26.2%
Northwest	167	43	25.7%
South	301	66	21.9%
Southeast	180	32	17.8%
West	629	109	17.3%
Not Recorded	226	44	19.5%
Total	5613	1341	23.9%

Table 1.4 – Test 1 Results by Region – 22/02/2021 to 28/02/2021*

*Note: Test 1 refers to the Day 0 test for close contacts informed before 5pm on the 23rd December 2020 and from the 10th February 2021. From 5pm on the 23rd December 2020 to the 9th February Test 1 was scheduled on Day 5. Test 2 was suspended from 23rd December. All testing of close contacts was suspended between 1st and 28th January 2021 with Test 1 resuming from 29th January 2021 and Test 2 resuming from 10th February 2021. Attendance and results are reported a week in arrears for Test 1 and two weeks in arrears for Test 2 to improve completeness of data and allow for more meaningful interpretation of results. Further details can be found in Appendix 3.

SARS-CoV2 Test 1* Results by Circumstances – Contacts Created 22/02/2021 to 28/02/2021

<i>Circumstances of Contact</i>	Number of Results Reported	Positive Results	Positivity Rate
<i>Household</i>	2801	894	31.9%
<i>Social</i>	952	136	14.3%
<i>Workplace</i>	318	31	9.7%
<i>Childcare Facilities</i>	169	32	18.9%
<i>Primary School***</i>	21	<5	**
<i>Special School</i>	62	<5	**
<i>Third Level Education</i>	<5	<5	**
<i>Healthcare Setting: Patient****</i>	24	<5	**
<i>Healthcare Setting: Staff****</i>	14	<5	**
<i>Sport</i>	14	<5	**
<i>Transport</i>	64	6	9.4%
<i>Other</i>	69	7	10.1%
<i>Not Recorded</i>	1102	225	20.4%
Total	5613	1341	23.9%

Table 1.5 –Test 1* Results by Circumstances of Contact –22/02/2021 to 28/02/2021

SARS-CoV2 Test 2* Results by Age Group – Contacts Created 15/02/2021 to 21/02/2021

<i>Age Group</i>	Number of Results Reported	Positive Results	Positivity Rate
<i>0 to 4</i>	174	25	14.4%
<i>5 to 8</i>	136	22	16.2%
<i>9 to 12</i>	160	28	17.5%
<i>13 to 18</i>	273	21	7.7%
<i>19 to 24</i>	474	36	7.6%
<i>25 to 34</i>	494	27	5.5%
<i>35 to 44</i>	478	35	7.3%
<i>45 to 54</i>	434	26	6.0%
<i>55 to 64</i>	329	18	5.5%
<i>65 to 74</i>	154	9	5.8%
<i>75+</i>	68	<5	**
Total	3174	248	7.8%

Table 1.6 –Test 2* Results by Age of Contact – 15/02/2021 to 21/02/2021

*Note: Test 1 refers to the Day 0 test for close contacts informed before 5pm on the 23rd December 2020 and from the 10th February 2021. From 5pm on the 23rd December 2020 to the 9th February Test 1 was scheduled on Day 5. Test 2 was suspended from 23rd December. All testing of close contacts was suspended between 1st and 28th January 2021 with Test 1 resuming from 29th January 2021 and Test 2 resuming from 10th February 2021. Attendance and results are reported a week in arrears for Test 1 and two weeks in arrears for Test 2 to improve completeness of data and allow for more meaningful interpretation of results. Further details can be found in Appendix 3.

** Unstable positivity rate due to small numbers.

***Schools re-opened on a phased basis from the 1st of March.

**** The majority of patients and staff who are close contacts in a healthcare setting are managed by Infection Prevention and Control and Occupational Health teams off the CCT.

SARS-CoV2 Test 2* Results by Region – Contacts Created 15/02/2021 to 21/02/2021

Region	Number of Results Reported	Positive Results	Positivity Rate
East	1344	107	8.0%
Midlands	289	27	9.3%
Midwest	368	38	10.3%
Northeast	292	22	7.5%
Northwest	130	13	10.0%
South	123	6	4.9%
Southeast	172	8	4.7%
West	353	25	7.1%
Not Recorded	101	<5	**
Total	3172	248	7.8%

Table 1.7 – Test 2* Results by Region – 15/02/2021 to 21/02/2021

SARS-CoV2 Test 2* Results by Circumstances – Contacts Created 15/02/2021 to 21/02/2021

Circumstances of Contact	Number of Results Reported	Positive Results	Positivity Rate
Household	1313	140	10.7%
Social	634	45	7.1%
Workplace	264	<5	**
Childcare Facilities	94	<5	**
Special School	<5	<5	**
Third Level Education	<5	<5	**
Healthcare Setting: Patient***	23	<5	**
Healthcare Setting: Staff***	17	<5	**
Sport	8	<5	**
Transport	24	<5	**
Other	63	<5	**
Not Recorded	729	50	6.9%
Total	3174	248	7.8%

Table 1.8 – Test 2* Results by Circumstances of Contact – 15/02/2021 to 21/02/2021

***Note: Test 1 refers to the Day 0 test for close contacts informed before 5pm on the 23rd December 2020 and from the 10th February 2021. From 5pm on the 23rd December 2020 to the 9th February Test 1 was scheduled on Day 5. Test 2 was suspended from 23rd December. All testing of close contacts was suspended between 1st and 28th January 2021 with Test 1 resuming from 29th January 2021 and Test 2 resuming from 10th February 2021. Attendance and results are reported a week in arrears for Test 1 and two weeks in arrears for Test 2 to improve completeness of data and allow for more meaningful interpretation of results. Further details can be found in Appendix 3.

