

**Contact Management Programme**  
**Weekly Public Health Report**  
**8<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> 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 14<sup>th</sup> 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 could be called and a list of contacts constructed. Further details on close and complex contacts are provided in Appendix 1.

Testing has been offered to close contacts since the 19<sup>th</sup> May 2020, apart from those close contacts identified between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> 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 29<sup>th</sup> January 2021. From 29<sup>th</sup> January to 9<sup>th</sup> February 2021, Test 1 was scheduled on day 5 or the date that the close contact was informed, depending on which was earlier. From 10<sup>th</sup> 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 10<sup>th</sup> 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, 15<sup>th</sup> 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 – 8<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> March

The total number of cases managed by the Contact Management Programme during the week ending 14<sup>th</sup> March was 3,763, an increase of 3.7% from the 3,626 cases managed the previous week (ending 7<sup>th</sup> March). This represents 95% of the cases reported on the CovidCare Tracker between the 8<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> March.

## Number of Contacts – 8<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> March

The number of close contacts reported during the week ending 14<sup>th</sup> March was 7,798, a 2% increase from the 7,662 captured during the week ending 7<sup>th</sup> March. Of the 7,798 close contacts reported, 5,459 close contacts have received a phone call and were referred for a test, 1,718 used the 'Request a Test' self-service online portal for close contacts to request their test online and 545 were informed by an SMS from the CMP. In total, these 7,722 represent 99% of the contacts created between the 8<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> March.

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

## Close Contact Attendance and Positivity Rates at Test 1\* - 1<sup>st</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> March

Of the close contacts created between 1<sup>st</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> March, 84% of those referred for a Test 1\* appointment attended for testing. Results were available at the time of report preparation for 4,871 close contacts, 1,051 (21.6%) of whom were positive. Various sub-categories of close contacts were considered; by age, positivity rates were highest in those 25-34 years (29.3%) and by circumstances of contact, positivity rates remain highest in household close contacts (34%).

## Close Contact Attendance and Positivity Rates at Test 2\* - 22<sup>nd</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> February

Of the close contacts created between 22<sup>nd</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> February, 2,956 (80%) of those who were referred for a Test 2\* appointment attended for testing. Results were available at the time of report preparation for 2,770 close contacts, 150 (5.4%) of whom were positive. High positivity rates were seen in those aged 0 to 4 years (7.0%), 25 to 34 years (8.9%) and 55 to 64 years (7.1%). 7.9% of close contacts where the circumstances of contact were recorded as household 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 allow for more meaningful interpretation of results.*

# CMP Weekly Public Health Update – 8<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> 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 14<sup>th</sup> March was 3,763, an increase of 3.7% from the 3,626 cases managed the previous week (ending 7<sup>th</sup> March). This represents 95% of the cases reported on the CovidCare Tracker between the 8<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> March. Further information on cases is available via the Health Protection Surveillance Centre.

