

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



2 days
Median end-to-end turn around time from referral to communication of result in community settings



1.1 days
Median Swab Taken to lab result



112,150+
Total Swabs



111,660
Total number of laboratory tests completed this week



41,550+
Total number of Contact Tracing calls made this week

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.

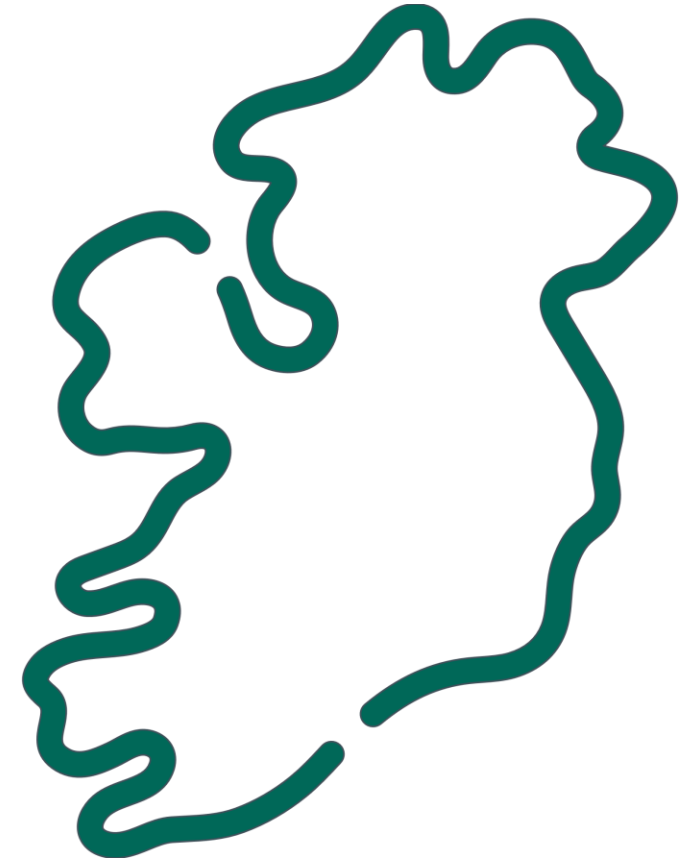
Ireland on the International Stage

Ireland

In comparison to the test and trace systems throughout Europe, Ireland continues to process increasingly high volumes of tests

This week, a report published by the ECDC shows Ireland as among the highest ranked counties in Europe for processing high volumes of tests

Ireland is second overall, after Denmark, of countries processing the highest volumes of tests, with a population of over 2 million people



Note: The ECDC report is published weekly and can be found here: <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications-data/covid-19-testing>



Seirbhís Sláinte
Níos Fearr
á Forbairt

Building a
Better Health
Service

2) Testing Programmes



Serial Testing of All Staff in Residential Care Facilities (RCFs) for Older Persons

Cycle 4 of the serial testing of all staff within residential care facilities commenced on 14th 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;