** Unstable positivity rate due to small numbers.

*** The majority of patients and staff who are close contacts in a healthcare setting are managed by Infection Prevention and Control and Occupational Health teams off the CCT.

Contacts by Region

Region	Total Number of Close Contacts	Number of Close Contacts per 100,000 population*
East	3548	207
Midlands	677	232
Midwest	705	149
Northeast	750	163
Northwest	229	89
South	461	67
Southeast	326	77
West	513	113
Not Recorded	453	N/A
Total	7662	161

Table 1.9 - Contacts by Region

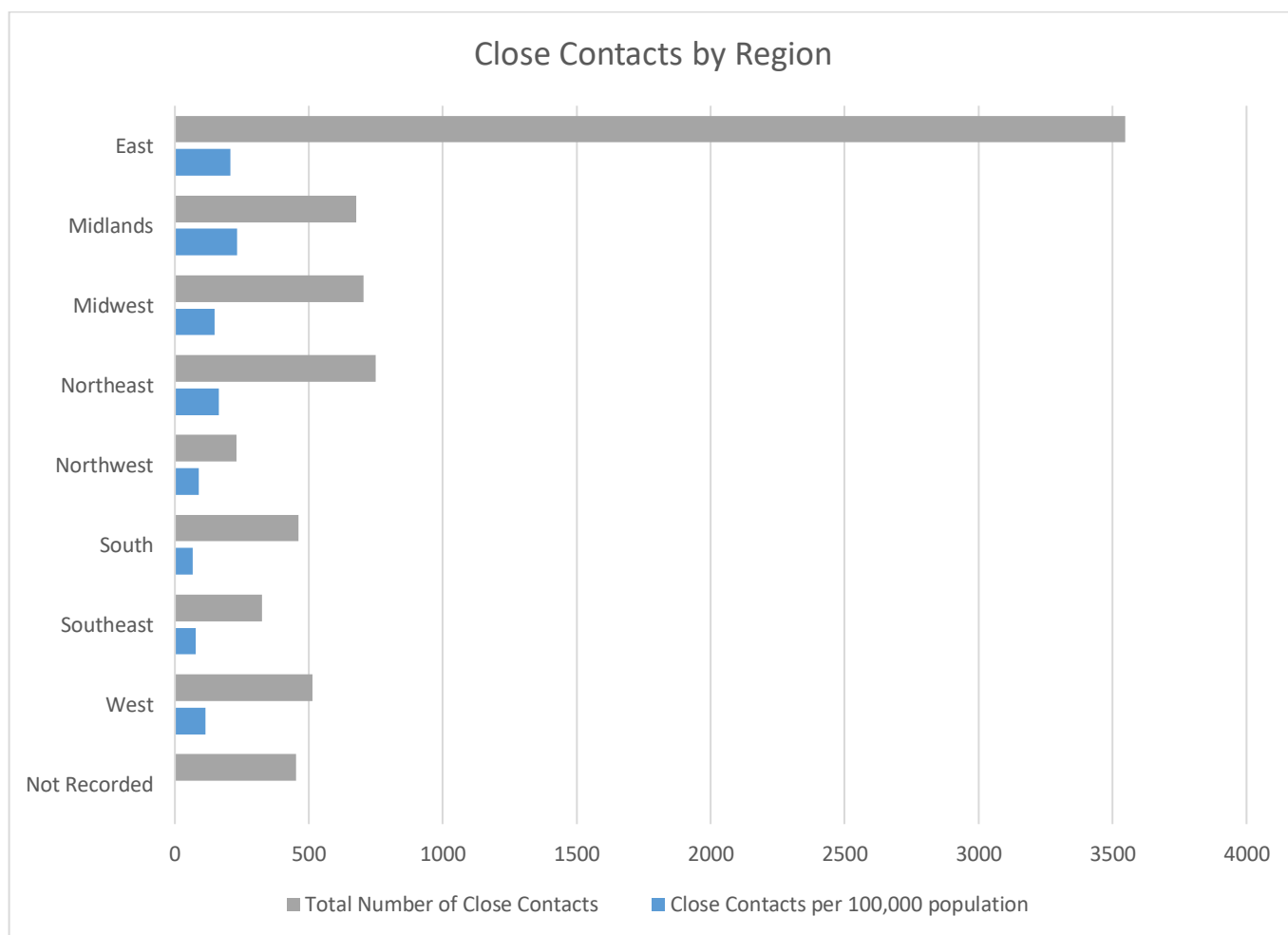


Figure 1.6 - Close Contacts by Region

*Note: The number of close contacts per 100,000 population is included to provide context, as population varies between regions. However, the number of close contacts per 100,000 population relates to the number of cases occurring within a region and the average number of close contacts per case in that region and so should be interpreted in that light.

