



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Oifig an Stiúirthóra Náisiúnta um Phleanáil agus Chlaochlú Straitéiseach
Seomra 2.49, Ospidéal Dr Steevens', Lána Steevens', BAC D08 W2A8
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Office of the National Director Strategic Planning and Transformation
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1st February 2021

Deputy Mairead Farrell
Dail Eireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

RE: PQ 2204/21

Dear Deputy Farrell,

I refer to PQ ref 2204/21 which you submitted via the HSE Parliamentary Affairs Division for review and direct response. The question concerned was referred to Strategic Planning and Transformation in the HSE for review and direct response, as we are managing the HSE's Covid-19 Contact Management Programme (CMP).

PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health if his attention has been drawn to differences in the pay and conditions for contact tracing staff located in centres in Galway relative to those centres based in Dublin, Cork and Limerick, particularly in relation in the working of 12 hour shifts three days in a row, the difference in pay between clinical and non-clinical contact tracers, various breaches of the CPSA codes of best practice in public service appointments and the alleged failure to adhere to the HSA return to work protocol; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Mairéad Farrell

Response: The HSE's Contact Management Programme has developed its own workforce and has put in place sustainable and effective arrangements with other organisations to support us in times of peak surge. Staff have been recruited by CPL Healthcare on behalf of the HSE to provide Contact Tracing services. The recruitment of this dedicated full-time workforce has allowed previously redeployed HSE to return to their substantive posts, posts which were often patient facing. We now have over 800 people working as contact tracers and we have a formalised relationship with the Defence Forces and our Environmental Health Service to augment our response as when needed.

The staff in Contact Tracing Centres are employees of CPL Healthcare and recruitment was carried out in line with best practice, balanced against the immediate urgent need for Contact Tracers to support the management of COVID-19 in a more sustainable way.

The recruitment process was streamlined to include a telephone interview process and securing of recruitment clearances. Colleagues in HSE Recruitment have advised that without further specific details it is not possible to determine where alleged breaches of Codes of Practice may have occurred. However, I would like to provide reassurance on behalf of our colleagues in HSE Recruitment Quality and Standards that a best practice recruitment process took place, balanced with the urgent need for Contact Tracers.



Seirbhís Sláinte
Níos Fearr
á Forbairt

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The recruitment of the contact tracers allowed HSE staff to return to their substantive roles and provided the necessary stability and sustainability to the contact tracing service. All CPL Healthcare employed staff, clinical and non-clinical; have access to the same pay rates and conditions across the contact tracing services.

- Clinical Contact Tracers are recruited for their clinical experience/ background and are paid at an Assistant Staff Officer rate of €28,749 to €43,628, dependent on relevant experience.
- Non Clinical Contact Tracers are paid at a Clerical Officer salary rate as they do not need to have clinical backgrounds/ experience for the services they provide - this ranges from €24,601 to €39,087 and again positioning on the scale would depend on relevant experience.

The roster arrangements operated in the Galway contact tracing service have been developed in consultation with staff and colleagues have advised that the current arrangements are well received and they do not differ from other centres in any marked way, other centres have adopted the Galway roster arrangements.

The HSE and local management in the Galway Contact Tracing Centre have advised that they are unaware of any alleged breach of the HSA Return to Work protocol in the Galway Contact Tracing Centre. Local management is exacting in its adherence to meet the HSA's protocol's requirements, including a stipulation for all personnel returning to work after absences to complete an online Return to Work form that fully aligns with the HSA protocol.

I trust this response deals with your query however; if you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact this office.

Yours sincerely,

Sarah Ryan
Business Manager
Office of the National Director, Strategic Planning and Transformation and Head of CMP