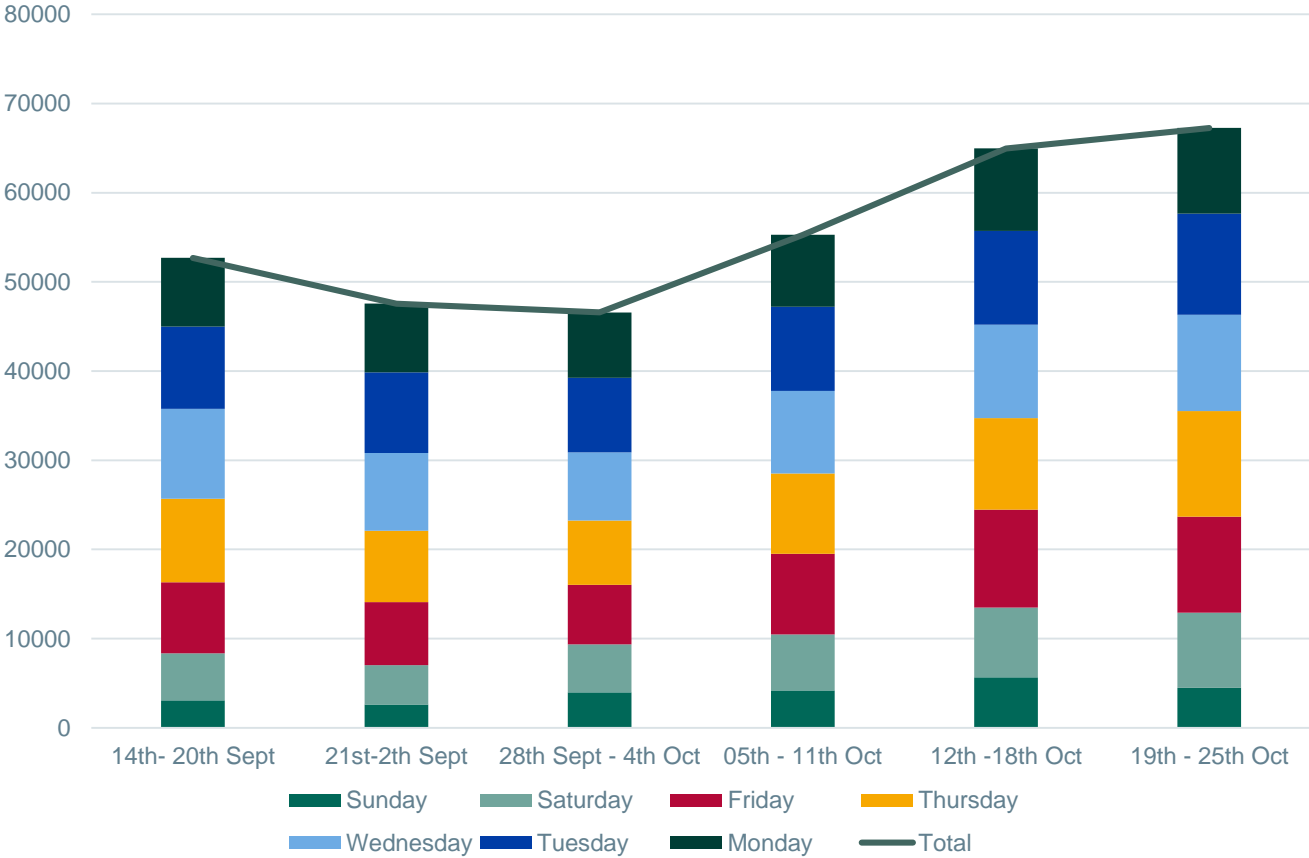


Tested staff in RCFs for Older Persons (tested over 15,589 staff from 19th – 25th of October)



Tested staff at food plants (over 4,307 food plant facility staff from 19th – 25th of October)

Increase in community demand



Contact tracing volumes over the past 6 weeks



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



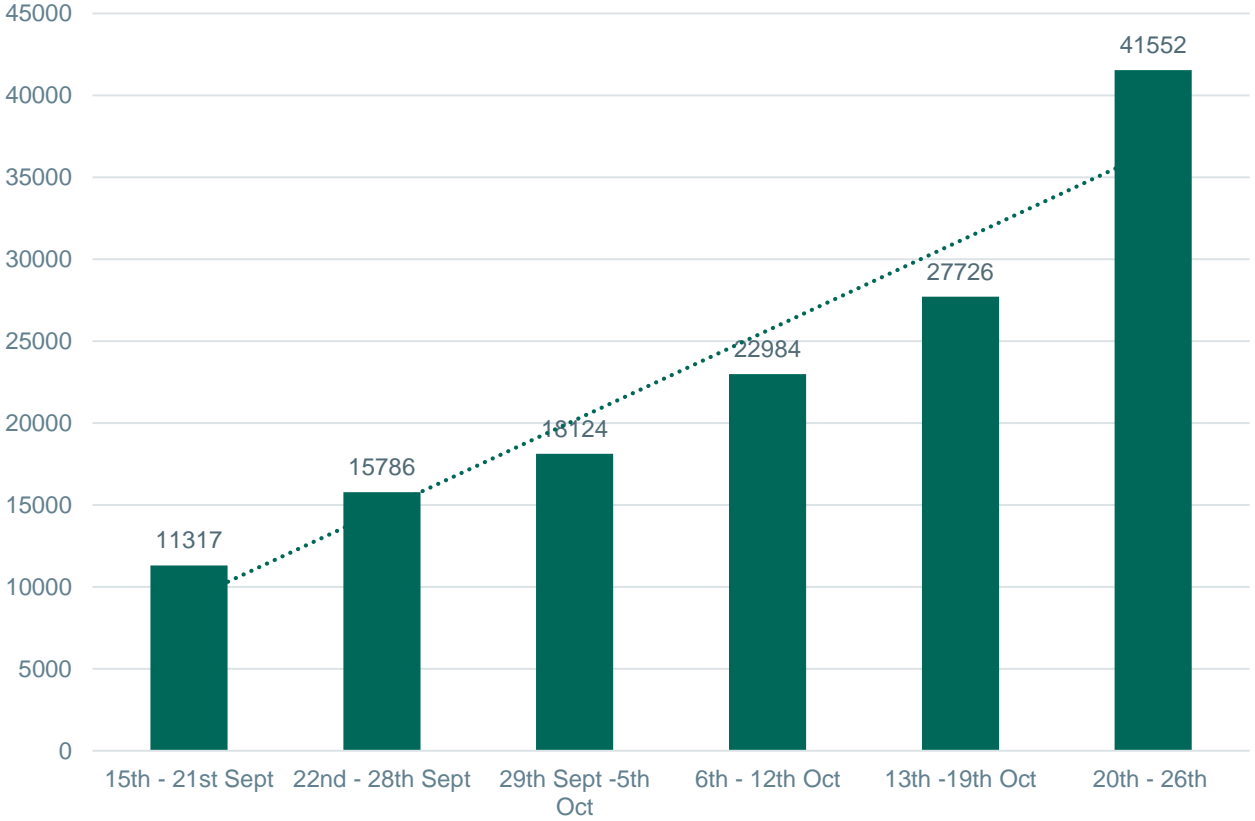
The volume of calls has increased by a factor of **3.7** in the last six weeks.

