National Contact Management Programme

Call 1 - 2 - 3

Version Control

Version	Date	Version comments
1.0	18/03/2020	Initial release
2.0	18/03/2020	Updates to align script changes
3.0	18/03/2020	Section 1- Repetition removed Section 2- Spread in the Population How to the virus Spread ? – up to 72 hours on surfaces added Symptoms Section – 80 % added. What about children ?- remove duplication When to wash your hands- added specified after taking gloved off. Section 3: Definition of Contact – removed usually 24hours in…. Types of contact - removed Unknown
4.0	19/03/2020	Removal of CT Centre Workplace & Roles slide Removal of slide ref. IT System slide Inclusion of Call Management and Self-care information Correction of typo errors Inclusion of holding slide for Covid-19 Case Tracker System
5.0	20/03/20	Inclusion of term 'restricted movement/self-quarantine' Definition and examples of exceptional, complex and associated contacts added Hand Hygiene change – 20 seconds Removal of reference to aerosol spread
6.0	21/03/20	Removal of reference to collecting casual contact data at call 1 & 2 Removal of 'daily' text message for close contacts at Call 3

Modules

- Overview

- How to conduct Call 1
- How to conduct Call 2
- How to conduct Call 3

- Frequently Asked Questions

- Call Advice and Self-Care Support

- Covid-19 Case Tracker System

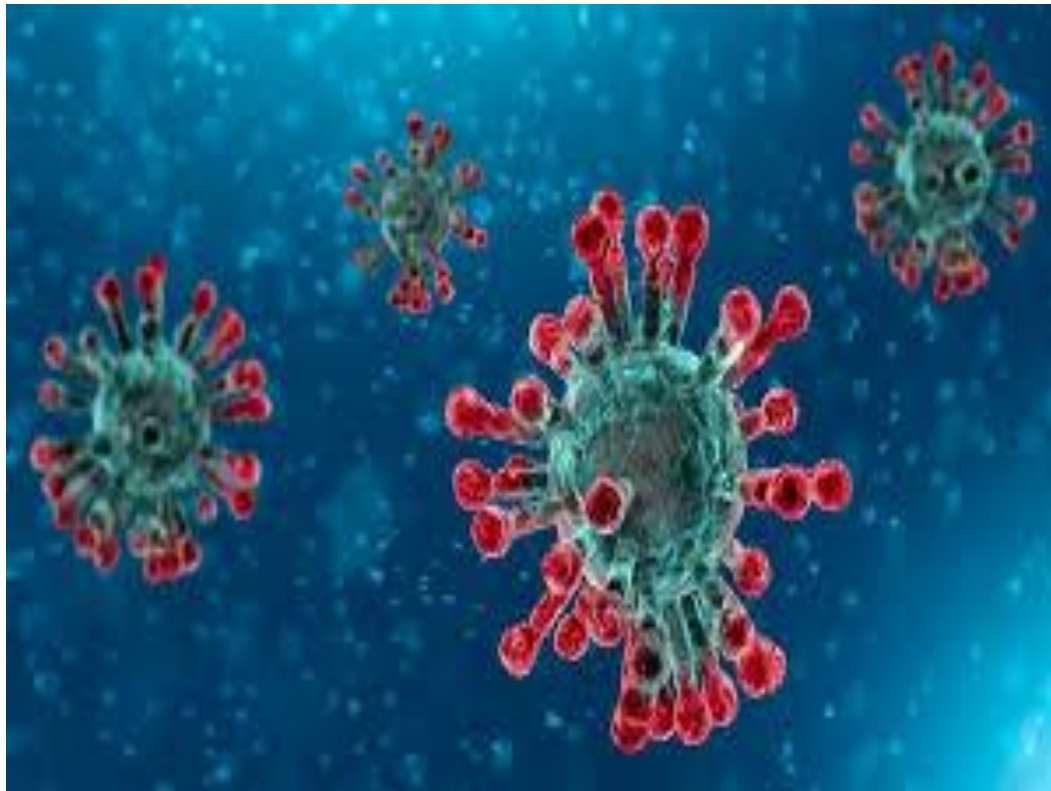# National Contact Management Programme

Overview

Aim

The aim of this programme is to provide you with the knowledge and skills required to support the contact tracing process for COVID-19/Coronavirus

Sections

- Section 1 – Corona Virus Background

- Section 2 – Spread in the Population
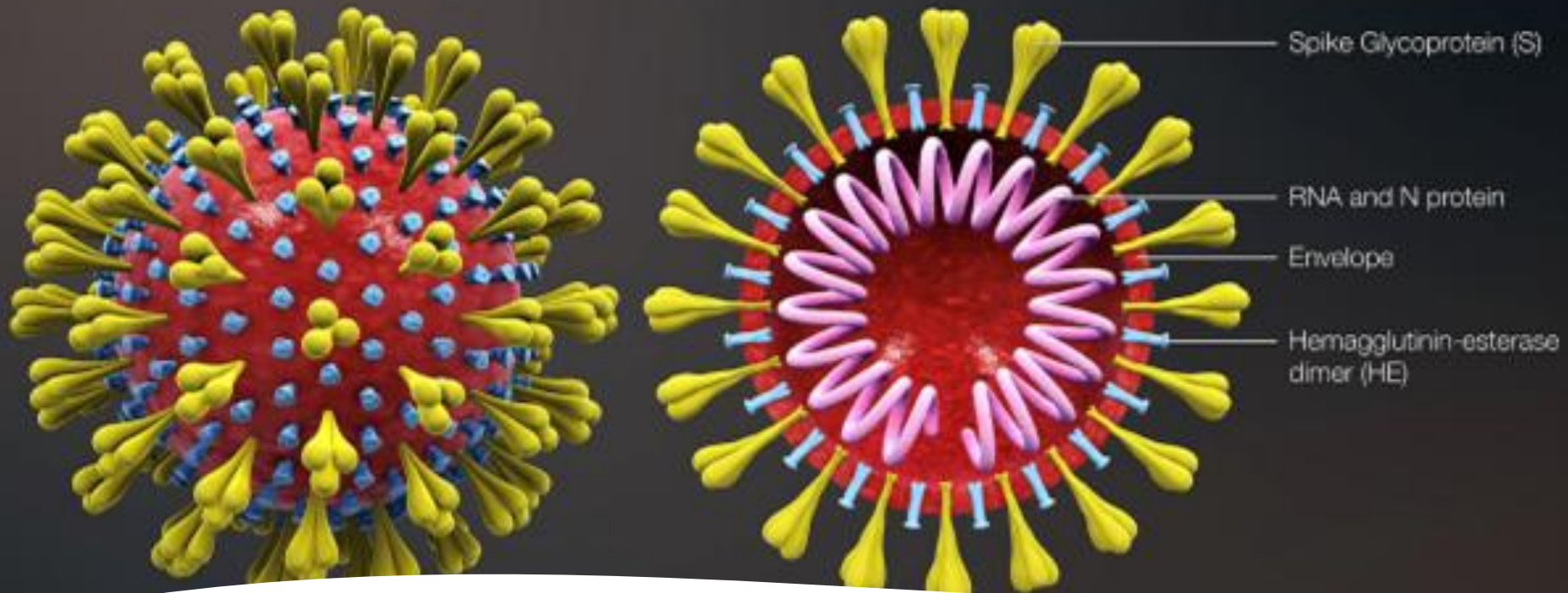
- Section 3 – Contact Tracing

Section 1 – Corona Virus Background

What is a Coronavirus?