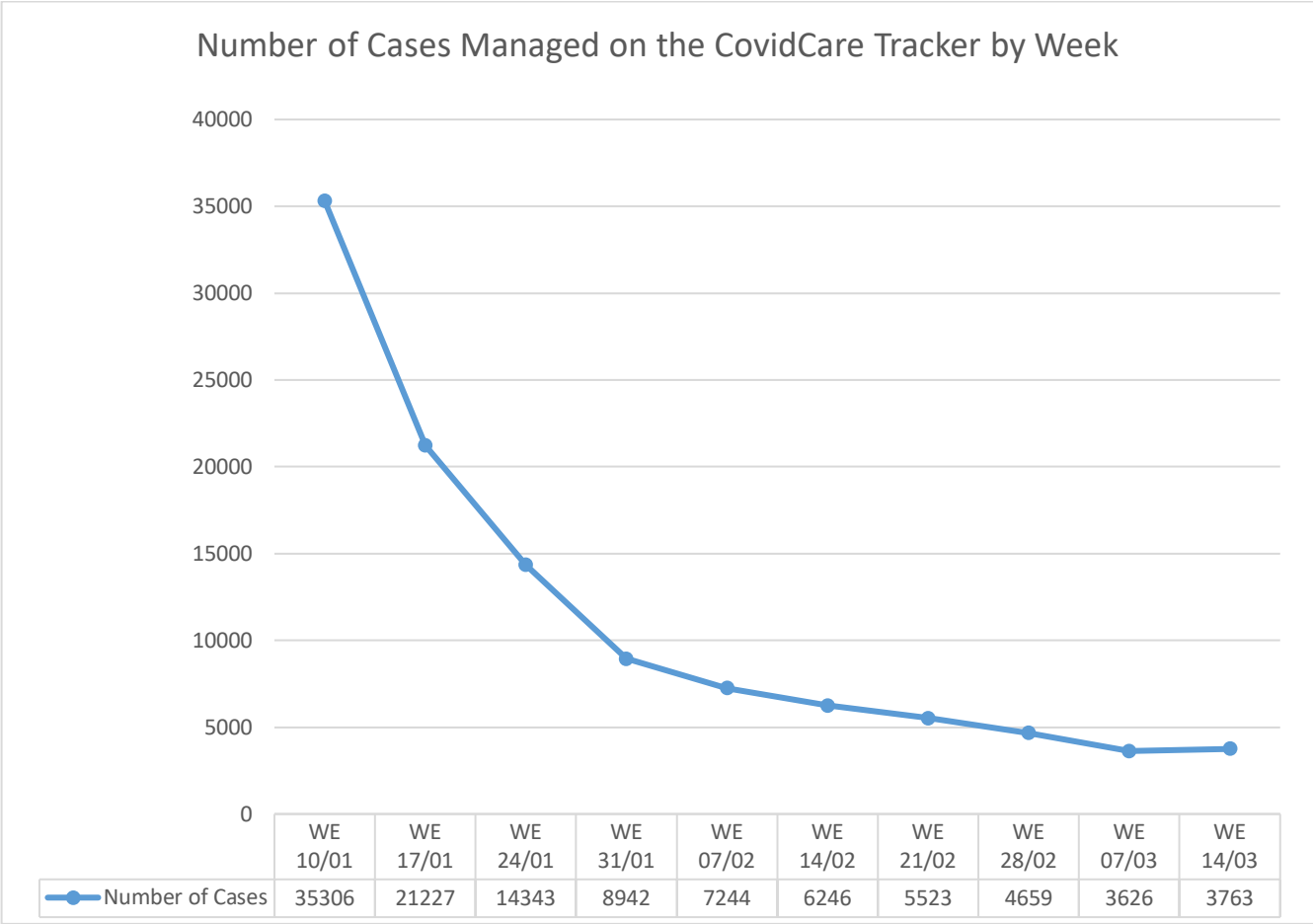
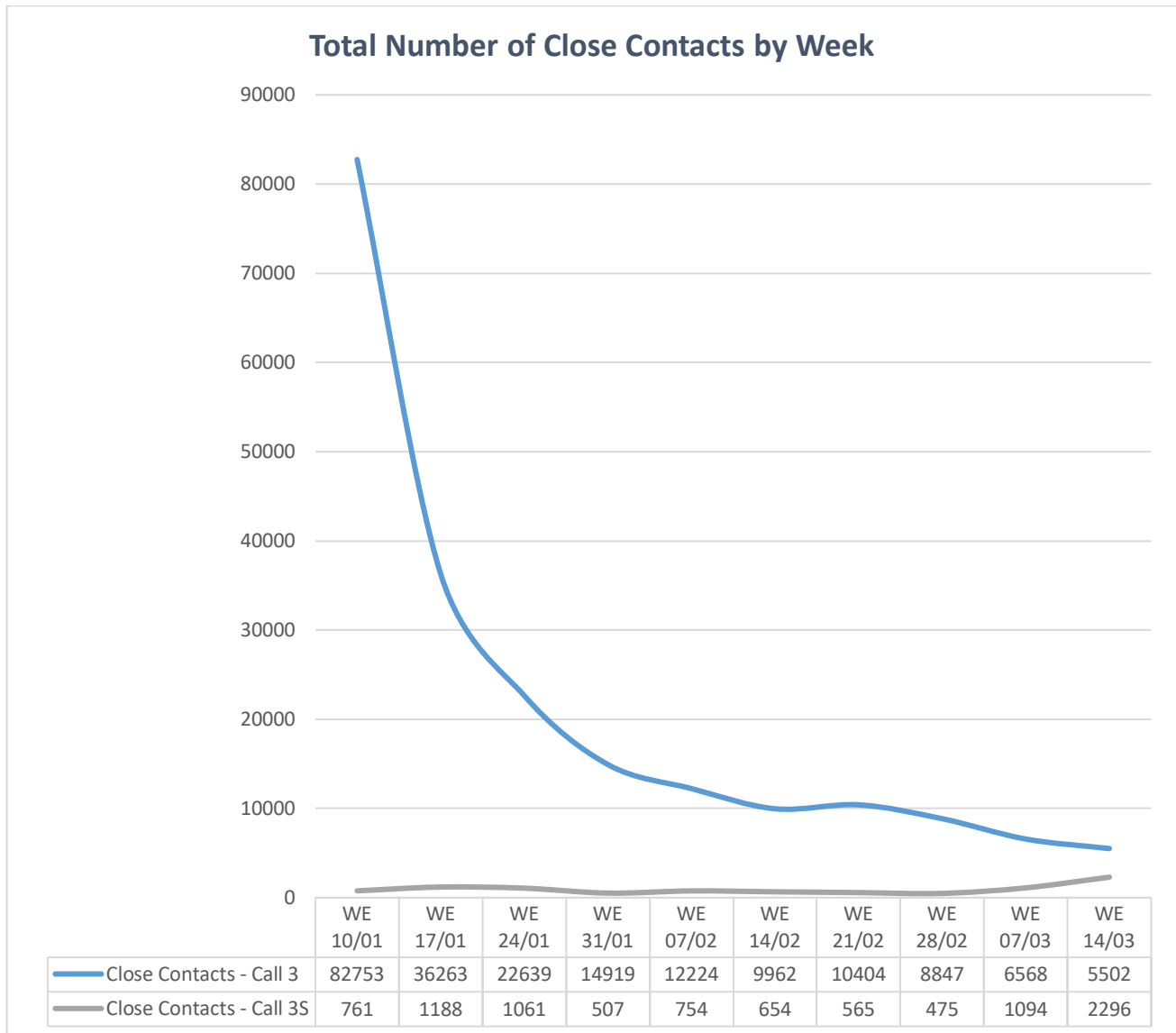


Figure 1.1 - Number of Cases Managed on CCT per Week

## Number of Close Contacts by Week

The number of close contacts reported during the week ending 14<sup>th</sup> March was 7,798, a 2% increase from the 7,662 captured during the week ending 7<sup>th</sup> March. To date, 5,459 close contacts have received a phone call, 1,718 used the 'Request a Test' self-service online portal for close contacts and 545 were informed by an SMS from the CMP. In total, these 7,722 represent 99% of the contacts created between the 8<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> March.