49%



Last week saw a c.**49%** increase from the previous week in the number of contact tracing calls made.

Total Contact tracing calls



Close contacts and Level 5

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.

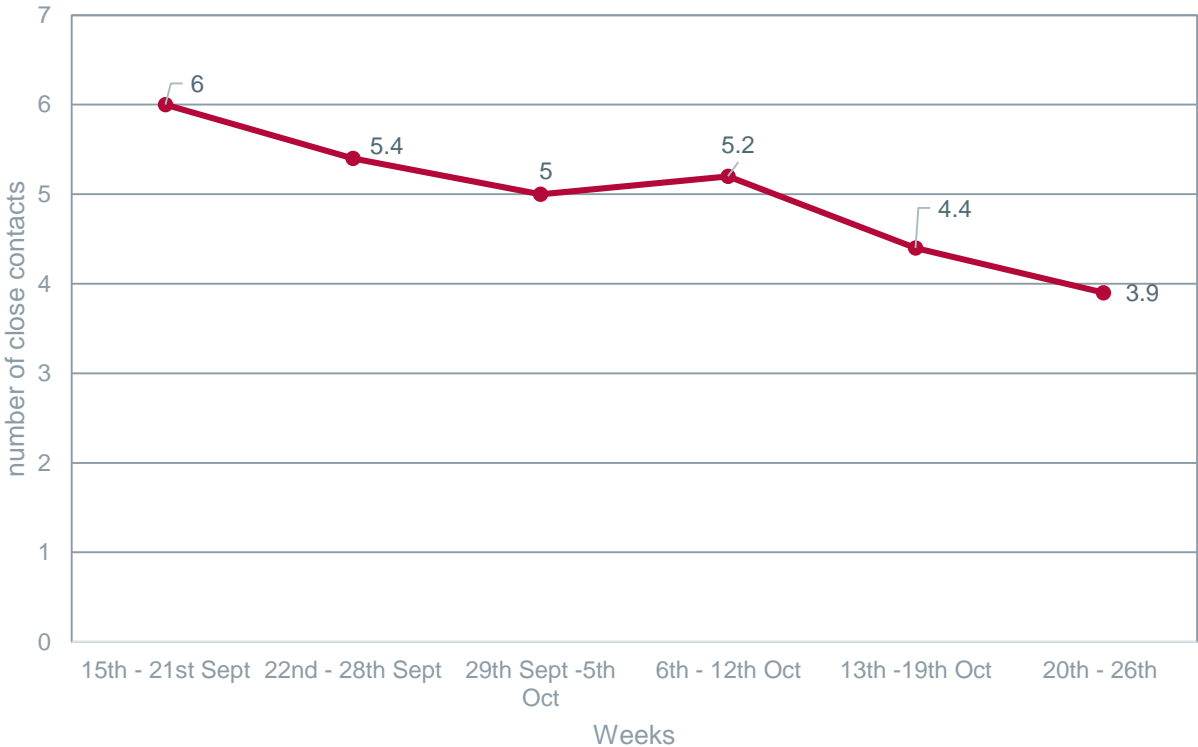
Average number of close contacts trend

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.