- A coronavirus is a type of Zoonotic virus found in animals and humans.

- As a group, coronaviruses are common across the world.

Spike Glycoprotein (S)

RNA and N protein

Envelope

Hemagglutinin-esterase dimer (HE)
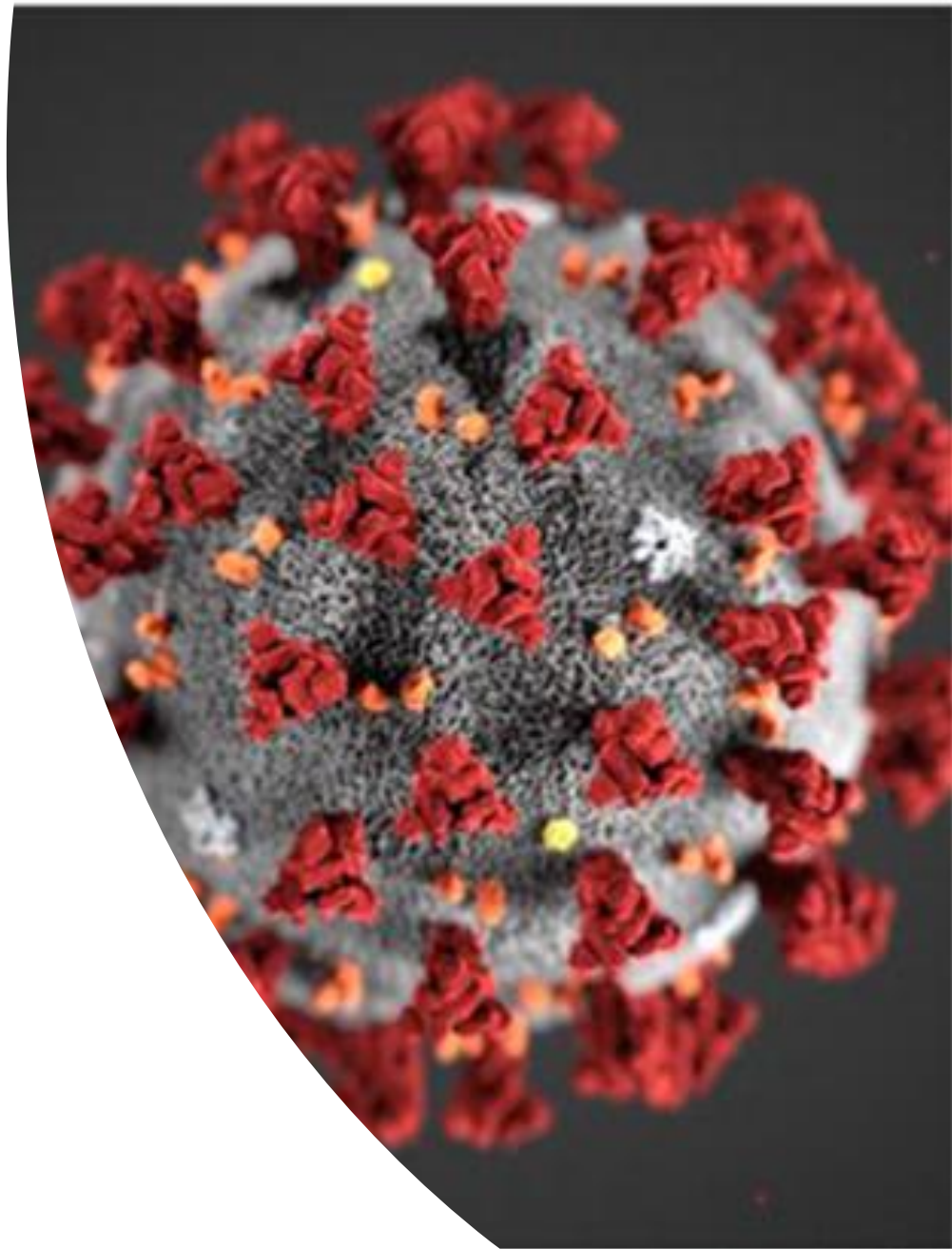
Coronavirus

There are 7 known coronaviruses which infect and spread between humans:

4 of these cause "common cold" type symptoms

3 are novel coronaviruses appearing only in the last 18 years and cause a Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)

- **SARS-CoV** caused a large outbreak originating in China in 2003 ("SARS")
- **MERS-CoV** is an ongoing low-level outbreak mainly in the Middle East – most cases are associated with animal (camel) exposure (MERS)
- **SARS-CoV-2(COVID-19) -** is microbiologically similar to SARS

The **Virus** causes the Disease

SARS-CoV-2 is the name of the *virus*

COVID-19 is the name of the *disease*

COVID-19

Originated in a city called Wuhan in the Hubei province of **China**

- First reported end of December 2019
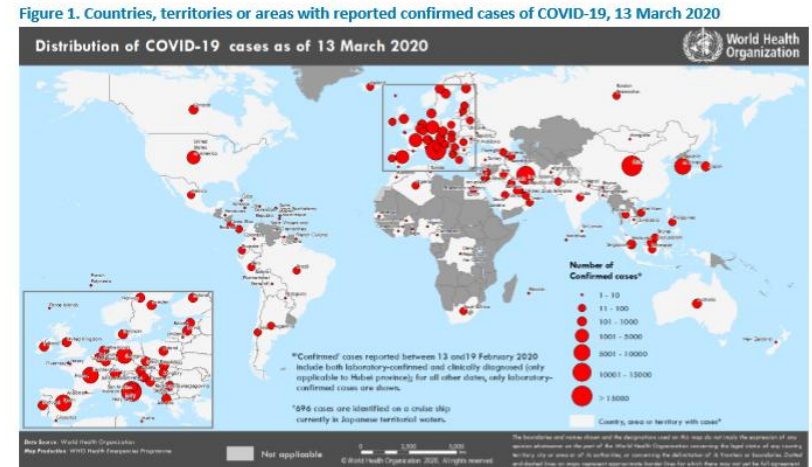
- SARS-CoV-2 identified in Jan 2020

- Spread outside of China in Feb 2020

Pandemic

The World Health Organisation has declared the COVID-19 outbreak to be a *pandemic.*

A pandemic is declared when a disease affects a lot of people in a lot of countries and spreads rapidly.

Figure 1. Countries, territories or areas with reported confirmed cases of COVID-19, 13 March 2020

Impact of COVID-19

- 80% of cases have mild symptoms.