Close Contact: Demographic Details

Age Group of Close Contacts	Gender of Close Contacts			Total Number of Close Contacts	Number of Close Contacts per 100,000 Population
	Female	Male	Not Recorded		
0-4	251	259	15	525	158
5-12	345	296	22	663	200
13-18	491	500	27	1018	154
19-24	503	515	25	1043	140
25-34	449	468	27	944	151
35-44	407	365	26	798	145
45-54	643	561	24	1228	330
55-64	335	273	11	619	122
65-74	148	130	7	285	76
75+	90	64	9	163	62
Not Recorded	90	134	152	376	N/A
Total	3752	3565	345	7662	161

Table 1.10 - Age and Gender of Close Contacts

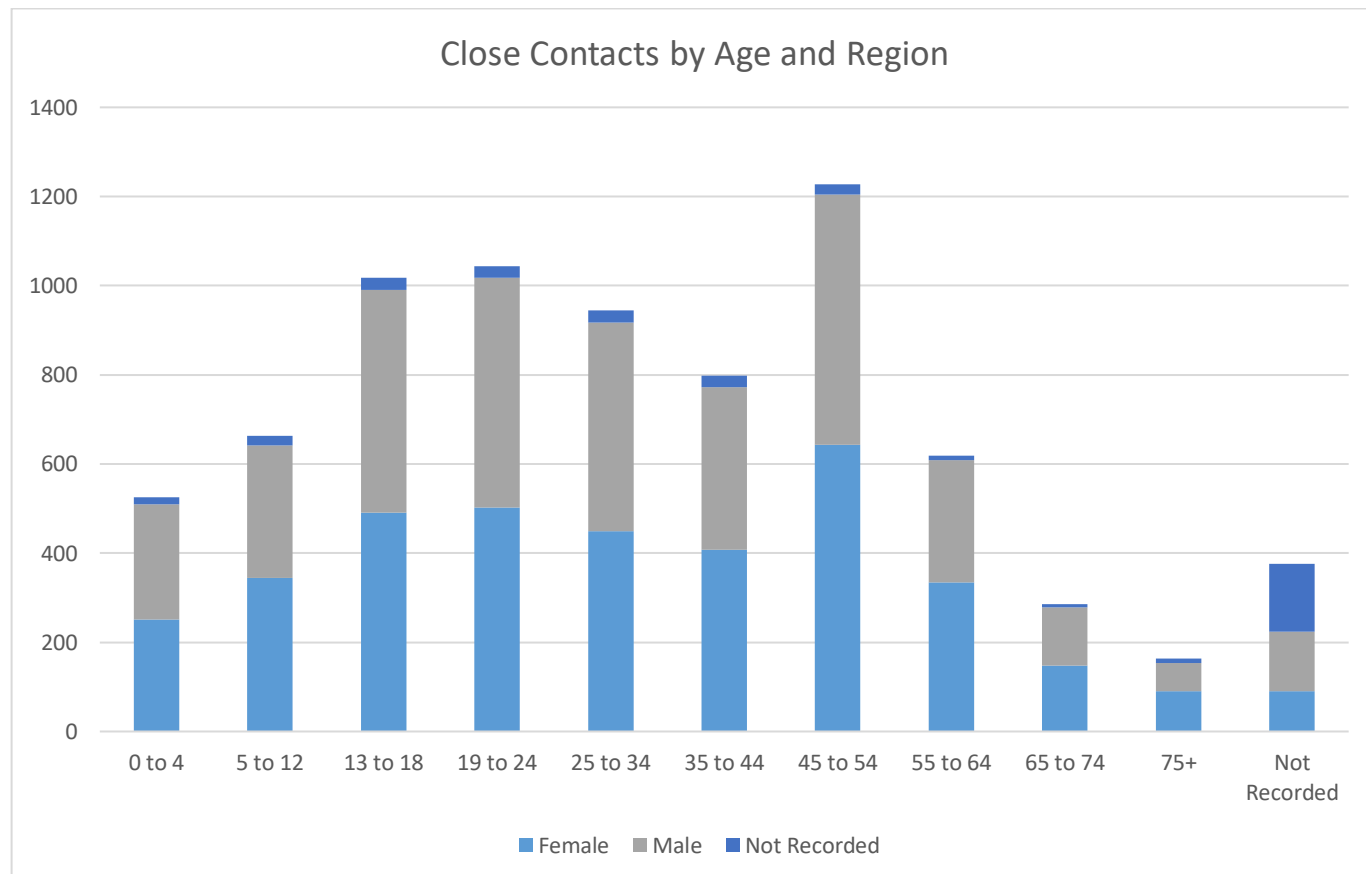


Figure 1.7- Number of Close Contacts by Age and Gender

Close Contacts per Case

Table 1.12 presents the mean, median, minimum and maximum number of close contacts per case and interquartile range for the last week and Figure 1.8 shows the mean and median number of close contacts for the last two months for all cases where contact tracing was recorded as complete on the CCT (i.e. including cases with zero close contacts*).

The mean number of close contacts per case (including cases with zero close contacts*) was 2.1, a decrease from 2.2 the previous week.