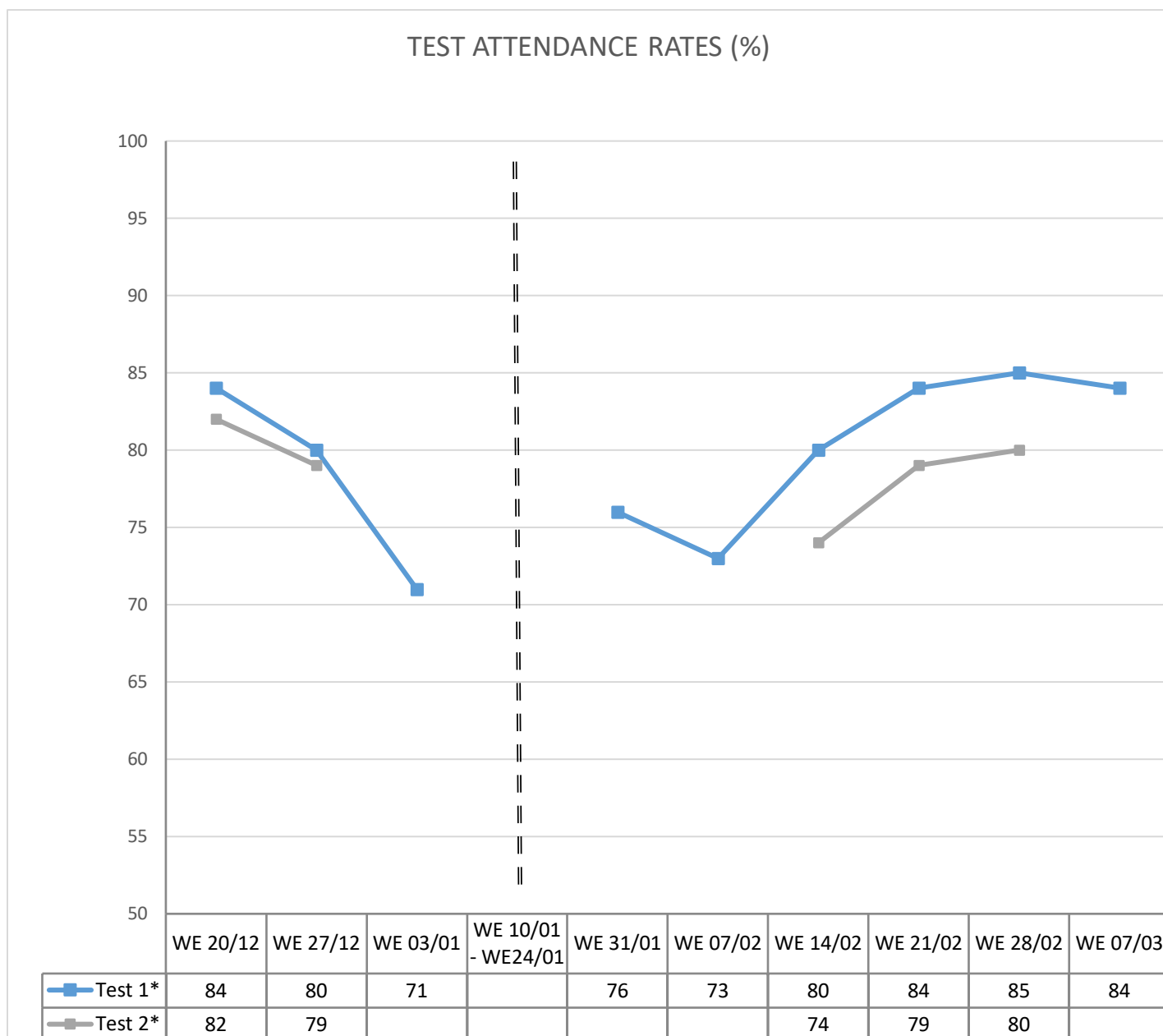


**Figure 1.2 - Close Contact Numbers**

*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 31<sup>st</sup> of August and the 23<sup>rd</sup> of September respectively. Further details are provided in Appendix 2.*

## Attendance at Testing

84% of the close contacts created between 1<sup>st</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> March who were referred for a Test 1\* appointment have attended for testing. 80% of the close contacts created between 22<sup>nd</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> February who were referred for a Test 2\* appointment have attended for testing.



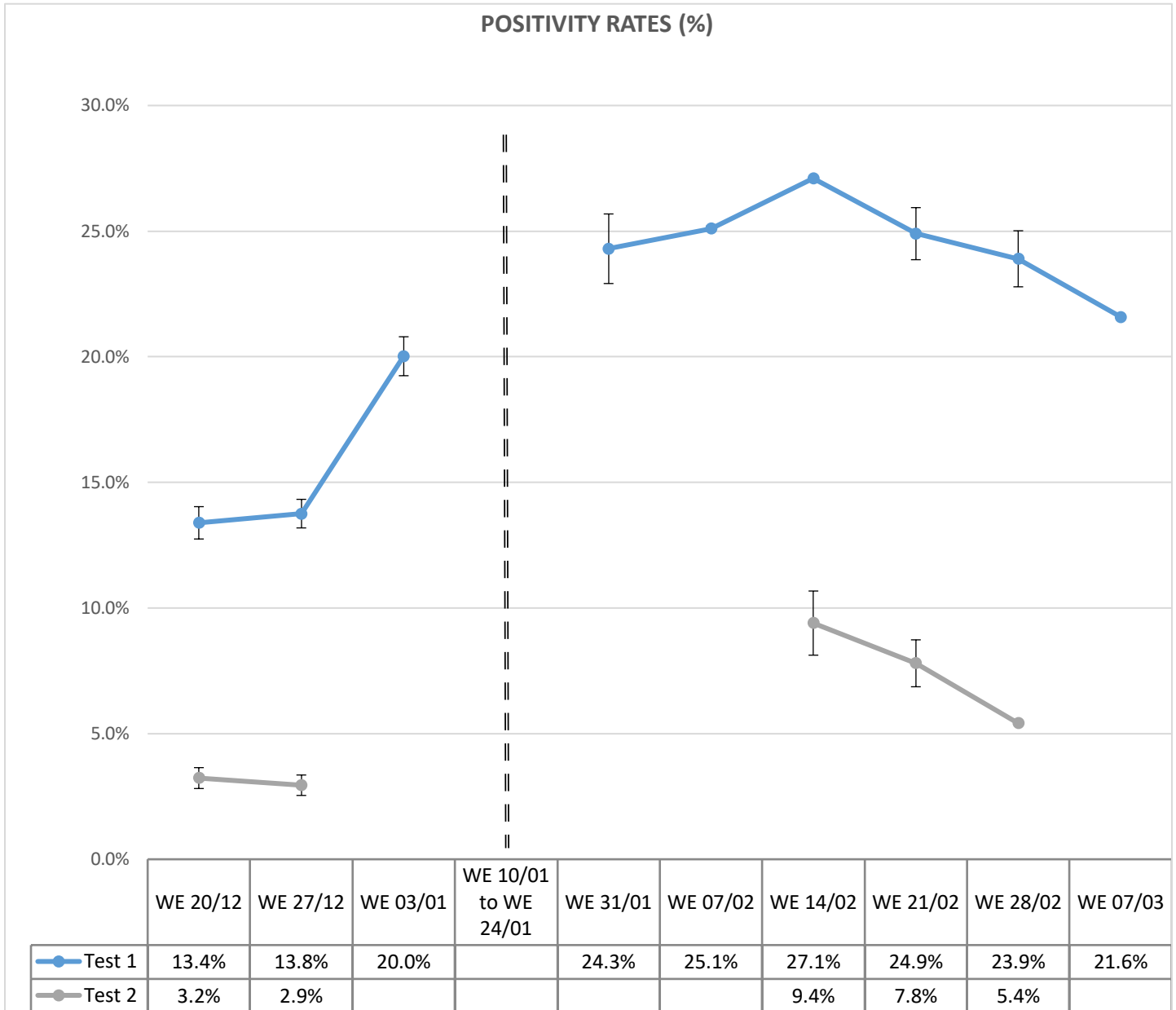
**Figure 1.3 - Close Contact Attendance Rates at Test 1\* and Test 2\***