- 15% of people infected become severely unwell

- 5% become critically un-well

- Fatality rate increases with age and depends on other underlying conditions

Initial data indicate that patients display approximately these proportions of severity:

80% No or mild symptoms

15% Severe disease

5% Critically unwell

Section 2 – Spread in the Population

How does the virus spread?

Coronavirus is spread in sneeze or cough droplets.

To infect you, it has to get from an infected person's nose or mouth into your eyes, nose or mouth.

This can be direct or indirect (on hands, objects, surfaces).

Keep this in mind. It will help you remember all the things you need to do to protect yourself and others from the virus.

COVID-19 Infectivity

The **incubation period** is the time from SARS-CoV-2exposure to the onset of symptoms of COVID-19. The average incubation period is 5.1 days, with 97.5% becoming symptomatic within 11.5 days . It is very unlikely that a person will become infected if not symptomatic 14 days after exposure.

The **infectious period** is *currently* considered to start from the date of first onset of symptoms.

Individuals are unlikely to be infectious 14 days after the onset of symptoms, provided they are well and have been fever free for 5 consecutive days. Seek clarification from GP if required.

Phases of the Outbreak

1. **Containment**
   - Preventing spread
     - Isolation of cases
     - Tracing and quarantine/restrict movement of contacts
     - Good Hygiene practices

2. **Delay**
   - Slowing down spread
     - Isolation
     - Quarantine
     - Good Hygiene practices
   - Social Distancing

3. **Mitigation**
   - All above measures plus
   - Treating the cases while maintaining health services

Delay Phase Slowing down the Outbreak

We are trying to slow down the spread of COVID-19 so that the health system is not over burdened.

One of the ways of slowing down the spread of COVID-19 is by tracing people who have been in close contact with confirmed cases and managing them to prevent on-going transmission.
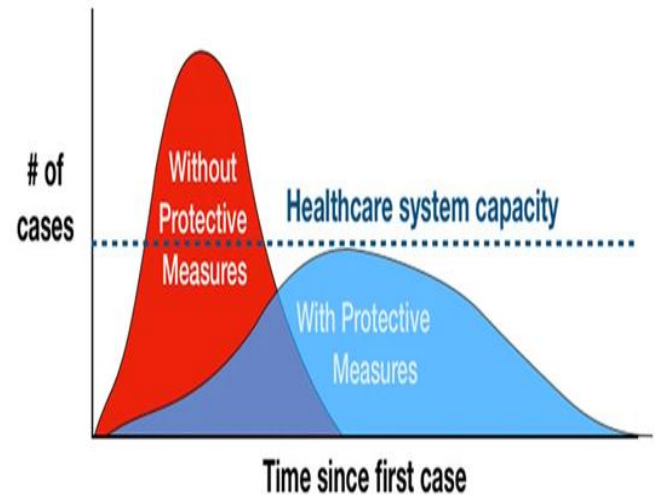
Epidemiological Curve

Symptoms

1. Fever (88%)

Feeling hot /feverish

(A high temperature is anything above 38^0 c or 100.4 ^{o} F)

2. Dry Cough (68%)

3. Breathing Difficulty (19%)

Shortness of breath

Symptoms

Other commonly reported symptoms
- fatigue (38%),
- sputum production (33%),

Other less commonly reported symptoms
- sore throat (14%), headache (14%)
- and achy muscles / bones(15%).
- Less common symptoms are diarrhoea
- (4%) and vomiting (5%).

- If person has any of the above symptoms they should contact their GP for advice

Those most likely to become unwell

These include;

- Elderly people

- People with underlying health conditions

 (high blood pressure, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, immuno-compromised patients)

- Healthcare workers treating cases

What about Children?

- Disease in children appears to be relatively mild.

- A large study from China suggested that just over 2% of cases were under 18 yrs. Of these, fewer than 3% developed severe or critical symptoms of disease.

- Children with underlying health conditions may be more vulnerable.

Is there a risk in pregnancy?

- We are still learning about coronavirus (COVID-19). We don't yet know how it affects pregnant women and their babies.

- There is currently no evidence that pregnant women are more vulnerable.

- At present, there is no evidence of transmission of COVID-19 from mother to baby occurring during pregnancy.

- Breast feeding – can continue -however advice needs to be sought from GP, Midwife.

COVID-19 Public Health Measures

- Guidance on how to protect yourself & others

- Contact Tracing

- Social Distancing

- Restricted Movement/Self-Quarantine

- Self-Isolation

Social Distancing

Social distancing is a term applied to certain actions that are taken by Public Health officials to stop or slow down the spread of a highly contagious disease.

Examples of Social Distancing

Schools, Colleges, Child care facilities closed

Indoor mass gatherings of >100 people cancelled

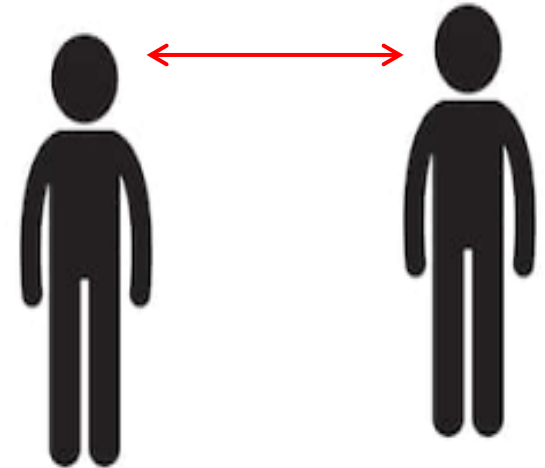Outdoor mass gatherings of >500 people cancelled

Social Distancing

At least 2 metres (6.5 feet) distance between people (particularly those who are coughing, sneezing or have a fever).

No handshaking or hugs -

Avoid crowds, sporting events, concerts etc…

www. HSPSC.ie

Protecting Yourself & Others

- Coughing and Sneezing Etiquette

- Hand Hygiene

COUGHING AND SNEEZING

COVER UP

- Turn your head away from others
- Use a tissue to cover your nose and mouth

- Drop your tissue into a waste bin

- No tissues? Use your sleeve

- Clean your hands after discarding tissue using soap and water or alcohol gel for at least 15 seconds

These steps will help prevent the spread of colds, flu and other respiratory infections

When to wash your hands

- after coughing or sneezing
- before and after preparing and eating food
- if you were in contact with someone who has a fever or respiratory symptoms
- after being on public transport or in a crowd (especially an indoor crowd)
- if you have handled animals or animal waste
- after toilet use

Moisturise your hands often. Any basic product that is not perfumed/coloured is ok.

- Do not wear gloves *instead* of washing your hands. The virus gets on them in the same way it gets on your hands.
- Your hands can get contaminated when you take the gloves of.
- Make sure you wash your hands after removing gloves

How to wash your hands with soap and water

1. Wet your hands with warm water and apply soap.
2. Rub your hands together until the soap forms a lather.
3. Rub the top of your hands, between your fingers and under your fingernails.
4. Do this for about 20 seconds.
5. Rinse your hands under running water.
6. Dry your hands with a clean towel or paper towel

▶ YouTube

https://youtu.be/IsgLivAD2FE

How to Handwash?