Date	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Maximum</i>	<i>Interquartile Range</i>
01/03/2021	2.1	1	0	13	0-3
02/03/2021	2.1	1	0	13	0-3
03/03/2021	2.2	1	0	18	0-3
04/03/2021	2.0	1	0	22	0-3
05/03/2021	2.0	1	0	21	0-3
06/03/2021	2.0	1	0	12	0-3
07/03/2021	2.0	1	0	17	0-3
Total	2.1	1	0	22	0-3

Table 1.11 - Number of Close Contacts per Case (*including those with zero close contacts)

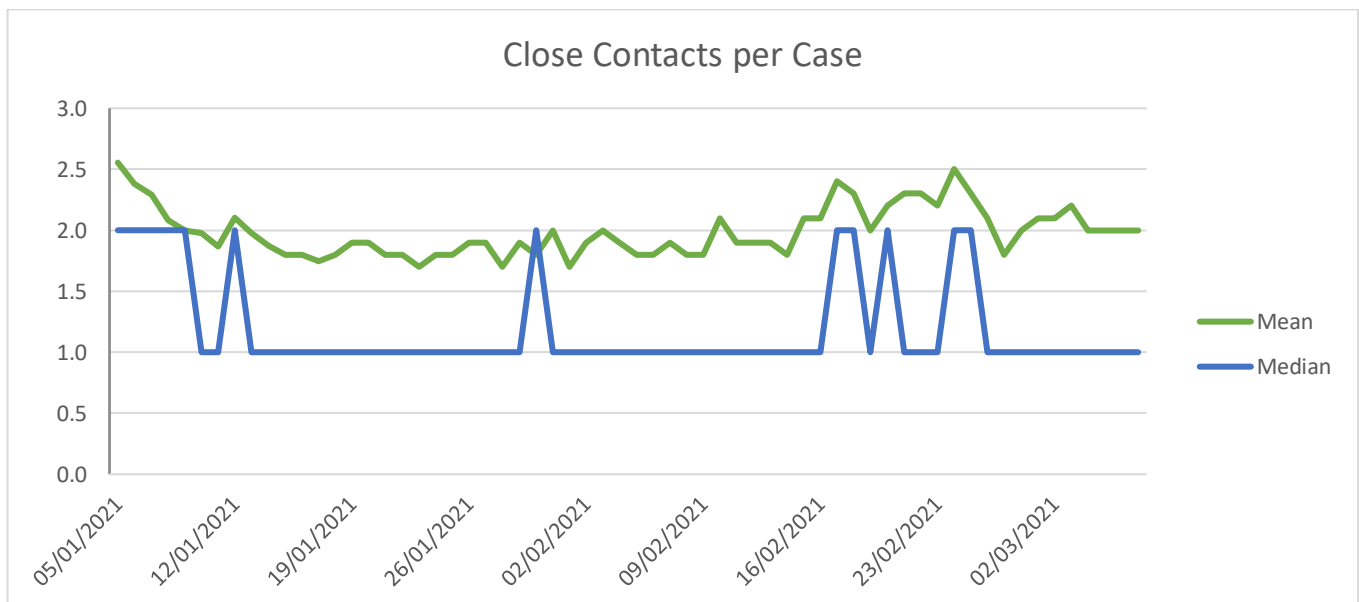


Figure 1.8 - Mean and Median Number of Close Contacts per Case (*including those with zero close contacts) for past 2 months

Note: The number of close contacts per case is presented for cases with zero close contacts and for cases with one or more close contacts as early reporting close contacts per cases was limited to cases with at least one close contact. To facilitate historical and future comparison we continue to report the mean and median number of close contacts per case for cases including and excluding those with zero close contacts. A case can have no close contacts for a number of reasons, e.g. if there are no actual close contacts, or if the close contacts have already been recorded in relation to another case (e.g. in a household of five with two cases, there are three close contacts, and 1.5 close contacts per case).

Table 1.13–outlines the analysis of the mean, median, minimum and maximum number of close contacts per case and interquartile range for the last week and Figure 1.9 shows the mean and median number of close contacts for the last two months for all cases where contact tracing was recorded as complete on the CCT and the case had one or more associated close contacts (ie excluding cases with zero close contacts*).

Date	Mean	Median	Minimum	Maximum	Interquartile Range
01/03/2021	3.3	3	1	13	2-4
02/03/2021	3.1	3	1	13	1-4
03/03/2021	3.4	3	1	18	1-4
04/03/2021	3.0	2	1	22	1-4
05/03/2021	3.0	2	1	21	1-4
06/03/2021	3.1	3	1	12	1-4
07/03/2021	3.1	3	1	17	1-4
Total	3.1	3	1	22	1-4

Table 1.12 - Number of Close Contacts per Case (*excluding those with zero close contacts)