*\*Note: Test 1 refers to the Day 0 test for close contacts informed before 5pm on the 23rd December 2020 and from the 10<sup>th</sup> February 2021. From 5pm on the 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2020 to the 31<sup>st</sup> December Test 1 was scheduled on Day 5. Test 2 was suspended from 23<sup>rd</sup> December. All testing of close contacts was suspended between 1<sup>st</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> January 2021 with Test 1 resuming from 29<sup>th</sup> January 2021 and Test 2 resuming from 10<sup>th</sup> 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 1<sup>st</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> 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 2020 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 1<sup>st</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> March, Test 1 results were available at the time of report preparation for 4,871 close contacts; 1,051 (21.6%) 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 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%
WE 0703	4871	1051	21.6%

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

Of the close contacts created between 22<sup>nd</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> February, Test 2 results were available at the time of report preparation for 2,770 close contacts; 150 (5.4%) 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 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%
WE 2802	2770	150	5.4%

*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 10<sup>th</sup> February 2021. From 5pm on the 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2020 to the 9<sup>th</sup> February Test 1 was scheduled on Day 5. Test 2 was suspended from 23<sup>rd</sup> December. All testing of close contacts was suspended between 1<sup>st</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> January 2021 with Test 1 resuming from 29<sup>th</sup> January 2021 and Test 2 resuming from 10<sup>th</sup> 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 1<sup>st</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> March 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 22<sup>nd</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> February. A high 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 01/03/2021 to 07/03/2021**

<b>Age Group</b>	<b>Number of Results Reported</b>	<b>Positive Results</b>	<b>Positivity Rate</b>
0 to 4	432	78	18.1%
5 to 12	598	40	6.7%
13 to 18	319	49	15.4%
19 to 24	597	108	18.1%
25 to 34	798	234	29.3%
35 to 44	816	215	26.3%
45 to 54	615	152	24.7%
55 to 64	420	109	26.0%
65 to 74	174	42	24.1%
75+	102	24	24.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4871</b>	<b>1051</b>	<b>21.6%</b>

Table 1.3 – Test 1\* Results by Age of Contact – 01/03/2021 to 07/03/2021

### **SARS-CoV2 Test 1\* Results by Region – Contacts Created 01/03/2021 to 07/03/2021**

<b>Region</b>	<b>Number of Results Reported</b>	<b>Positive Results</b>	<b>Positivity Rate</b>
East	2454	520	21.2%
Midlands	409	69	16.9%
Midwest	377	82	21.8%
Northeast	528	120	22.7%
Northwest	155	34	21.9%
South	301	79	26.2%
Southeast	188	45	23.9%
West	355	77	21.7%
Not Recorded	105	25	24.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4871</b>	<b>1051</b>	<b>21.6%</b>

Table 1.4 – Test 1\* Results by Region – 01/03/2021 to 07/03/2021

\*Note: Test 1 refers to the Day 0 test for close contacts informed before 5pm on the 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2020 and from the 10<sup>th</sup> February 2021. From 5pm on the 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2020 to the 9<sup>th</sup> February Test 1 was scheduled on Day 5. Test 2 was suspended from 23<sup>rd</sup> December. All testing of close contacts was suspended between 1<sup>st</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> January 2021 with Test 1 resuming from 29<sup>th</sup> January 2021 and Test 2 resuming from 10<sup>th</sup> 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 01/03/2021 to 07/03/2021**

<b>Circumstances of Contact</b>	<b>Number of Results Reported</b>	<b>Positive Results</b>	<b>Positivity Rate</b>
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Household	2122	721	34.0%
Social	769	116	15.1%
Workplace	206	17	8.3%
Childcare Facilities	283	26	9.2%
Primary School***	414	8	1.9%
Special School	25	<5	**
Third Level Education	4	<5	**
Healthcare Setting: Patient****	37	<5	**
Healthcare Setting: Staff****	14	<5	**
Sport	24	<5	**
Transport	66	<5	**
Other	64	<5	**
Not Recorded	841	154	18.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4871</b>	<b>1051</b>	<b>21.6%</b>

Table 1.5 – Test 1\* Results by Circumstances of Contact – 01/03/2021 to 07/03/2021

### SARS-CoV2 Test 2\* 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	187	13	7.0%
5 to 12	160	7	4.4%
13 to 18	614	21	3.4%
19 to 24	483	26	5.4%
25 to 34	393	35	8.9%
35 to 44	392	21	5.4%
45 to 54	115	<5	**
55 to 64	266	19	7.1%
65 to 74	70	<5	**
75+	90	5	5.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2770</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>5.4%</b>

Table 1.6 – Test 2\* Results by Age of Contact – 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 10<sup>th</sup> February 2021. From 5pm on the 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2020 to the 9<sup>th</sup> February Test 1 was scheduled on Day 5. Test 2 was suspended from 23<sup>rd</sup> December. All testing of close contacts was suspended between 1<sup>st</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> January 2021 with Test 1 resuming from 29<sup>th</sup> January 2021 and Test 2 resuming from 10<sup>th</sup> 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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 22/02/2021 to 28/02/2021

Region	Number of Results Reported	Positive Results	Positivity Rate
East	1092	66	6.0%

Midlands	275	21	7.6%
Midwest	344	10	2.9%
Northeast	287	20	7.0%
Northwest	76	<5	**
South	155	5	3.2%
Southeast	101	6	5.9%
West	328	12	3.7%
Not Recorded	112	8	7.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2770</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>5.4%</b>

**Table 1.7 – Test 2\* Results by Region – 22/02/2021 to 28/02/2021**

### **SARS-CoV2 Test 2\* 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
Household	1171	93	7.9%
Social	581	20	3.4%
Workplace	224	8	3.6%
Childcare Facilities	64	<5	**
Primary School***	12	<5	**
Special School	33	<5	**
Third Level Education	0	<5	**
Healthcare Setting: Patient****	12	<5	**
Healthcare Setting: Staff****	5	<5	**
Sport	10	<5	**
Transport	23	<5	**
Other	51	<5	**
Not Recorded	584	25	4.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2770</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>5.4%</b>

**Table 1.8 – Test 2\* Results by Circumstances of Contact – 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 10<sup>th</sup> February 2021. From 5pm on the 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2020 to the 9<sup>th</sup> February Test 1 was scheduled on Day 5. Test 2 was suspended from 23<sup>rd</sup> December. All testing of close contacts was suspended between 1<sup>st</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> January 2021 with Test 1 resuming from 29<sup>th</sup> January 2021 and Test 2 resuming from 10<sup>th</sup> 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

<b>Region</b>	<b>Total Number of Close Contacts</b>	<b>Number of Close Contacts per 100,000 population*</b>
East	3530	206
Midlands	586	200
Midwest	456	96
Northeast	692	150
Northwest	436	170
South	449	65
Southeast	444	105
West	822	181
Not Recorded	383	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>7798</b>	<b>162</b>