WASH HANDS WHEN VISIBLY SOILED! OTHERWISE, USE HANDRUB

Duration of the entire procedure: 40-60 seconds

0 — Wet hands with water;
1 — Apply enough soap to cover all hand surfaces;
2 — Rub hands palm to palm;
3 — Right palm over left dorsum with interlaced fingers and vice versa;
4 — Palm to palm with fingers interlaced;
5 — Backs of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked;
6 — Rotational rubbing of left thumb clasped in right palm and vice versa;
7 — Rotational rubbing, backwards and forwards with clasped fingers of right hand in left palm and vice versa;
8 — Rinse hands with water;
9 — Dry hands thoroughly with a single use towel;
10 — Use towel to turn off faucet;
11 — Your hands are now safe.

World Health Organization | Patient Safety | SAVE LIVES Clean Your Hands

What do we mean by restricted movement/self-quarantine?

- People may be asked to **restrict movement/self-quarantine** . This is because they have been in close contact with a case of Coronavirus but have **no symptoms.**

- The period they may be asked to self-quarantine for is usually 14 days from the last contact with the case.

- People can still go outside for walks, runs or cycles on their own but you should not spend time in close contact with other people.

- Other household members do not need to restrict their activities, unless they are also close contacts of a case.

www2.hse.ie

How do people restrict movement/self-quarantine?

- Do not go to school, college or work.

- Do not use public transport.

- Do not go to meetings, social gatherings, group events or crowded places.

- Do not have visitors at your home.

- Do not go shopping - where possible, order your groceries online or have some family or friends drop them off.

- Avoid contact with older people, people with chronic health problems and pregnant women if possible.

- Do not travel outside Ireland.

What do we mean by self-isolate?

If during the quarantine period a person develops symptoms of COVID-19, they must self-isolate and phone their GP or whoever they have been advised to contact.

They will be assessed and testing will be arranged.

Self-isolation means staying indoors and completely avoiding contact with other people. People will be asked to self-isolate

– While waiting to get tested for coronavirus
– While awaiting their test results
– If they have had a positive test result for coronavirus

The period you may be asked to self-isolate for, is from the day of symptom onset until you are classified as no longer infectious by the treatment team.

How do people self-isolate?

- Stay at home, in a room with the window open.

- Keep away from others in your home as much as you can. (especially older people, pregnant women or anyone with an underlying health condition)

- Check your symptoms - call a doctor if they get worse.

- Phone your doctor if you need to - do not visit them.

- Cover your coughs and sneezes using a tissue - clean your hands properly afterwards.

- Wash your hands properly and often.

- Use your own towel - do not share a towel with others.

- Clean your room every day with a household cleaner or disinfectant.

- Do not go to work, school, religious services or public areas.

- Do not share your anything you handle

- Do not use public transport or taxis.

- Do not invite visitors to your home.

For more information refer to www2.hse.ie Click on Coronavirus info

or enter 'hse self-isolation' into your search engine

Section – 3 Contract Tracing

What is Contact Tracing?

Contact tracing is the process of identifying all people to whom a confirmed case may have transmitted the infection, and putting in place measures to ensure these exposed people do not further transmit disease

What does it involve?

Phoning those people who were in contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 to provide

✓ Advise
✓ Guidance

Definition of a contact

Anyone who has been in contact with someone who has been confirmed as having COVID-19.

The contact timeframe is **from the day the infected person showed signs of symptoms** until the infected person is no longer classified as infectious by the treating team. *(usually 24 hours after symptom resolution)*
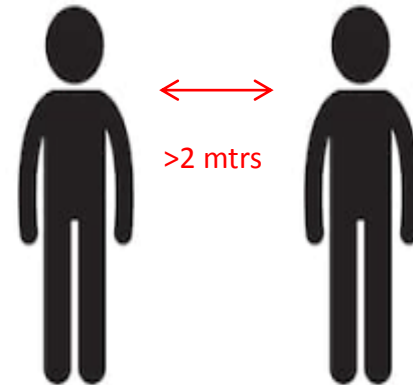
Types of Contact

Two main types

1. Close Contact
2. Casual Contact

Other Contact Classification in the Case Tracker System

1. Exceptional Contacts
2. Complex Contacts
3. Associated Contacts

Definition of a Close Contact

Is defined as an individual who has had greater than **15 minutes face-to-face contact** with a confirmed case of COVID-19 in any setting or circumstance within **less than 2 meters (6.5 feet)** distance.

>2 mtrs

HSE National Interim Guidelines for the public health management of contacts of cases of covid-19, including healthcare workers

Examples of Close Contacts

1. Household contacts

2. Closed space contact

For those contacts who have shared a **closed space** with a confirmed case for longer than two hours, a risk assessment should be undertaken taking into consideration the size of the room, ventilation and the distance from the case.

3. Healthcare workers

4. Passengers on an aircraft

Sitting within two seats (in any direction) of the COVID-19 case, travel companions or persons providing care, and crew members serving in the section of the aircraft where the index case was seated

Characteristics of a Casual Contact

Any individual who has shared a **Closed Space** with a confirmed case for **less than two hours .**

Any individual who has shared a closed space with a confirmed case for **longer than two hours**, but following a risk assessment, does not meet the definition of a close contact.

2 hours

Passengers on an aircraft sitting **beyond two seats** (in any direction) of a confirmed case.