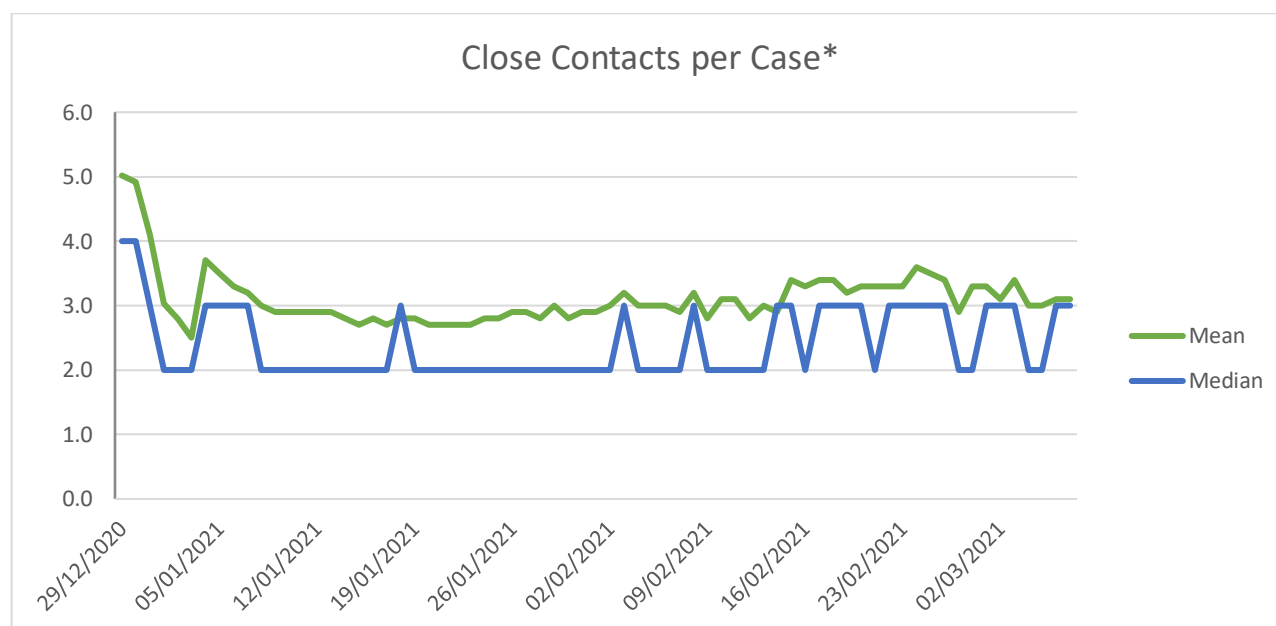


Figure 1.9- Mean and Median Number of Close Contacts per Case (*excluding those with zero close contacts) for past 2 months

Note: The number of close contacts per case is presented for cases with zero close contacts and for cases with one or more close contacts as early reporting close contacts per cases was limited to cases with at least one close contact. To facilitate historical and future comparison we continue to report the mean and median number of close contacts per case for cases including and excluding those with zero close contacts. A case can have no close contacts for a number of reasons, e.g. if there are no actual close contacts, or if the close contacts have already been recorded in relation to another case (e.g. in a household of five with two cases, there are three close contacts, and 1.5 close contacts per case).

Number of Complex Contacts by Week

A complex contact is created when a case has been in contact with a setting or group of people during their infectious period. Individual close contacts arising from these complex episodes of contact are included in analyses of close contacts. The number of complex contact episodes identified during the week ending 7th March was 1,206, a 25% decrease from the 1,614 captured during the week ending 28th February. Further definitions for close and complex contacts are provided in Appendix 1.