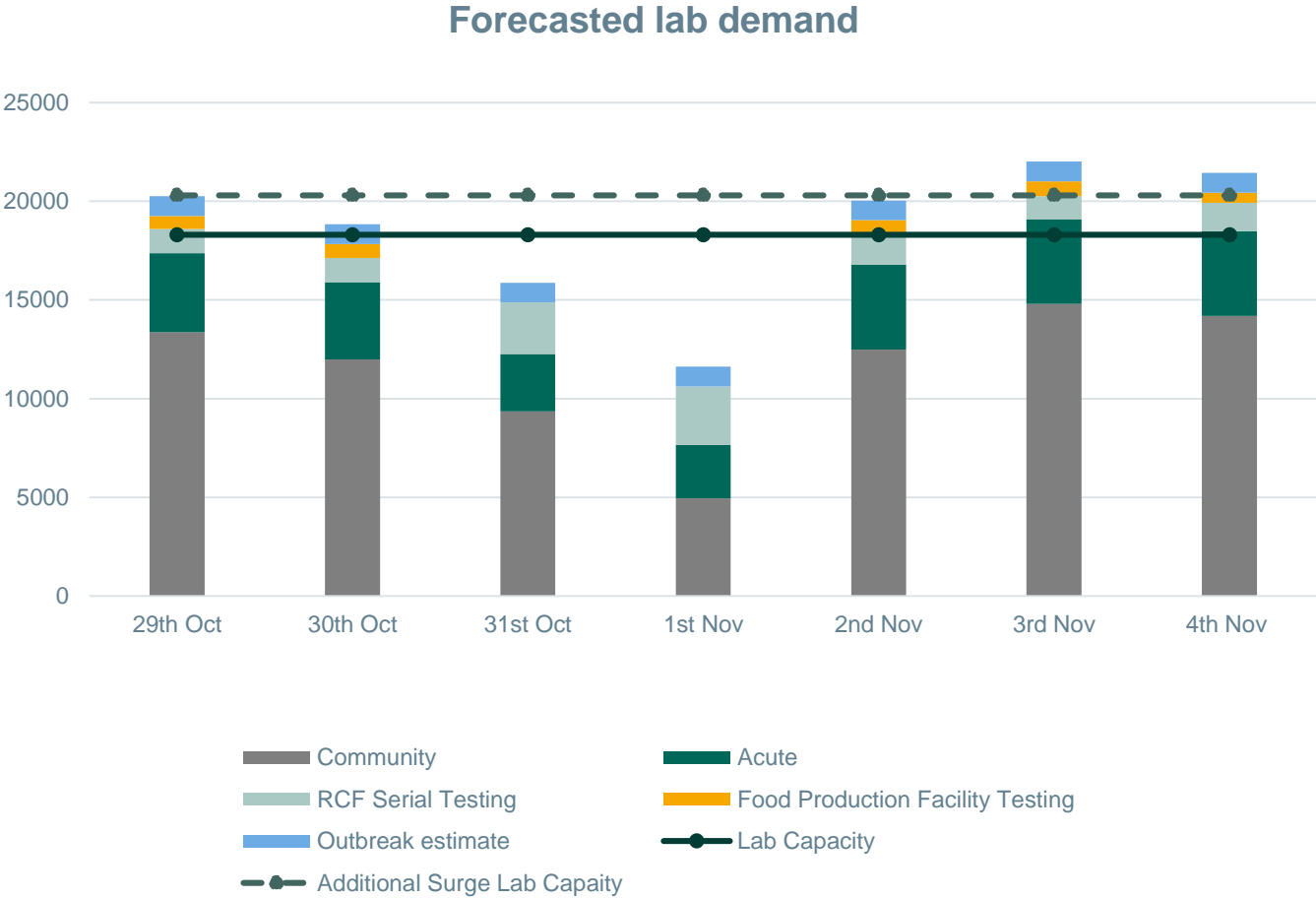
This week we have seen a slight drop, on average those who have received a detected COVID 19 result have had 3.9 close contacts.

Average no of 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.



4) Building agility into the test and trace system



SMS improving the test and trace process

SMS for detected cases

On the 12th of October, SMS communication was introduced for those who were tested for COVID-19 and received detected result

This change in the results communication process is one of the ways we are continuously improving and optimising our end to end test and trace system

SMS for close contacts

On Wednesday 21st of October, SMS notification was introduced to notify individuals if they are a close contact of somebody who has a confirmed case of COVID-19

What has this done for our Turnaround time?

The notification of SMS for detected cases, has improved our turnaround time from referral to communication of a detected result, in all settings, to a median of **2.3 days**.

Reiterating the guidelines

Over the last number of months, the public have had to come to terms with guidance in relation to levels of risk and public health guidance. Sometimes, with messages coming in multiple directions the key message can be lost.

People are confused on whether they have to self-isolate or restrict their movements, what these both mean and for how long this needs to be done

Here are some of your questions answered



Self isolate or restrict my movements?

Self isolate means stay in your room, restrict your movements means stay at home

You should self isolate if

- 1) You have symptoms
- 2) You are waiting on a COVID-19 test/ test result
- 3) Test positive.

You should restrict your movements if

- 1) You are a close contact of someone who has tested positive
- 2) Live with someone who has COVID19 Symptoms, but you feel well
- 3) Arrive in Ireland from a country that isn't on the Green list

Is that for 10 days or 14 days?

An individual who falls under the **self isolate** category should only stop isolating when **they have had no fever for 5 days and 10 days since they first developed symptoms**

An individual who falls under the **restrict your movements** category should **restrict their movements for 14 days**, even if they had a test and it comes back negative.

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.