Exceptional, Complex & Associated Contacts

1. **Exceptional Contact:**
   1. Healthcare Worker
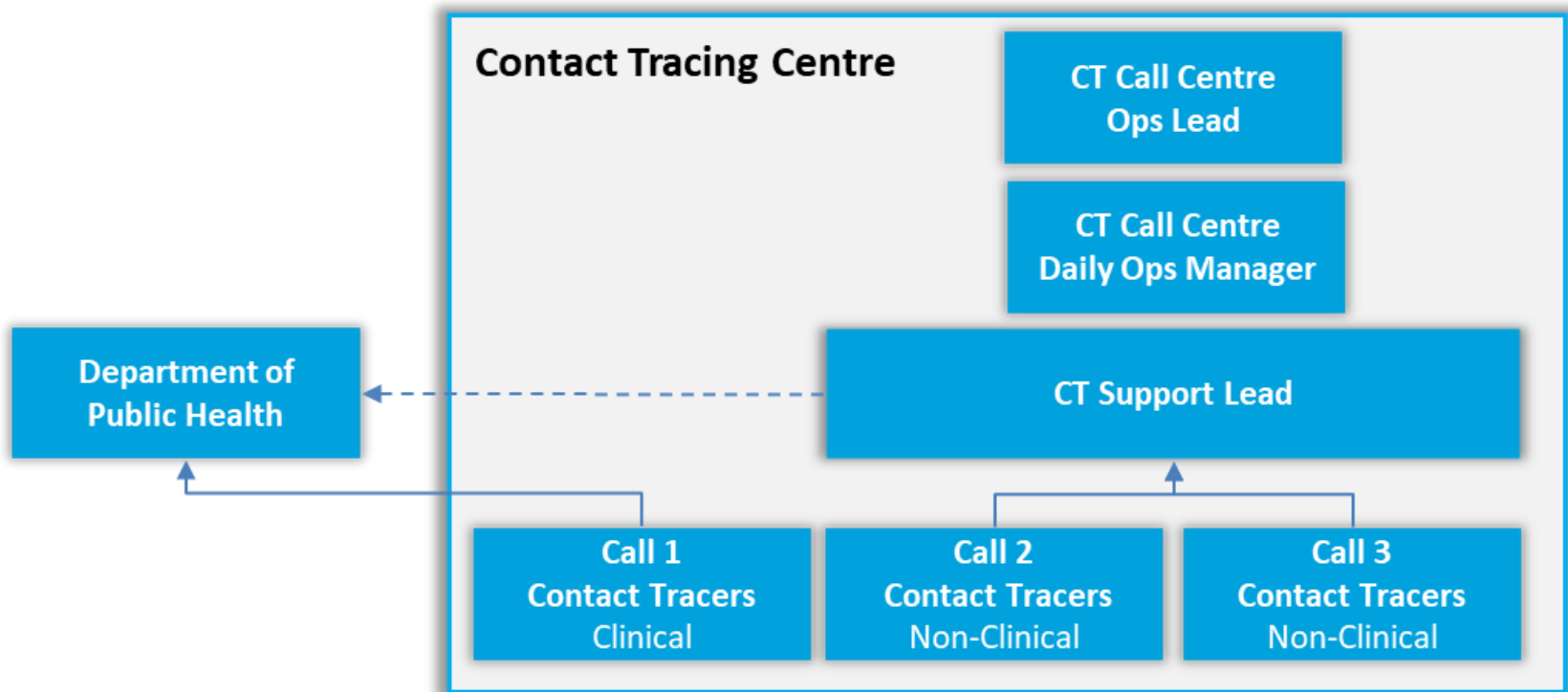
2. **Complex Contact:**

   A group of unidentified people eg.
   1. Nursing home resident / other social care setting
   2. Prison
   3. Direct Provision

3. **Associated Contact:**

This arises if a person's details are unknown but can alternative contact can provide those details.

CTC – Contact Tracing Call Centre Governance Structure

How to Conduct Call 1

How to conduct the clinical case overview

Supporting Documents

Refer to the Guide for Contact Identification

Steps to be followed

1. Introduce yourself & confirm identity details
2. Purpose of the call
3. Deliver the result
4. Check if they are a healthcare worker & refer to Public Health
5. Check for symptoms & give health and self-isolation advice
6. Explain what will happen next regarding contact

Who are you calling?

The people you are calling a person who has been **tested positive** for COVID-19.

Why are you calling?

- To tell them they have tested positive for COVID-19 *(This is the first time they will find out they have tested positive)*

- To give them appropriate healthcare advice

- To tell them that a colleague will be in touch to collect a list of their contacts from the **first day they experienced symptoms** to date

Step 1 Introduce yourself & confirm identity details

Hello my name is...

Reference Guide Script

If the person is not proficient in English – ask is there someone who they would like included in the conversation. Check if they have a designated contact they would like you to speak to. Capture name and number in notes.

If someone else answers the phone, please ask to speak to the contact

DOB This is to verify their identity. You do not need to enter this again on the data system. If the person is **under 16** (xx/xx/2004) ask to speak with a parent or legal guardian. If they are not with their guardian, get a parent / guardian's name and phone number.

If i**n-patient** ask has anyone been in touch about the result.

Make a judgement on clinical condition of case; whether the person is well enough and able to speak.

If not, ask for the name and number of a close family member that you can phone and enter details in notes.

Try to encourage the person to proceed with call, and only defer in exceptional circumstances

Step 2 – Deliver the result

How are you feeling today..

Reference Guide Script

Key Points

- *1. You were recently tested for Covid19 and I am calling to tell you that the results of your test has come back as positive which means you have COVID-19. I am sorry to have to give you this news.*

- *2. How are you feeling today?* **Check if symptomatic. If the person is feeling unwell please advise them to contact the GP. If they are acutely unwell please advise them to call the emergency services**

Pause to let diagnosis sink in. You may need to reiterate where you are calling from and your name.

Step 3 – Identify healthcare workers

Can I check if you are a healthcare worker?

Reference Guide Script

Key Points

Can I check if you work in healthcare?

If <u>YES</u>: Ask them to contact their occupational health department and line manager where they work and continue with the call.

If <u>NO</u>: continue with call.

Step 4 – Check for Symptoms

Can I check in with you…

Reference Guide Script

Key Points

When did you first start feeling unwell?

Identify and note date of first symptoms – fever, cough, shortness of breath

Are you still experiencing fever, cough, and shortness of breath?

Capture date of last symptoms if no longer symptomatic

Step 5 – Check if still self-isolating

Can I ask what informatio and advice you have been given on how to self-isolate?

Reference Guide Script

Key Points

Can I ask what information and advice you have been given on how to self-isolate?

Refer to Patient Sheet on Self-Isolation at Home. (Appendix 1)

If self-isolation is breached, family members must re-start their period of restricted movement/self-quarantine from the date of the breach.

You will need to continue to self-isolate until XX date, if on that day you have been fever free for 5 days, you can cease self-isolation. If not, wait 5 days until your last had fever.

Note: Self-isolation can end if 14 days since symptoms began and 5 days fever free

Step 6 – Inform about contact tracing

It's really important ....

Reference Guide Script

Key Points

It is really important that we identify the people you have been in contact with since you felt unwell

Over the next few hours, could you please write down a list of anyone you have had close contact with since you first had symptoms.

You will receive a call later today and someone will go through this list and ask you for each person's:

Name

Phone Number

Date of contact

Also think of any places you have been but don't know the name of others who were there

Also whether you know if any of your contacts work in healthcare?

Remember

Close Contact is anyone with whom you have had more than 15 mins face to face contact within 2 metres (6.5 feet) or more than 2 hours in a closed space

Step 7 – Give Health Advice

Again I am very sorry...

Reference Guide Script

Continue to adhere to the advise already given to **self-isolate**

Refer to www2.hse.ie for further information on self-isolation.

Key Points

I am going to give you some information and advice.

If you start to feel very unwell but it is not an emergency call your regular doctor / GP.

If it is an emergency and you need to call an ambulance, call 112 or 999 and remember to tell the ambulance service that you have been diagnosed with COVID-19

Step 8 Advise on what happens next

Again I am very sorry….

Reference Guide Script

Again, I am very sorry to have had to deliver the news that you have the COVID-19 virus.

Thank you for taking the time to speak to me and providing so much information.

All the information that I have given you is available on the HSE website **www2.hse.ie**

Is there anything in particular that you would like me to go back over now?

How to conduct Call 2

Who are you calling?

You are calling a person who has been **tested positive** for COVID-19.

Why are you calling?