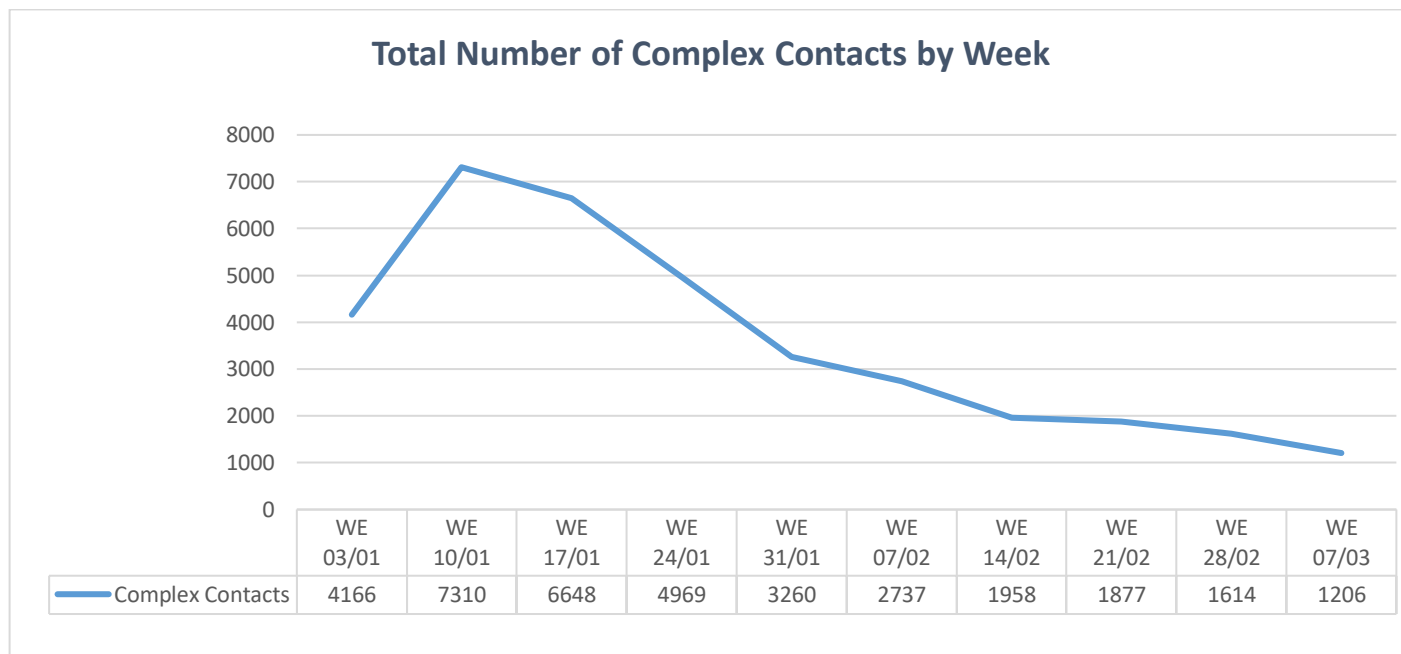


Figure 1.10– Complex Contact Episodes

Complex Contacts Reason for Complexity – 1st to 7th March

Reason for Complexity	Number
<i>Potential outbreak in another setting</i>	530
<i>Hospital</i>	265
<i>Member of the Traveller Community</i>	66
<i>Homeless Accommodation</i>	62
<i>Educational Institute</i>	60
<i>Public transport</i>	42
<i>Flight</i>	37
<i>Social Venue</i>	35
<i>Home Help Services</i>	34
<i>Other Residential Care Setting</i>	34
<i>Nursing Home</i>	17
<i>Prison</i>	14
<i>Asylum Seeker Accommodation</i>	6
<i>Member of Roma Community</i>	4
Total	1206

Table 1.13- Reason for Complexity

Complex Contacts Trends by Week

There was a marked decrease in the number of complex contact episodes related to Nursing Homes for the week ending 7th March, down 89% from the previous week and 98% from the peak observed on the week ending 17th January.