Table 1.9 - Contacts by Region

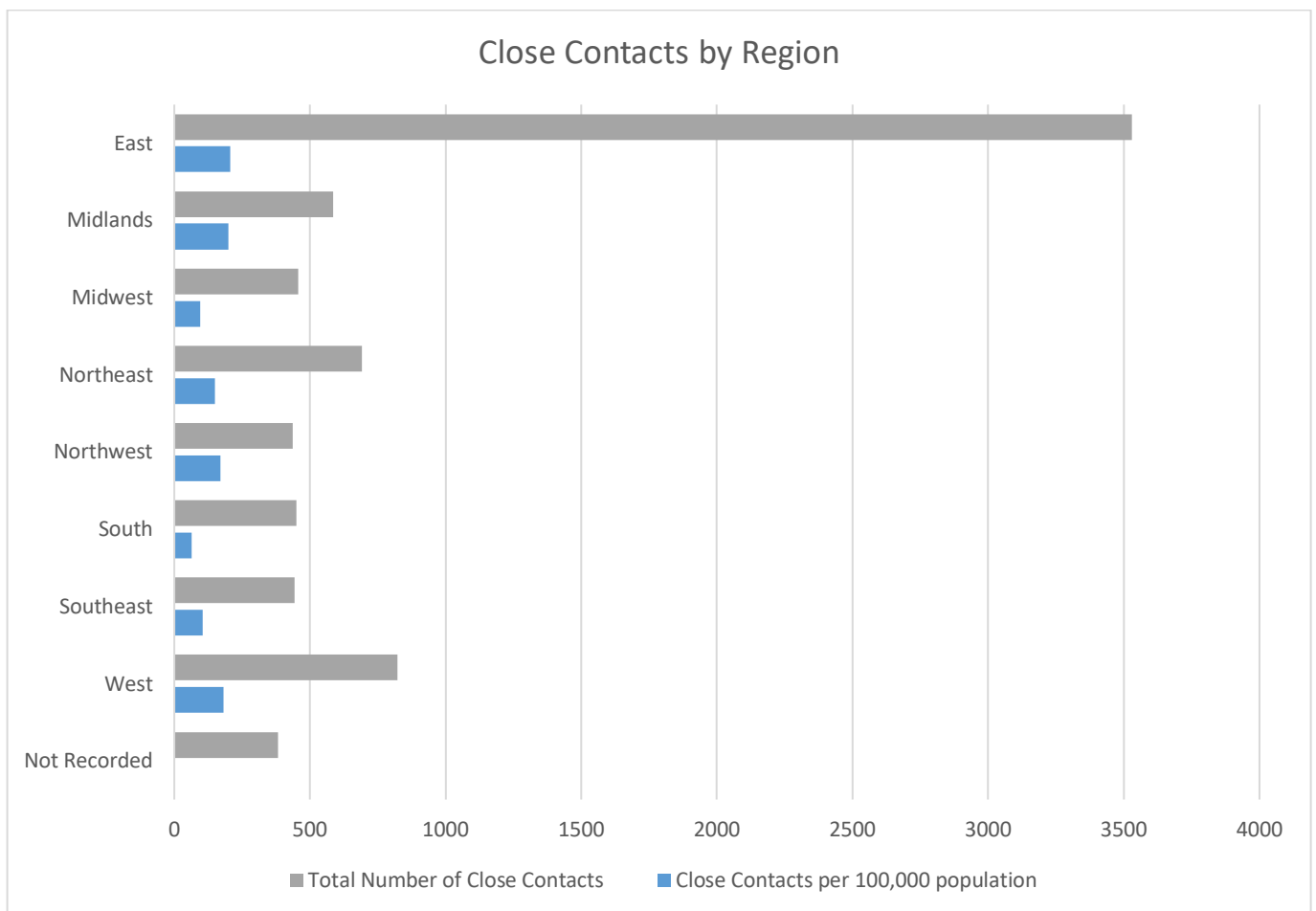


Figure 1.5- Close Contacts by Region

\*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 also relates to the number of cases occurring within a region and their associated close contacts and so should not be interpreted as a direct measure of the number of close contacts per case by region.

## 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		
<b>0-4</b>	316	294	12	622	188
<b>5-12</b>	860	875	24	1759	473
<b>13-18</b>	388	540	17	945	285
<b>19-24</b>	363	397	24	784	119
<b>25-34</b>	497	399	25	921	123
<b>35-44</b>	455	409	22	886	142
<b>45-54</b>	416	300	26	742	135
<b>55-64</b>	239	220	9	468	92
<b>65-74</b>	106	103	9	218	58
<b>75+</b>	57	46	5	108	41
<b>Not Recorded</b>	83	87	175	345	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>3780</b>	<b>3670</b>	<b>348</b>	<b>7798</b>	<b>162</b>