- You are calling them to identify their contacts since the date they **first experienced symptoms.**

and

- You are assessing and classifying their contacts
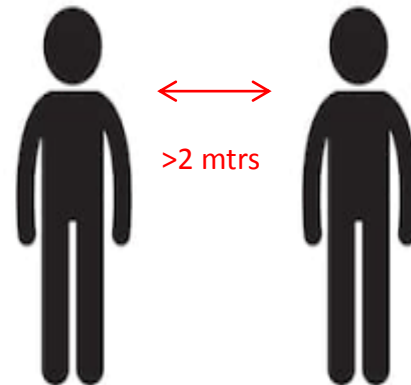
Reminder
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Reminder

Definition of a Close Contact

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>2 mtrs

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Exceptional, Complex & Associated Contacts

Reminder

1. Exceptional Contact:

1. Healthcare Worker

2. Complex Contact:

A group of unidentified people eg.

1. Nursing home resident / other social care setting
2. Prison
3. Direct Provision

3. Associated Contact:

This arises if a person's details are unknown but can alternative contact can provide those details.

How to conduct the close contact identification call

Supporting Documents

Refer to the Guide for Contact Identification

Steps to be followed

1. Introduce yourself & confirm identity details
2. Purpose of call
3. Identify contacts and risk assess
4. Run through days since onset of symptoms
5. Give health advice
6. Advise on what happens next

Step 1 Introduce yourself & confirm identity details

Hello my name is...

Reference Guide Script

Make a judgement on clinical condition of the person; whether the person is well enough and able to speak.
If not, ask for the name and number of a close family member that you can phone and enter details in notes and add the additional phone number under "phone" within the patient details section.
Refer to CT Support Lead Lead if necessary

Key Points

- If the person is not proficient in English – ask is there someone who they would like included in the conversation.

- Check if they have a designated contact they would like you to speak to. If yes, enter a note containing name, number and relationship under timeline and add the additional phone number under "phone" within the patient details section.

- If someone else answers the phone, please ask to speak to the contact.

- This is to verify their identity. If the person is under 16 (before Today's date 2004) ask to speak with a parent or legal guardian.

- If they are not with their guardian, get a parent / guardian's name and phone number in notes and add the additional phone number under "phone" within the patient details section. If they are with a guardian, ask to speak with a parent or legal guardian.

- Try to encourage the person to proceed with call, and only defer in exceptional circumstances
- If **YES:** proceed with call.
- If **NO:** A *colleague of mine will call you back.*

Step 2 – Explain the Purpose of the Call

Were you contacted about your Covid19 test result?

Reference Guide Script

Refer to CT Support Lead if they have not been contacted already.

or

if they do not know the result

Key Points

- *If they say no say "I am going to have a colleague call you back with your result ."*

- **Enter a note under timeline and refer to the CT Support Lead.**

- **Ask if they are ok?**

- What day/ date did you first feel unwell; the first day you had a cough, a fever or shortness of breath?

- **Ensure contact is captured from the first day of symptoms.**

Step 3– Identify contacts & risk-assess

I would like to go through your contact list now....

Key Points

Start with who they live with

Reference Guide Script

- **Capture name and phone number of contact**

- **Confirm the level of contact – select if close, exceptional or complex**

Refer to CT Support Lead if.. a contact is identified as a health & social care worker (eg. hospital, nursing home, residential care setting). They will be classified as **Exceptional .**
Record line manager name and phone number.

For each person 16 years of age or older get contact details for them to contact them directly. For persons under 16 ask for contact details of the most appropriate caregiver.

Record name of location if high risk (such as nursing home or hospital, cinema, flight, train, co-workers. This will be classified as a **Complex** Contact.
Record line manager name and phone number.

Note: Associate Contact

- *The person may not know the name or number of the contact but can provide an alternative contact who will be able to provide these details. Record details in notes.*

Step 3– Identify contacts & risk-assess

I would like to go through your contact list now....

Reference Guide Script

 Key Points

Confirm the date of the last contact

Only record contacts from DAY 1 of symptoms. If this was before the day of symptom onset they are not a contact.

Record setting of exposure under the "circumstances" section.

- **Household**
- **Work**
- **Social**
- **Travel**
- **Healthcare setting**

Prompts

Identify **Day 1** – day of onset of symptoms and work from then onwards

- **Household**
- *Who lives in the house with you?*
- *Did any family, neighbours or friends visit since *DATE*?*
- *Have you had any other help in your house; home helper, nanny, cleaners, builders etc since *DATE*?*

- **Work**
- *Have you worked outside the home since *DATE*?*
- *If yes, where do you work?*
- *Have you shared a work space since *DATE*?*

- **School or College:**
- *Have you attended School /college since *DATE*?*
- *If yes, what is the name of the school of college?*
- *If yes, what class/year/ course are you in?*

- **Other Regular Place of Attendance:**
- *Is there another place you attend on a regular basis, and been there since *DATE* e.g. a community centre, health facility?*

Step 5 – Run through days since first symptoms

I would like to talk you through the last x days....

Reference Guide Script

Key Points

- *I would like to talk you through the last X days, so we can look at where you have been and who you have spent time with to make sure there isn't anyone else we need to contact.*

- *The first day you said you had symptoms was *DATE*, can we talk through that day?*

- **Start with the first day they felt unwell – cough, fever or shortness of breath/difficulty breathing until they entered self-isolation**

- ***Please do this piece slowly and methodically***

Step 6 – Give Health Advice

Thank you so much….adhere to advice already given to self isolate…

Reference Guide Script

NB: If you start to feel very unwell but it is not an emergency call your regular doctor / GP.

If it is an emergency and you need to call an ambulance, call 112 or 999 and remember to tell the ambulance service that you have been diagnosed with the COVID-19 virus.

Key Points

Continue to adhere to the advice already given to **self-isolate**

Refer to www2.hse.ie for further information on self-isolation.

Remind the person to

- *Regular hand washing is very important*

- *Try to avoid touching your mouth, nose and eyes.*

- *Cover your mouth and nose with a clean tissue when coughing and sneezing or cough into the bend of your elbow.*

- *Dispose of used tissues in a bin with a lid on it and wash your hands afterwards.*

Step 7 Advise on what happens next

So what will happen now will be…..

Reference Guide Script

- Thank you for taking the time to speak to me and providing so much information.

- All the information that I have given you is available on the HSE website. **www2.hse.ie**

- If unable to access website, check if they can ask a family member/friend note in system and record their address.

- Is there anything in particular that you would like me to go back over now?

How to conduct Call 3

Section 1 – How to conduct the close contact call

Who are you calling?

- The people you are calling have been identified as **close contacts** of a confirmed case of COVID-19.

Why are you calling?

- You are calling to give them to provide appropriate health advice.