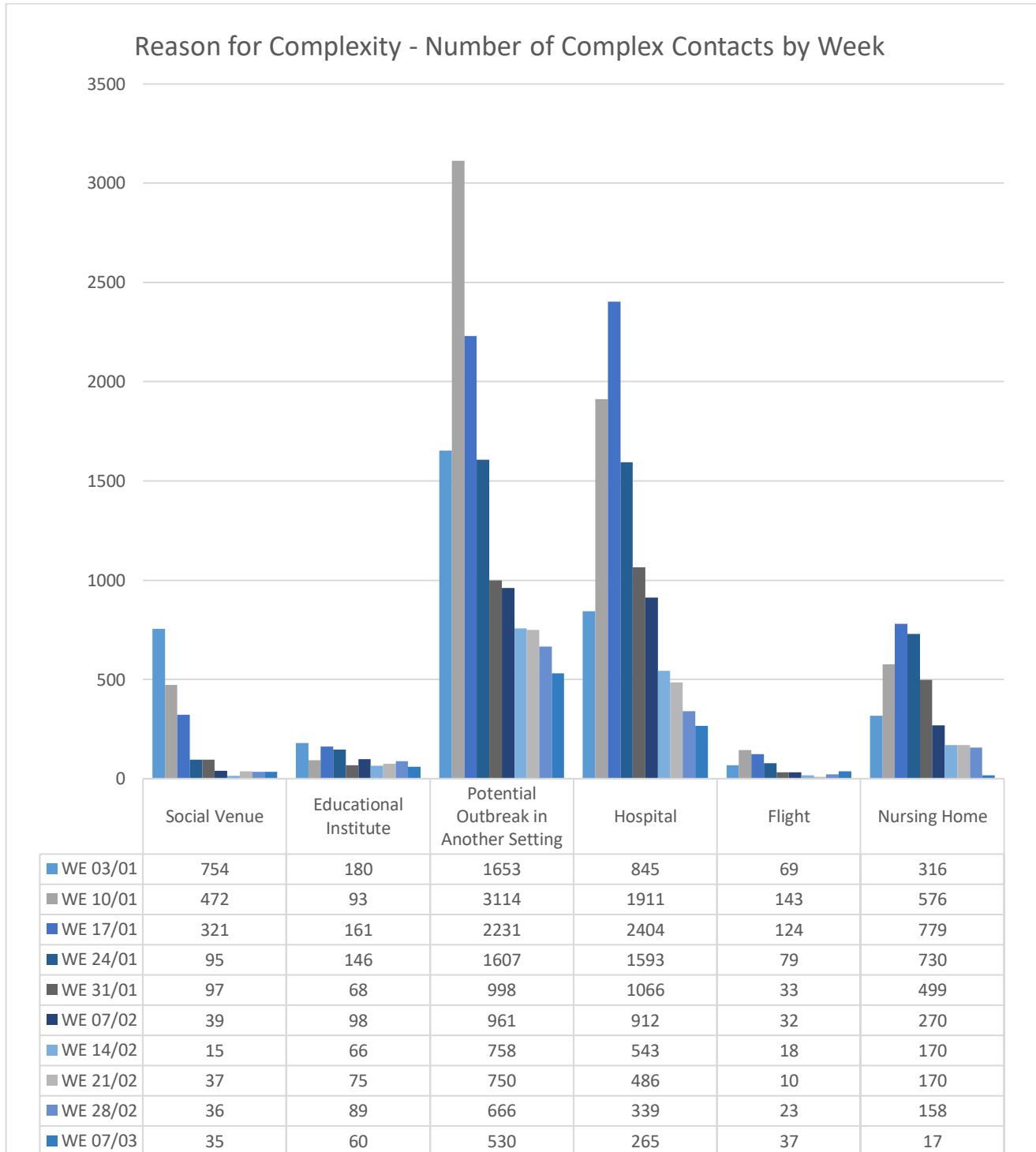


Figure 1.11 - Reason for Complexity - Number of Complex Contacts by Week

Data are provisional - Some close contacts are managed off the CCT.

Appendix 1: Contact Definitions

Cases are asked to identify contacts during their infectious period based on symptom onset or date of test if asymptomatic. If symptomatic, cases are asked to list contacts from 48 hours before symptom onset to 10 days after symptom onset. If asymptomatic, cases are asked to list their contacts from 24 hours before the date of their positive test to 10 days after the date of the positive test.

Close Contacts

Close Contacts are defined as:

- Any person that the case has been in face to face contact with for longer than 15 minutes in any setting.
- Any person who shared a closed space for longer than 2 hours.

Contact tracers select one of the following circumstances of contact:

- Household contacts are defined as living or sleeping in the same house, individuals in shared accommodation sharing kitchen and bathroom facilities, and sexual partners.
- Workplace contacts are close contacts from the workplace.
- Social contacts include close contacts from the extended family, close contacts in restaurants, cafés and public houses, and other social contacts.
- Sport contacts include close contacts from sporting and recreational activities.
- Primary School contacts include staff and students in primary schools.
- Secondary School contacts include staff and students in second level schools.
- Childcare facility contacts include staff and students in crèches, pre-schools and after-schools.
- Special School contacts include staff and students in schools that provide education for children with special educational needs.
- Third level education contacts include close contacts from third-level institutes and universities.
- Transport contacts are close contacts from flights, public transport, taxis and cars.
- Healthcare Setting: Patients are close contacts who were patients in healthcare settings where the contact has only occurred in that setting. Most close contacts who are patients in healthcare settings are managed by Infection Prevention & Control who do not currently use the CCT.
- Healthcare Setting: Staff are close contacts who work in healthcare settings and the contact was limited to those settings. Most staff who come into contact with a case while working in healthcare settings are managed by Occupational Health who do not currently use the CCT.
- Other: these are close contacts where the circumstances of contact are known but not included in one of the categories above.
- Not Recorded: no circumstances of contact recorded. This includes contacts identified via the COVID Tracker App.

Complex Contacts

A complex contact is a situation where the contact is not a known named individual but relates to, for example, a congregate setting where an individual could be called and a list of contacts constructed.

Contact tracers select one of the following reasons for complexity:

- Hospital: case has been a patient, member of staff or visitor to a hospital.
- Nursing home: case is a resident, member of staff or has visited a nursing home.
- Other Residential Care Setting: case is a resident, member of staff or has visited a residential care setting that is not a nursing home.
- Flight: the case was on a flight as a member of staff or as a passenger.
- Homeless Accommodation/Hostel: case is a resident or member of staff in homeless accommodation.
- Asylum Seeker Accommodation (Direct Provision Centre): case is a resident or member of staff in asylum seeker accommodation.
- Prison: case was an inmate or worked in a prison.
- Public transport: case used public transport.
- Social Venue: case attended or worked in a social venue such as a restaurant, cinema or bar.
- Member of the Traveller Community: case is a resident in a halting site or a member of the Traveller community.
- Educational Institute: case attended or worked in a crèche, school, university or other educational setting.
- Home Help Services: case interacted with or provided home help services.
- Member of Roma Community: case is a member of the Roma community.
- Potential outbreak in another setting: case worked in or attended a setting that is not included in the list above. These include hairdressers, beauty salons, food production factories and retail outlets.

Appendix 2: Close Contact Pathways

Close contacts are managed using two separate pathways on the CCT, depending on the type of contact that has occurred. The two pathways are illustrated in the figure below.