Table 1.10 - Age and Gender of Close Contacts

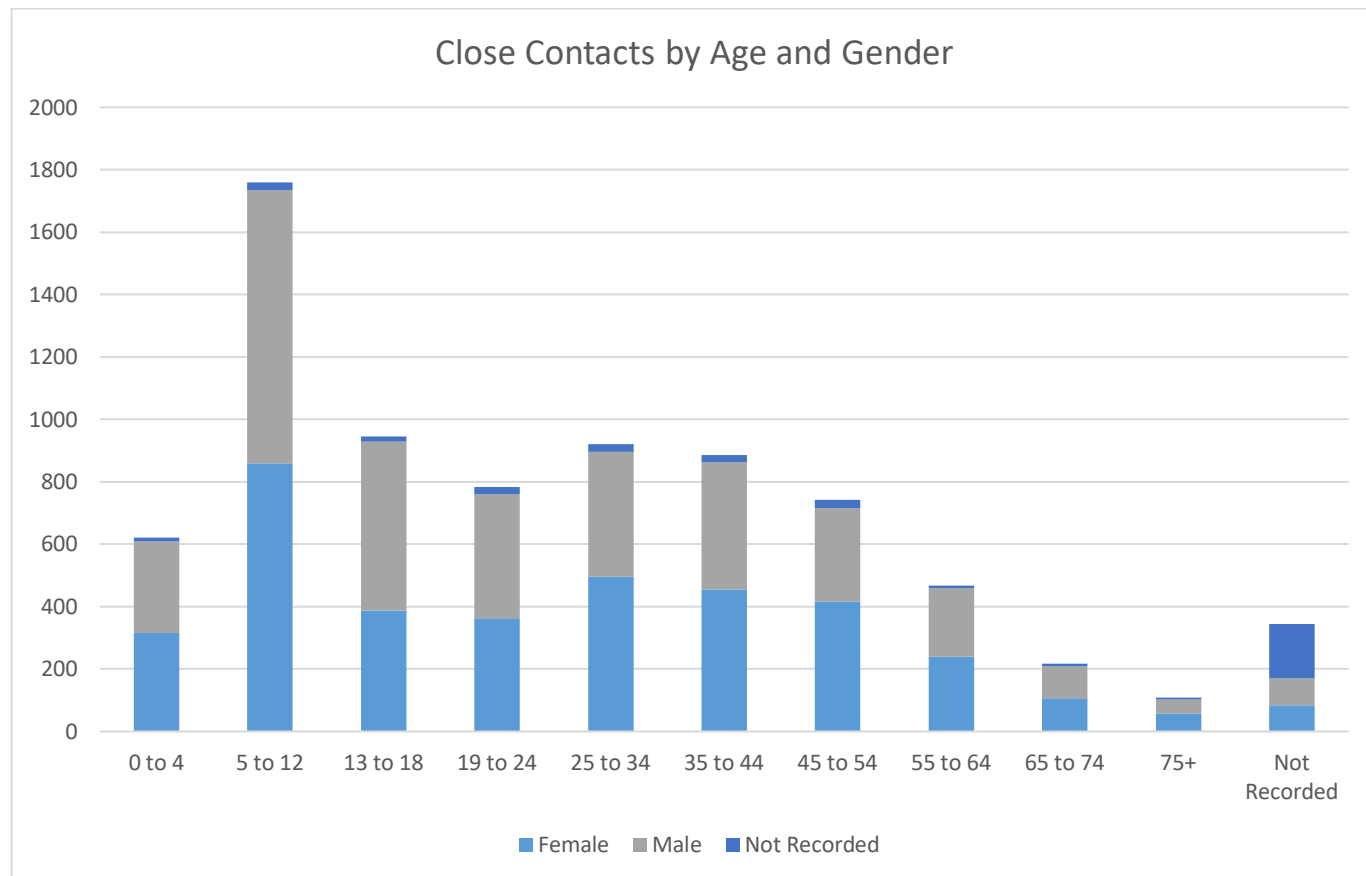


Figure 1.6- Number of Close Contacts by Age and Gender

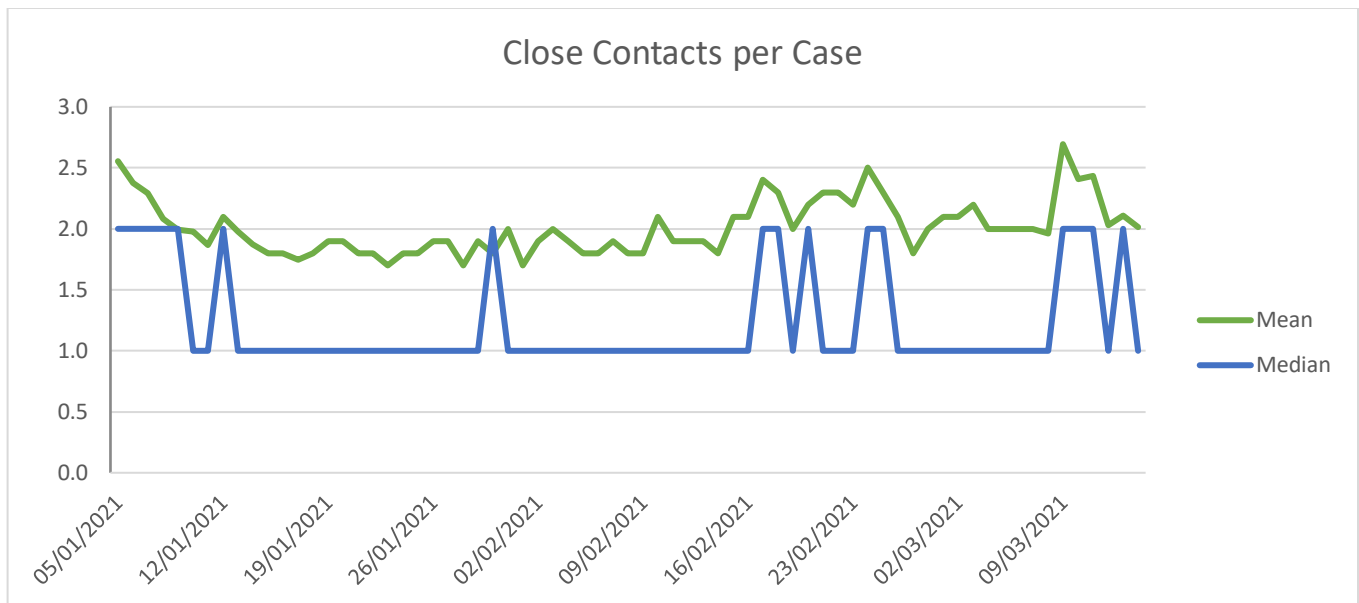
## Close Contacts per Case

Table 1.11 presents the mean, median, minimum and maximum number of close contacts per case and interquartile range for the last week and Figure 1.7 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 2.2, an increase from 2.1 the previous week.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Median</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>	<b>Interquartile Range</b>
08/03/2021	2.0	1	0	18	0-3
09/03/2021	2.7	2	0	15	0-4
10/03/2021	2.4	2	0	16	0-4
11/03/2021	2.4	2	0	19	0-4
12/03/2021	2.0	1	0	24	0-3
13/03/2021	2.1	2	0	18	0-3
14/03/2021	2.0	1	0	15	0-3
<b>Total</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>0-4</b>

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



**Figure 1.7 - 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 1.12 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 (i.e. excluding cases with zero close contacts\*).

