

Interim report of the profile of COVID-19 cases in healthcare workers in Ireland,

Report prepared by HPSC on 12/10/2021

On 14 May 2021 the HSE suffered a major cyber-attack on its IT systems. While HSE-HPSC and Computerised Infectious Diseases Reporting (CIDR) system were not directly compromised by the cyber-attack, our surveillance partners (Departments of Public Health, laboratories, and others) were.

Not all surveillance processes have returned to normal. The transfer of information gathered during the patient interview, including healthcare worker status, from the HSE-Covid Care Tracker (CCT) to CIDR is not yet restored. For this reason, CIDR data has been merged with CCT data to report on some variables. Further information is available [here](#).

Healthcare worker definition

Healthcare worker (HCW) status is determined both by self-classification and workplace. The definition includes anyone who self-identifies as a HCW irrespective of where they work. In addition, all staff that work in any healthcare facility (includes cleaners, household staff etc.) are classified as HCWs. The category includes healthcare workers employed both by public and private providers.

Summary

Table 1: Summary of healthcare worker COVID-19 cases notified to HPSC, 12/09/2021-09/10/2021

Characteristic of HCW COVID-19 cases	Number	%
Total number of COVID-19 cases	37,036	-
Total number of HCW cases	1,417	3.8%
Median age (range)	41 (17-84)	
Total number hospitalised	13	0.9%
The median age (range) of hospital inpatient	45 (20-58)	
Total number admitted to intensive care units (ICU)	3	0.2%
The median age (range) of HCW in ICU	46 (31-52)	

There was a total of 37,036 COVID-19 cases notified to HPSC as of 12/10/2021, 1,417 (3.8%) were healthcare workers (HCWs).

The proportion of females is disproportionately high (79.7%) among HCW COVID-19 cases compared to non-HCW COVID-19 cases (49.7%), most likely due to some HCW specialities e.g. nursing, being female dominated.

Table 2 describes the profile of all HCW COVID-19 cases, in Ireland notified to HPSC during the period 12/09/2021-09/10/2021.

Table 3 describes the country of birth of all HCW COVID-19 cases in Ireland notified to HPSC during the period 12/09/2021-09/10/2021.

Table 4 describes most likely transmission source of all HCW COVID-19 cases in Ireland notified to HPSC during the period 12/09/2021-0/10/2021.

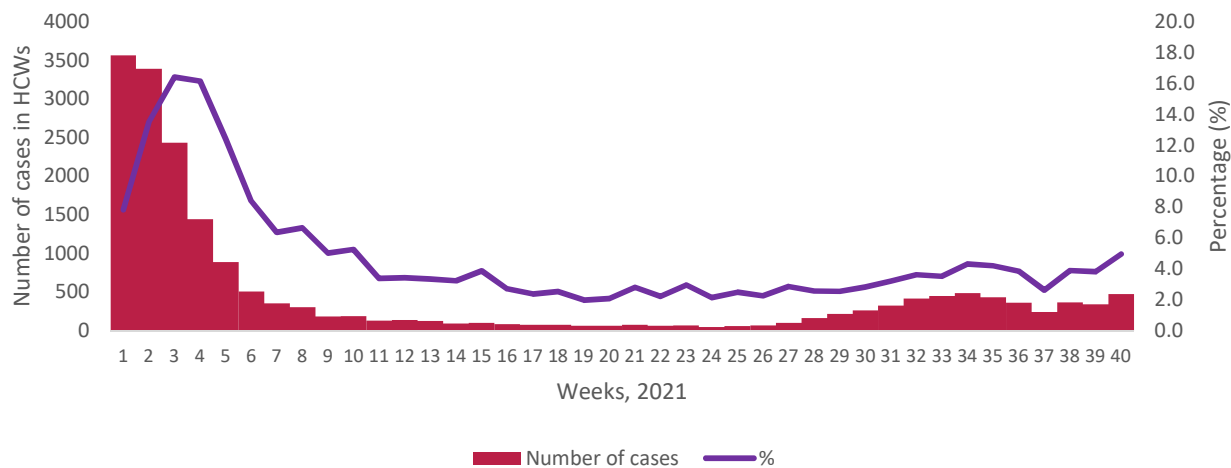


Figure 1: Number of COVID-19 cases and percentage of HCW cases by week in Ireland notified to CIDR (weeks 1-40, 2021).

Table 2: Healthcare worker COVID-19 cases, Ireland by sex, age-group, HCW role and work location notified to HPSC, 12/09/2021-09/10/2021

Total number of cases		N=1,417	%
Females		1,130	79.7%
Age-group			
	13-18	4	0.3
	19-24	154	10.9
	25-34	304	21.5
	35-44	386	27.2
	45-54	320	22.6
	55-64	213	15.0
	65-74	34	2.4
	75-84	2	0.1
HCW Role			
	Nurse	371	26.2
	Healthcare assistant	282	19.9
	Admin / Clerical worker	129	9.1
	Doctor	65	4.6
	Home care	57	4.0
	Catering / Kitchen worker	54	3.8
	Pharmacy worker	42	3.0
	Physiotherapist	19	1.3
	Occupational therapist	16	1.1
	Porter	13	0.9
	Other	267	18.9
	Unknown	102	7.2
Location of HCW role			
	Acute hospital	376	26.4
	Nursing Home	242	17.1
	Community services	175	12.4
	Community Hospital/Long Stay Unit	74	5.2
	Designated Centre for disabilities	54	3.8
	GP surgery	46	3.3
	Residential Institution	46	3.3
	Mental Health Facility	28	2.0
	Hospice	26	1.8
	Other HCW place of work	138	9.7
	Unknown	212	15.0

Table 3: Healthcare worker COVID-19 cases, Ireland, by ethnicity and country of birth, notified to HPSC, 12/09/2021-09/10/2021

Total number of cases		N=1,417	%
Country of birth			
	Ireland	994	70.3
	India	89	6.3
	England	57	4.0
	Philippines	45	3.2
	Poland	30	2.1
	Romania	23	1.6
	Nigeria	19	1.3
	Other	107	7.5
	Unknown	53	3.7
Ethnicity			
	White	1,140	80.4
	Indian subcontinent	94	6.6
	Black African	31	2.2
	Mixed background	12	0.9
	Other	65	4.6
	Unknown	75	5.3

Table 4: Healthcare worker COVID-19 cases, Ireland, by likely transmission source notified to HPSC, 12/09/2021-09/10/2021

Total number of cases		N=1,417	%
Most likely transmission source			
	Community transmission	558	39.4
	Close contact with a known confirmed case	537	37.9
	Healthcare setting acquired: staff	184	13.0
	Travel related	41	2.9
	Healthcare setting acquired: patient	40	2.8
	Under investigation	57	4.0

Interpretation

The number of COVID-19 cases in HCWs show a slightly increasing weekly trend between weeks 37 and 40. However, the total number of HCW cases between weeks 37 and 40 is lower than that seen in the previous 4 week period between weeks 33 and 36 (n=1772). The percentage of all cases who are HCWs decreased slightly in weeks 37-40 to 3.8% (1,417/37,036) compared to 4.0% (1,722/43,575) in weeks 33-36. The proportion of cases who are HCWs remains far lower than that seen during the January 2021 surge when the HCW vaccination programme was in its early phase, and 16.4% (2,433/14,809) of cases were HCWs.

Acknowledgements

Sincere thanks are extended to all those who are participating in the collection of data and reporting of data used in these reports. This includes the HSE COVID-19 Contact Management Programme (CMP), staff in ICU units, notifying clinicians, laboratory staff, public health doctors, nurses, surveillance scientists, microbiologists and administrative staff.