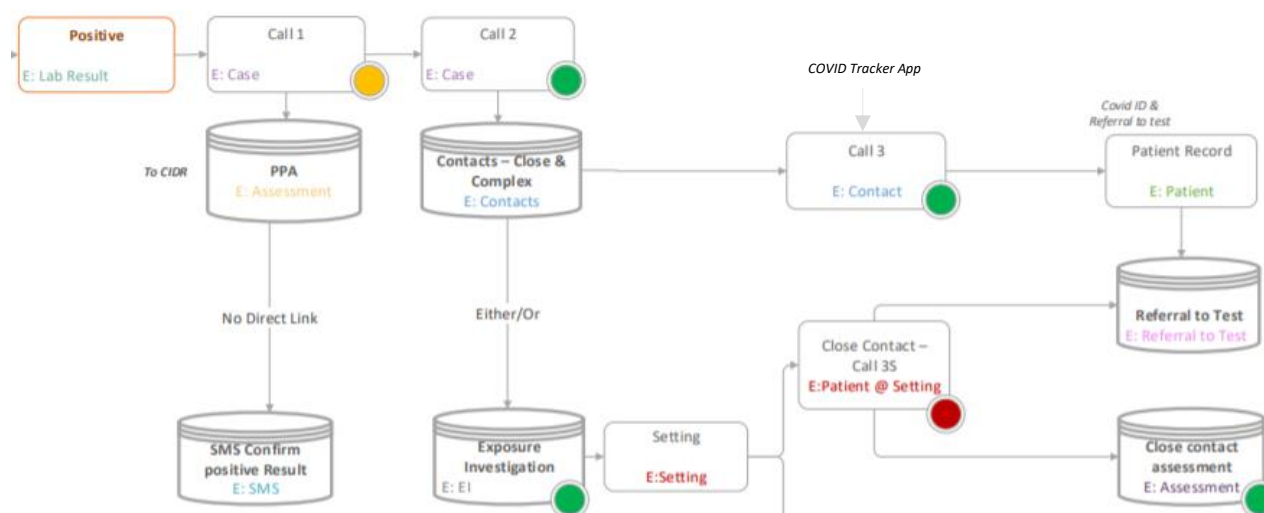


Figure A2.1 - Call 3 and 3S Pathways

Call 3 Pathway

Close contacts identified by the case on a call 2 or by the COVID Tracker App are managed using the standard call 3 pathway unless related to a flight, school, crèche or Montessori. Close contacts identified by Departments of Public Health as part of their investigation of complex contacts are also managed using this pathway, unless the contact occurred on a flight or in a school, crèche or Montessori.

Call 3S Pathway

Since the 31st of August 2020, cases who took a flight during their infectious period are referred to their regional Department of Public Health for risk assessment. Following the Public Health Risk Assessment, close contacts are uploaded to the CCT by a central data entry team where they receive a phone call from a contact tracer, a SMS or are referred directly for testing. Since the 23rd of September 2020, cases who report attending a school, crèche or Montessori as a student or member of staff during their infectious period are referred to the regional Department of Public Health for risk assessment. Close contacts identified during the Public Health risk assessment are managed using the Call 3S or Contacts at Settings pathway, which links these contacts back to the setting where the close contact occurred. Data, including retrospective data, on these contacts have been available to the CMP from the 7th of December 2020.

Appendix 3: Revisions to Management of Close Contacts over Time

Symptomatic close contacts were referred for testing by the CMP from 17th March 2020 (when the Contact Tracing Module of the CovidCare Tracker went live) to 18th May 2020.

Testing of all close contacts by the CMP commenced on 19th May 2020. From this date Test 1, initially called the Day 0 Test, was arranged as soon as a contact was informed that they had been in close contact with a confirmed case. Test 2, previously called the Day 7 Test, commenced on 28th May when it was arranged on the true seventh day from last contact with the confirmed case.

This approach remained unchanged during the second surge in CMP activity in October 2020. However, while testing was offered to all close contacts identified to CMP, there was a cohort of 1,901 cases who were advised to self-trace due to the surge in activity. As their contacts were never identified to CMP, they were not contacted or referred for testing by CMP.

Due to the rapid increase in test and trace activity in late December 2020, to optimise the use of CMP resources a number of changes were made to the management of close contacts as follows:

- The 'Book a Test' self-service portal went live on the 23rd December 2020 following a successful pilot. From this date, contacts could arrange a test themselves via the portal instead of receiving a call from CMP.
- From 23rd December 2020 at 5pm, Test 1 was scheduled either on Day 5 or the date that the close contact was informed, depending on which was earlier.
- Test 2 was suspended on December 23rd 2020 from 5pm.
- From 29th December 2020, cases were informed of their diagnosis and had data collected on their contacts on one call instead of the usual two-call process. While the majority of cases received an SMS informing them of their positive result prior to the call, combining the calls may have had an impact on the data captured for close contacts as cases were no longer given an opportunity to collect contact information between their first and second call.
- From 1st January 2021, the majority of close contacts were informed of their close contact status by SMS instead of by phone call. Phone calls were only made where an SMS to a close contact was unsuccessful.
- Referral for SARS-CoV-2 testing by the CMP was suspended for close contacts from 1st to 28th January 2021. Symptomatic close contacts were advised to organise testing via their GP during this period.
- From 29th January 2021, phone calls to close contacts from the CMP resumed and the 'Book a Test' portal was re-implemented.
- Test 1 was reinstated from 29th January 2021, either on day 5 or the date that the close contact was informed, depending on which was earlier.
- From 10th February 2021, the standard two call process was used to inform cases of their diagnosis and collect contacts.
- The following approach to testing of close contacts was implemented from 10th February 2021:
 - Test 1 was arranged as soon as a contact was informed that they had been in close contact with a confirmed case.
 - Test 2 was arranged on the tenth day from last contact with the confirmed case where a Test 1 was earlier than the ninth day since last contact with case and the contact did not have a positive Test 1 result.
- An updated version of the online portal for close contacts called the 'Request a Test' portal went live on February 16th 2021.