



Test and Trace

GREG CLARK MP
CHAIR
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY SELECT COMMITTEE
HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON

SW1A 0AA

26th October 2020

Dear Mr Clark,

I am writing to give you a further update on the proportion of contacts who were successfully reached following the technical issue around case uploads, discovered by Public Health England (PHE) on Friday 2 October affecting their data systems.

As you are aware, we were able to successfully reach 79% of people who had tested positive in order to get details of their close recent contacts. Of the contacts that were provided, 76% were officially notified of the need to self-isolate either by text, email and / or by voicemail. Just over half actively confirmed with us, either through completing contact tracing online or by speaking to one of our call handlers.

Of those that we did not receive direct confirmation from – either because they did not engage online or we were unable to speak to them over the phone – around 75% were from the same household as the positive case. We would not mark them as complete under our current methodology as we did not speak to them directly, but as they are from the same household there is a high likelihood that they would be aware of the need to self-isolate and this is something which is covered when our contact tracers speak to the person who has tested positive in the first place.

We brought in a large amount of additional workforce hours and also increased the number of times which we try to ring people to ensure we could speak to as many people as possible.

I hope this answers your question. We continue to work hard to ensure that we are providing effective support to the government's pandemic response.

Best wishes,

Baroness Harding