<b>Date</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Median</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>	<b>Interquartile Range</b>
08/03/2021	3.24	3	0	18	1-4
09/03/2021	3.72	3	0	15	2-5
10/03/2021	3.39	3	0	16	2-5
11/03/2021	3.42	3	0	19	2-4
12/03/2021	3.39	3	0	24	2-4
13/03/2021	3.03	3	0	18	2-4
14/03/2021	3.00	2	0	15	1-4
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.31</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>2-4</b>

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

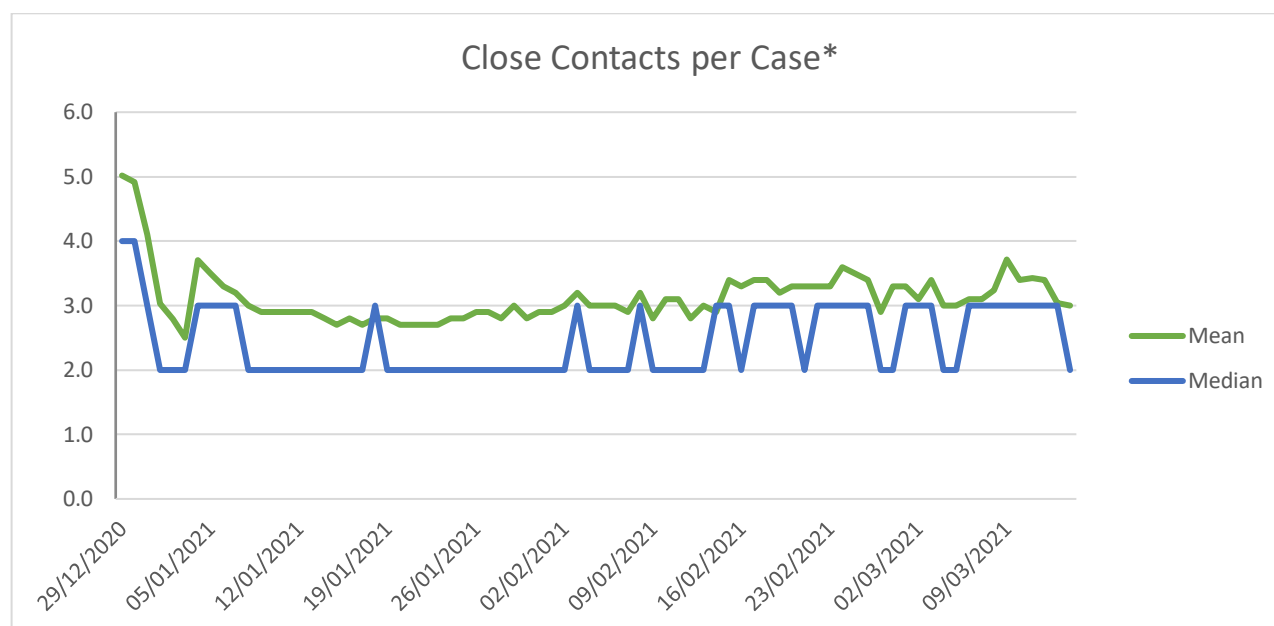


Figure 1.8- Mean and Median Number of Close Contacts per Case (\*excluding those with zero close contacts) for past 2 months

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 14<sup>th</sup> March was 1,336, a 10.8% increase (n=130) from the 1,206 captured during the week ending 7<sup>th</sup> March. Further definitions for close and complex contacts are provided in Appendix 1.

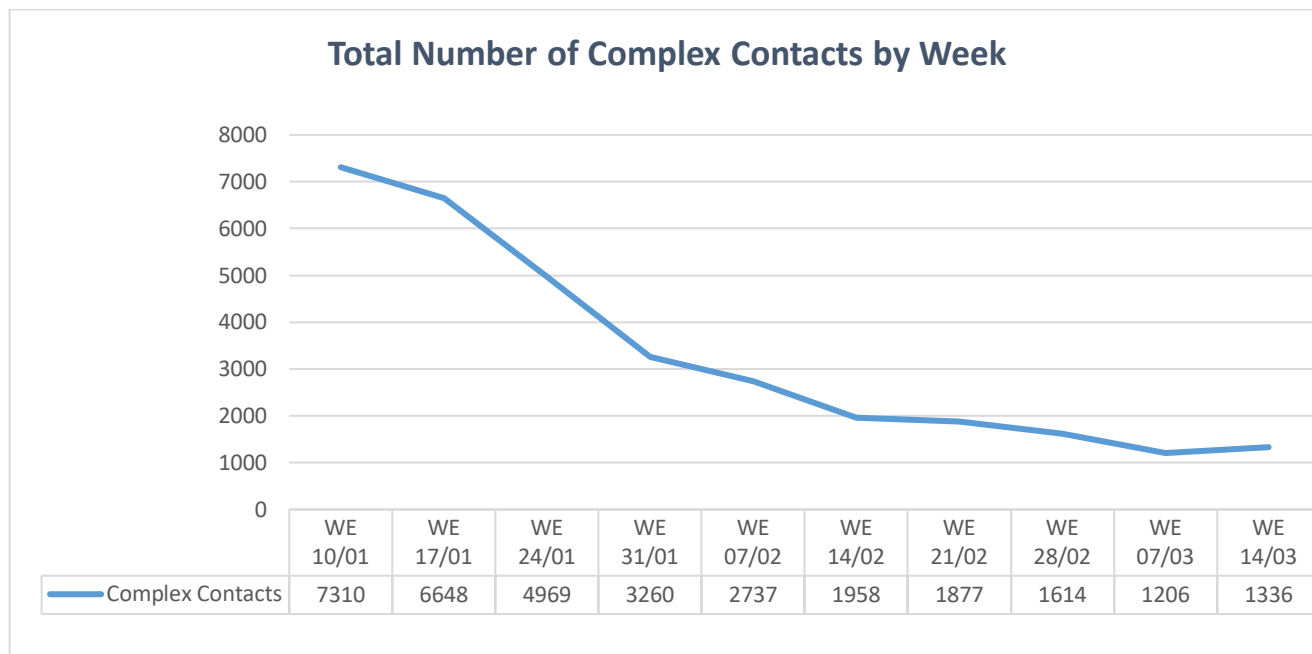


Figure 1.9– Complex Contact Episodes

## Complex Contacts Reason for Complexity – 8<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> March

<b>Reason for Complexity</b>	<b>Number</b>
Potential outbreak in another setting	533
Hospital	335
Member of the Roma Community	7
Homeless Accommodation	38
Educational Institute	224
Public transport	27
Flight	13
Social Venue	32
Home Help Services	30
Other Residential Care Setting	35
Nursing Home	45
Prison	4
Asylum Seeker Accommodation	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,336</b>