Supporting Documents

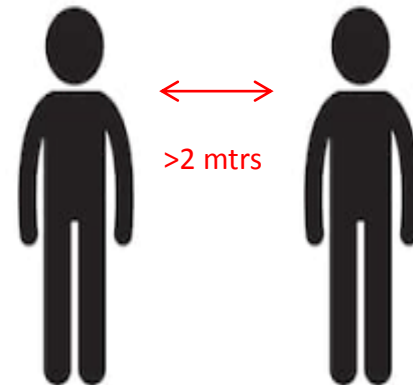Refer to the Guide for Contacting **Close Contacts**

Steps to be followed

1. Introduce yourself
2. Purpose of call
3. Identify if person is a healthcare worker
   Identify symptoms if any
4. Give health advice
5. Advise on what happens next

Reminder…

Close Contact

Is defined as an individual who has had greater than **15 minutes face-to-face contact** with a confirmed case of COVID-19 in any setting within **less than 2 meters** distance.

>2 mtrs

HSE National Interim Guidelines for the public health management of contacts of cases of covid-19, including healthcare workers

Step 1 Introduce yourself

Hello my name is…

Reference Guide Script

Key Points

If the person is not proficient in English, ask if there is someone that they would like included in the conversation

- ***If someone other than the contact answers the phone, ask to speak to the contact***

- *Can I confirm the spelling of your name?*

Step 2 – Explain the Purpose of the Call

I'm calling you because….

Reference Guide Script

Is this a good time to speak?
Try to encourage the person to proceed with call, and only defer in exceptional circumstances

If **YES:** proceed with call.
If **NO:** A *colleague of mine will call you back within a few hours.*

Key Points

- *You were last in contact with this person on the *DATE*.* **Pause at this point.**

- *Please don't be worried, this is a standard call that we make to those who have had close contact with a person who has COVID-19. This call should only take a short time.*

- **If asked about patient identity/ confidentiality:** *I cannot tell you who the person who has COVID 19 is but this does not impact the information I am giving you. I can tell you is that this contact was on *DATE**

- *Can you confirm that you are over 16?* **This is to verify their identity. If the person is under 16 (before xx/xx/2004) ask to speak with a parent or legal guardian. If they are not with their guardian, get a parent / guardian's name and phone number.**

Step 3 – Identify Healthcare Workers

Can I check with you if you
work in a healthcare
setting?

Reference Guide Script

If **YES:** *I am going to refer to you a colleague of mine who will call you back for further advice*.

Note: Ask them the name of the healthcare facility they work in, the name and number of their line manager
Also ask them to contact their line manager and occupational health department and tell them you have been identified as a close contact of a confirmed case.

If **NO:** continue with call.

Step 4 – Identify Symptoms

- Can I check with you if you have any of the following ?

- A fever/ High Temperature is above 38 °C /100.4° F) or feeling feverish or have chills Y/N

- *A cough Y/N*

- *Shortness of breath or difficulty with breathing Y/N*

Reference Guide Script

If **YES**: *Can you please give me your Eircode?*
Please stay on the line, I will transfer you to my colleague who will ask you further questions.

If person is symptomatic - reports having any of the symptoms, SELECT TELEPHONE ASSESSMENT

Step 5 – Give Health Advice

I'm going to give you some information & advice….

Reference Guide Script

If you develop any of the above three symptoms, please isolate yourself on your own in a room at home, and phone GP or HSE Live. 1850 24 1850

Key Points

- *Because you have had close contact with a person who has COVID 19. We need you to **quarantine** yourself at home for 14 days since the last date of contact with the person who has COVID-19 which was on *DATE*. Quarantine will end on *DATE*.*

- *Because you are a close contact this advice is for you and not for other people that you are in contact with such as those you live with.*

- *Quarantine means you should limit your social interactions outside the home.*
    - *You should not go to work*
    - *You should not travel on public transport*
    - *You should not visit other people's home or have visitors to your home.*
    - *You can continue normal interaction with family or others that you live with.*
    - *Other people in your house do not need to restrict their activities.*
    - *You can still go out for walks/runs/or cycles on your own as long as you keep a distance from people.*
    - *We need you to monitor yourself for 14 days since the last date of contact with the person who has COVID-19 which was on *DATE* for any of these symptoms:*
    - *Fever*
    - *Cough*
    - *Shortness of Breath*

- *I want to give you some tips that will really help to prevent the spread of the virus.*
- *Regular hand washing is very important*
- *Try to avoid touching your mouth, nose and eyes.*
- *Cover your mouth and nose with a clean tissue when coughing and sneezing or cough into the bend of your elbow.*
- *Dispose of used tissues in a bin with a lid on it and wash your hands afterwards.*

Step 6 Advise on what happens next

So what will happen now will be…..

Reference Guide Script

Note:
If you start to feel very unwell but it is not an emergency call your GP.

If it is an emergency and you need to call an ambulance , call 112 or 99 and remember to tell them you have been in close contact with someone who has been diagnosed with Covid 19/coronavirus.

- *You will receive a text message from the HSE to remind you to check if you have any of the 3 symptoms and what to do if you develop symptoms.*

- *All the information that I have given you is available on the HSE website www2.hse.ie.*

- *Is there anything in particular that you would like me to go back over now?*

Refer to FAQ Document

Call Advice & Self-Care Support

In this section how to manage interactions in a professional, courteous, compassionate and informed manner

Understanding the type of Responses/Reactions you will encounter

- The people you are calling will be scared and worried about themselves and others.

- They may experience a range of feelings to include:
  - shock that this has happened to them.
  - confusion, as to how or why this has happened – why me? - unsure about all the data available
  - anger, disappointment, denial
  - overwhelmed – need clarity
  - feeling aggrieved – may need to blame someone or blame themselves – accusing

- They may be in a crisis situation – physical, emotional, financial, social

- They may have very sad stories to tell in relation to the impact of this news on them personally and for those that they care for.

Be mindful that the person you are calling….

- May be ill
- May be bereaved and going through a grieving process and experiencing difficulties with funeral arrangements.
- Will need to tell their story and to feel listened to and heard
- Will need to have their questions answered – information provided and have access to further information
- Will need reassurance and solutions

Be prepared...

- Some may become very distressed – hysterical, crying
- There may be occasions when people become aggressive
- Some may not feel able to continue the conversation
- They will need to experience empathy and compassion

Note:
Should the person have a very strong emotional reaction, take time out of the script.
Demonstrate that you hear the person *" I can hear that you are upset/angry/shocked."*
Give them time to express what they are feeling, then ask **"Do you feel ready to continue with the call?"**
Remember sometimes it may be appropriate to refer the call to the Call Centre Support Lead

Tips for responding to different reactions

Introduction Stage

Gently try to find out what they already know by asking them for a brief narrative of events, such as;

'you know you had the test(s) recently – do you know what the tests were for?'

'Do you know why the HSE might be calling you?'

Use a warning shot before breaking the news e.g.

- 'Your test results are back and, unfortunately, the news isn't as good"

Delivering the Result

If they are not aware why you are calling
"You were recently tested for COVID-19, is it ok if I go ahead and give you the result?
"Your test result has confirmed that you are positive for the Corona Virus".

Let them take this in before moving on. Use simple language - avoid jargon.

