Contact Tracing Service
Management Information Update

Test ✔
Trace ✔
Protect ✔
HSC Health and Social Care

Issued 20 January 2022

In response to unprecedented high levels of demand in recent weeks the NI Contact Tracing Service focused resources on areas with greatest public health benefit and reduced the amount of information collected from cases. Consequently we are temporarily unable to produce the weekly report in its usual format.

Contact tracing is an important part of the Covid-19 Test, Trace and Protect Strategy[1] in Northern Ireland. Contact tracing involves identifying people who have been in close contact with cases of Covid-19, informing them of this, and providing them with information on the symptoms to be aware of, what to do if symptoms develop and if they need to self-isolate or get tested.
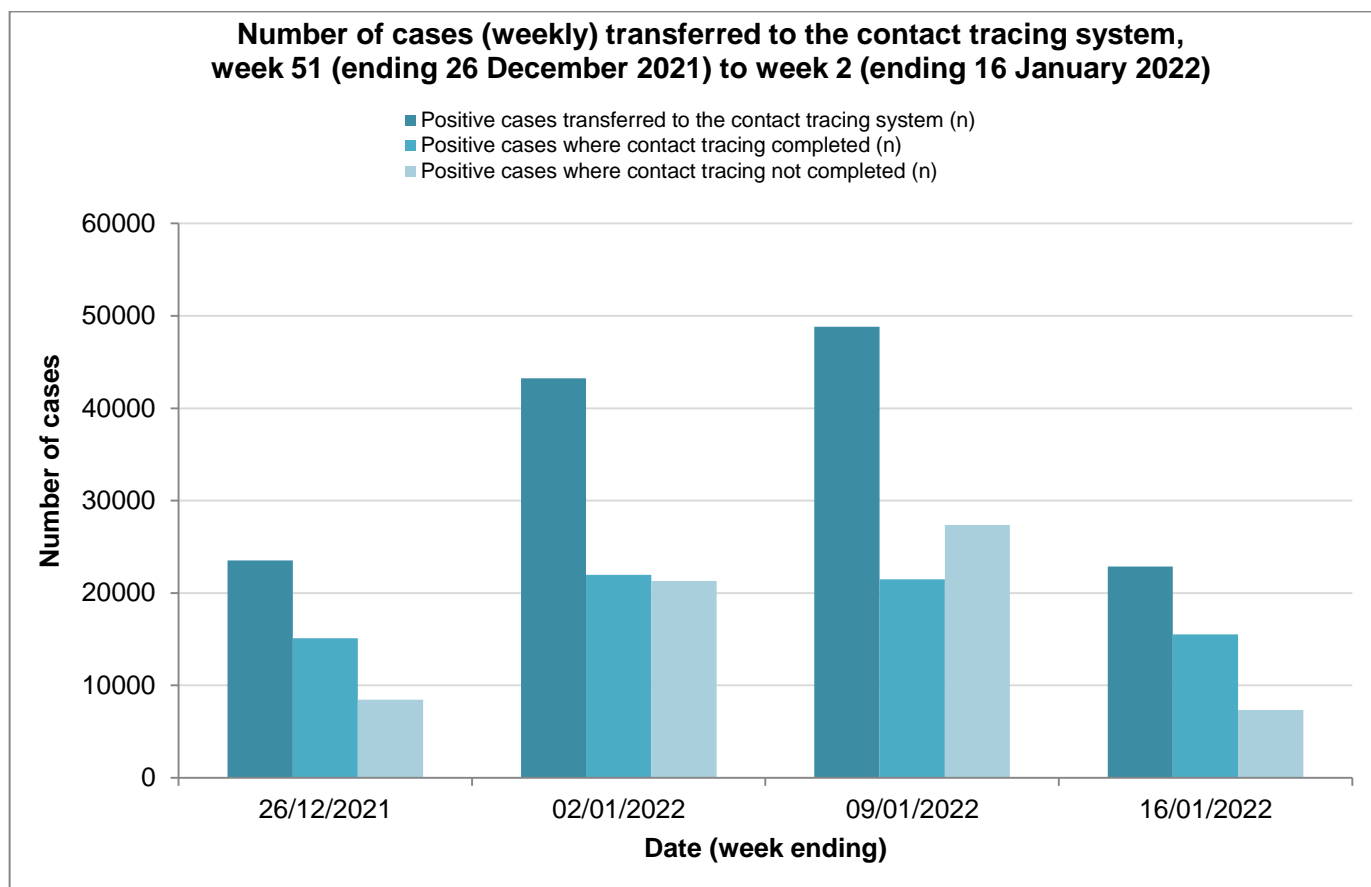
Weekly data

Data as of Sunday 16 January @ 12 midnight	In 7 days up to 16 January 2022
Number of positive cases transferred to the contact tracing system[2]	**22873**
Number of positive cases where contact tracing completed	15531
Total number of positive cases where contact tracing not completed	7342
• Number of incomplete cases sent an SMS advising self-isolation and inviting to digitally self-trace	6912
• Number of incomplete cases telephoned at least once	7265