Table 1.13- Reason for Complexity

## Complex Contacts Trends by Week

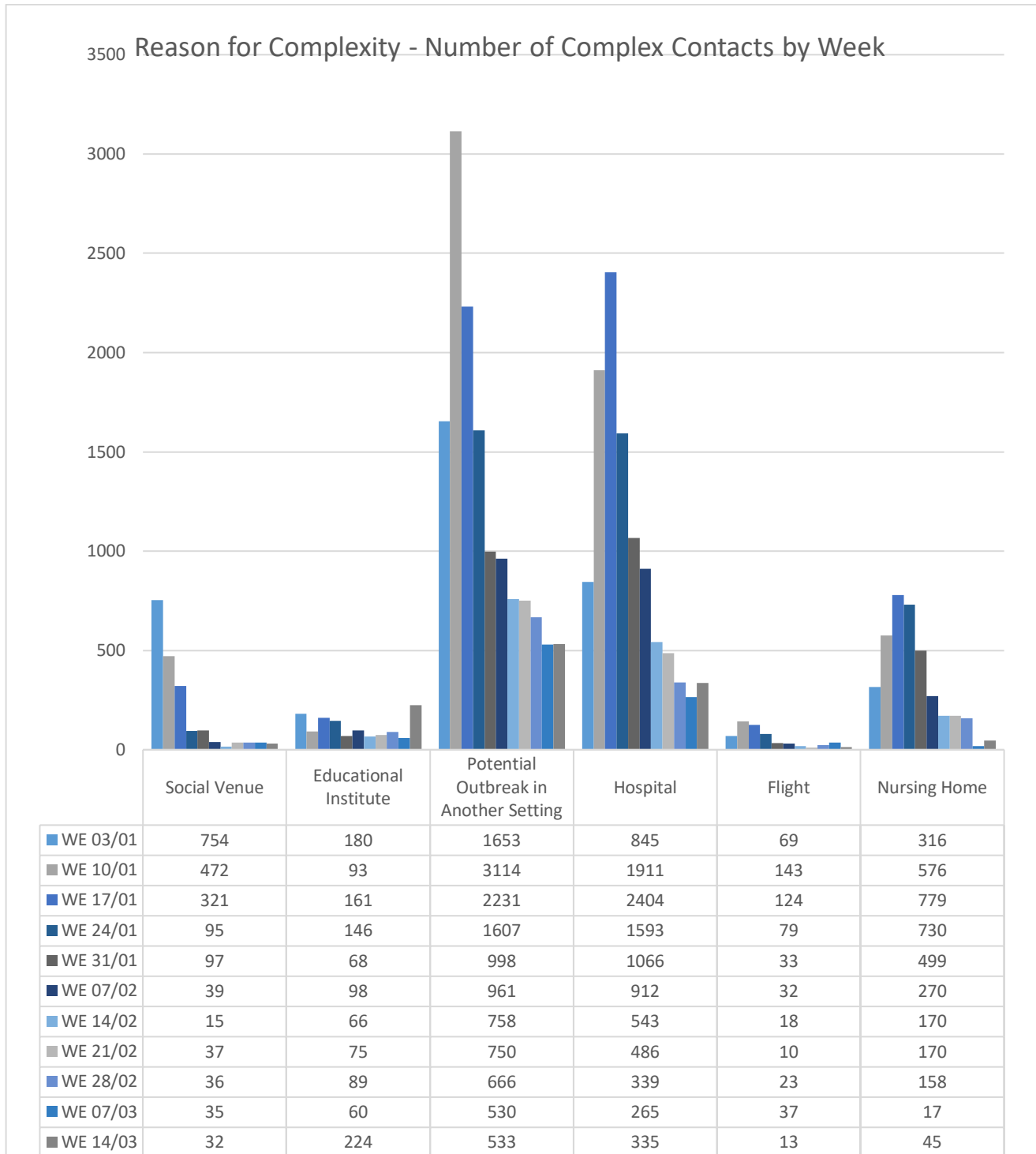


Figure 1.10 - Reason for Complexity - Number of Complex Contacts by Week

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.

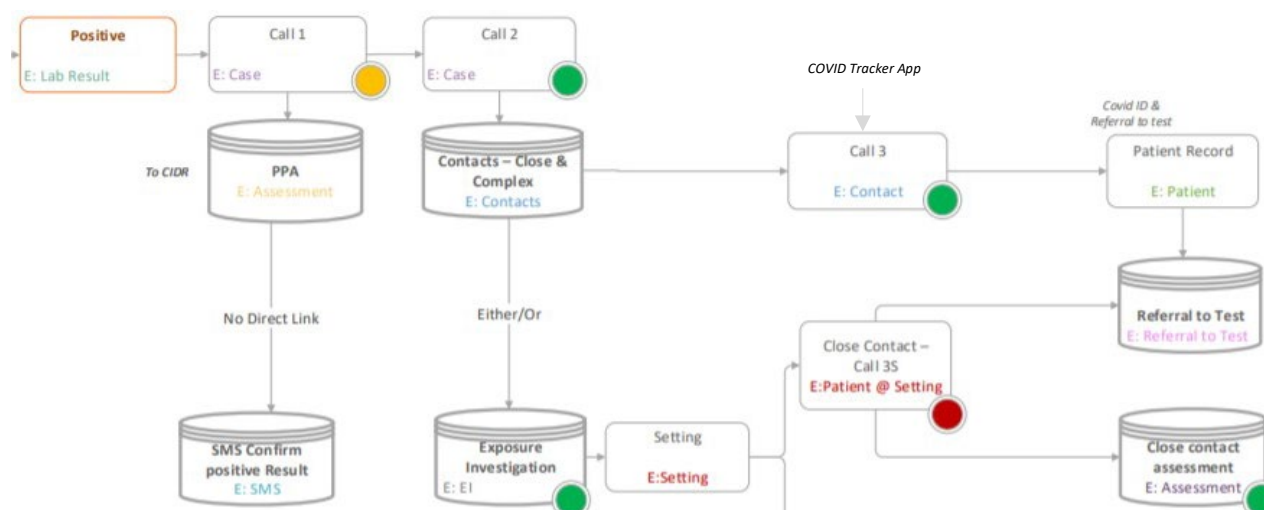


Figure A2.1 - Call 3 and 3S Pathways

### 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 31<sup>st</sup> 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 23<sup>rd</sup> 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 7<sup>th</sup> of December 2020.

## Appendix 3: Revisions to Management of Close Contacts over Time

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

Testing of all close contacts by the CMP commenced on 19<sup>th</sup> 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 28<sup>th</sup> 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 23<sup>rd</sup> 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 23<sup>rd</sup> 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 23<sup>rd</sup> 2020 from 5pm.
- From 29<sup>th</sup> 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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 1<sup>st</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> January 2021. Symptomatic close contacts were advised to organise testing via their GP during this period.
- From 29<sup>th</sup> 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 29<sup>th</sup> January 2021, either on day 5 or the date that the close contact was informed, depending on which was earlier.
- From 10<sup>th</sup> 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 10<sup>th</sup> 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 16<sup>th</sup> 2021.