Acknowledge the impact of this news and support the person:
Listen for the person's reactions and acknowledge their emotional reactions – e.g.
"I know this is a shock for you / very upsetting for you'
or
"Being told something like this can seem overwhelming"

It's ok to say sorry
"I am very sorry that this has happened to you"
"I am sorry to have to give you this news"

Giving advice

1. Chunk and check - Break the news into chunks and check that the person understands each chunk.

2. Don't overload the person with information.

3. Check their understanding of what you have said by asking the person to tell you what they have heard/ understood… If necessary, you can 'correct' their understanding.

"This is a lot to take in, can you tell me what you understand about what I have told you so far?"

"This is a lot of information in one go, can you tell me what you understand I am asking you to do"

"Is it ok that I move on to give you some more advice?"

Summarising & informing them of what happens next

This is your opportunity to summarise what you have told the person and what you want them to do next

"So to summarise, I have called you today because….
and what we are asking you to do is….
and what will happen next will be…."

"Is there anything you would like me to go back over?"

Allow for silence and emotion, including tears, Bad news can flatten people, and make it impossible to take everything in - be prepared to repeat information a number of times if required.

Self-Care when working in the CT Centre

Managing these calls and delivering bad news continually on a day to day basis can be difficult.

Managing the varying responses /reactions from the persons involved may have a negative impact on staff who are also living with the fear of contracting Covid-19 themselves and are concerned for their own welfare and the welfare of their families.

Self-care and care for each other is so important at this time.

Staff should..

- Be aware of and accept their own vulnerability in dealing with these types of calls.

- Understand that to exercise compassionate towards others involves self-compassion

- Remember that they are human and that any personal responses are normal reactions to difficult situations.

- Not be afraid to express those feelings and to talk about them

- Take time out after a difficult call, talk to their buddy, a colleague or a supervisor/manager. Get some fresh air. Have some refreshments.

- Know when to seek medical assistance

i.e. experiencing difficulty in sleeping for > 1 week, if their response to the situation is too intense or lasting too long, if they are experiencing intense physical reactions e.g. pounding heart, rapid breathing, nausea, muscle tension, sweating, suicidal ideation, feeling unable to work and/or the situation is impacting on their private life and ability to cope generally with normal day to day activities.

Self-Care when working in the CT Centre

- Talk to your buddy, colleague, supervisor or manager – this reduces isolation and stress – can be healing
- Talk time to relax every day – use relaxation techniques,
- Get enough sleep
- Get some exercise
- Maintain a good diet.
- Try to follow a structured schedule – make sure that you get enough time off. You cannot help if you become unwell yourself and you must stay well to look after family members also.
- Keep yourself safe – follow all containment precautions
- Attend training and updates – ask questions if unsure about anything
- Spend time with your family and allow time for leisure activities as appropriate – try to switch off during this time.
- Expect that some things that you are dealing with may bother you and that this is normal
- Realise that others around you may be stressed too
- Seek medical assistance if experiencing profound symptoms

Things to avoid if you are feeling stressed

- Do not drink alcohol excessively

- Do not stay away from work unnecessarily – don't let a bad call or a bad day put you off return to work – talk about it and get help

- Do not withdraw from significant others or isolate yourself from others.

- Do not be hard on yourself

- Do not make any major life changes or decisions at this time

Supporting each other

It is also important to be mindful of the welfare of our colleagues.

When a colleague is distressed the following approach will be helpful.

Supporting a distressed colleague

- Provide the staff member with time out – bring them to a quiet, confidential space.

- Allow them time to settle – offer refreshments.

- Acknowledge their distress and assess the impact – personal impact and ability to stay at work

- Allow them time to talk about it – uninterrupted – listen to their story and hear what they are saying. Feedback what you have heard

- Express regret for what they are experiencing

- Share personal experience, if appropriate

- Discuss supports available and possible solutions

  emotional and practical solutions

  establish what their needs are at this time

  (do not impose your solutions e.g. sending a person home may be the wrong solution for them – discuss and agree solutions)

- Maintain continued support and reassurance – check in regularly

- Open door – "*My door is always open – please talk to me at any time*".

- Refer to other support services available such as the Employee Assistance Programme, Occupational Health or other services available at your call centre

Key Messages

- 80% of those who are infected with COVID-19 will experience mild symptoms.

- The basic things you can do to protect yourself and your community are
    - Practice good hand hygiene
    - Practice respiratory etiquette
    - Maintain good hygiene practices
    - Observe social distancing guidelines
    - Observe self-isolation and quarantine guidelines
    - Protect the vulnerable groups in communities
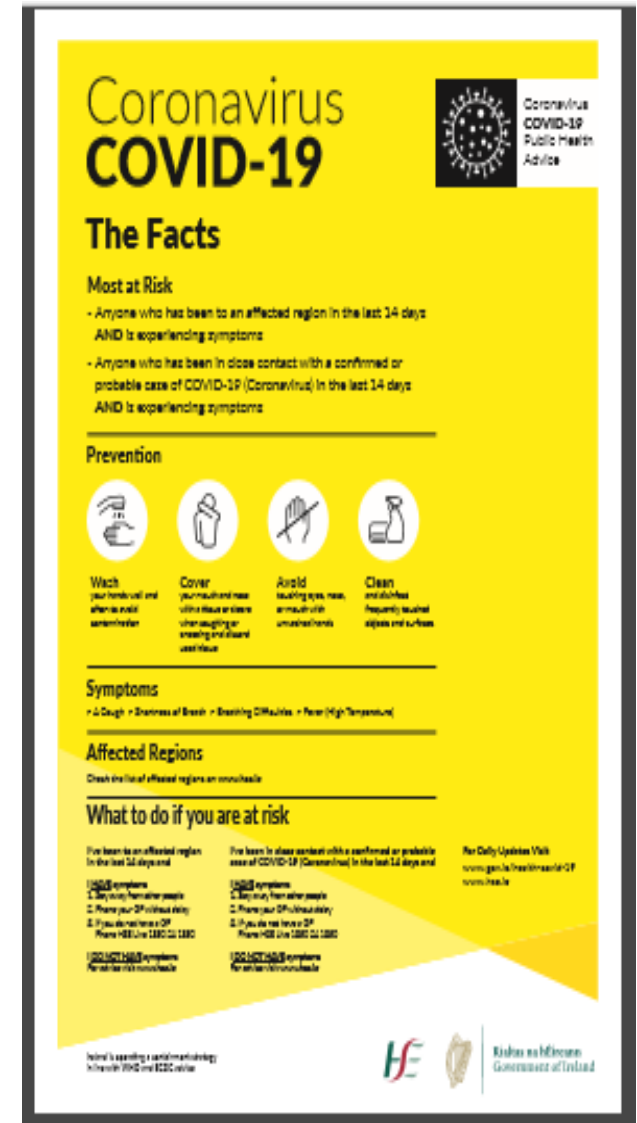
Covid-19 Case Tracker System

Refer to the User Guide for the Case Tracker System

This Guide and associated training will be provided by your call centre

Material Prepared by the
HSE National Contact Tracing Programme
Training & Resources Team