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[1] Department of Health. Covid-19 Test, Trace and Protect Strategy. Belfast: May 2020.SS
https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/health/Test-Trace-Protect-Support-Strategy.pdf
[2] CTS aims to deduct duplicates and cases where no contact details are available. Care home residents who test positive are followed up under separate health protection arrangements and are not included in this information.
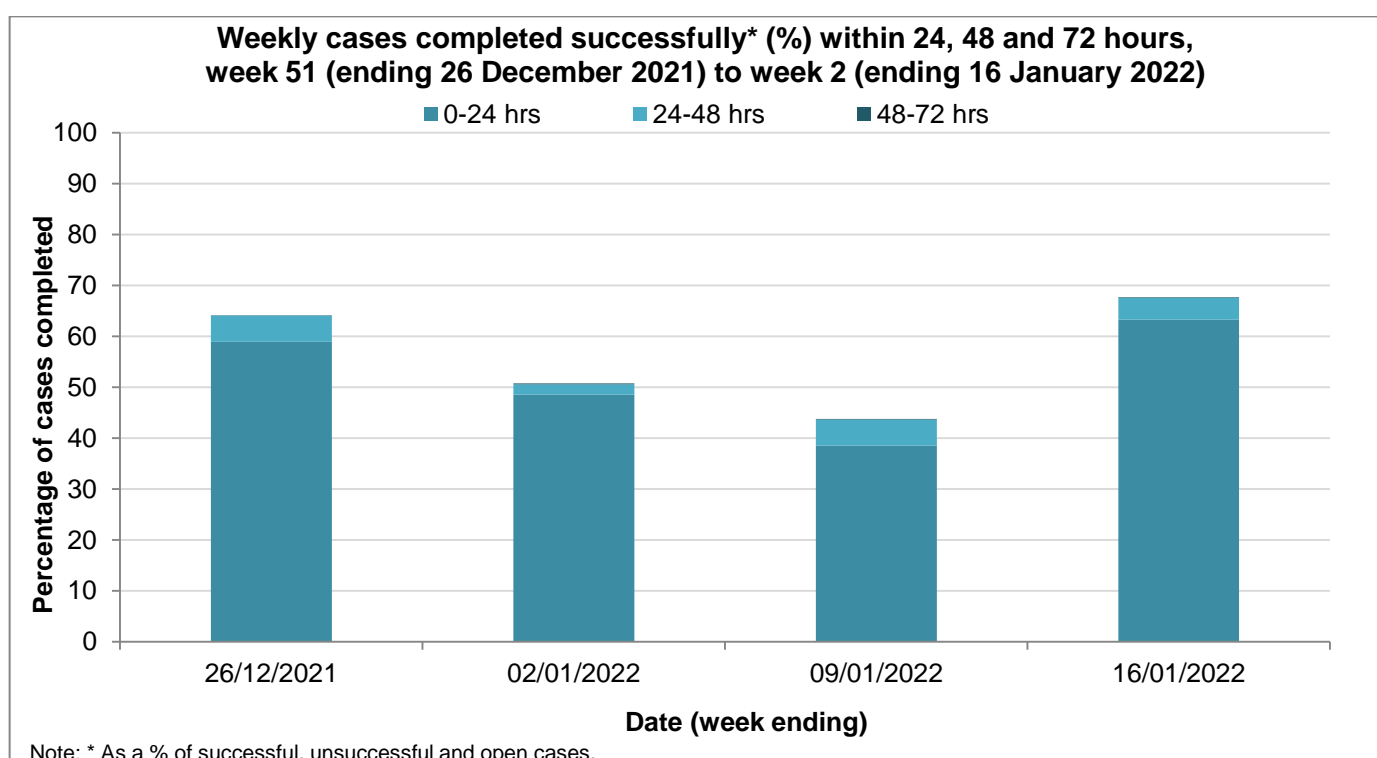
Number of cases – past 4 weeks

Number of cases (weekly) transferred to the contact tracing system, week 51 (ending 26 December 2021) to week 2 (ending 16 January 2022)

Legend:
- Positive cases transferred to the contact tracing system (n)
- Positive cases where contact tracing completed (n)
- Positive cases where contact tracing not completed (n)

Y-axis: Number of cases (0 to 60000)
X-axis: Date (week ending) — 26/12/2021, 02/01/2022, 09/01/2022, 16/01/2022

Case completion by time period

Of the 22,873 positive cases reported to the contact tracing service between 10 January and 16 January 2022, 63% were reached within 24 hours and 68% were reached within 48 hours.

Weekly – past 4 weeks

Weekly cases completed successfully* (%) within 24, 48 and 72 hours, week 51 (ending 26 December 2021) to week 2 (ending 16 January 2022)

Legend:
- 0-24 hrs
- 24-48 hrs
- 48-72 hrs

Y-axis: Percentage of cases completed (0 to 100)
X-axis: Date (week ending) — 26/12/2021, 02/01/2022, 09/01/2022, 16/01/2022

Note: * As a % of successful, unsuccessful and open cases.

Note 1 – Close contact data
From 24th December 2021 in response to the recent large increase in the number of positive COVID-19 cases associated with the omicron variant, positive cases have been advised to follow up with their own household close contacts. These household close contacts are not currently recorded on the contact tracing system and consequently the number of close contacts in this report will be an underestimate of the total number of close contacts and not comparable with previous data.

Note 2 – Contacts per case
Average contacts per case (CPC) data has also not been presented as, due to the reasons outlined in Note 1, this would underrepresent CPC data for cases at the moment.

Note 3 – Cessation of confirmatory PCR testing and associated increase in recording of multiple positive LFD results
The cessation of confirmatory PCR testing on January 5th 2022 has led to an increase in multiple positive LFD results being recorded. Where cases have recorded multiple positive LFD results during the period of interest the first case received by the CTS during the period has been used. LFDs loaded in bulk on 6th Jan have been excluded.

Additional notes:
- Data extracted from contact tracing system at 10am on Wednesday 19th January 2022.
- SMS sent to contacts from 30th September 2020.
- Digital Self Trace for cases commenced on 9th October 2020.
- These data are management information collected from a live operational system and provide a summary of contact tracer activity.
- Reporting methods and parameters may change over time.
- Should not be compared with other published figures as they will not align.
- New IT systems and data outputs often take some time to bed in. Data should therefore be treated with caution while the system and understanding of the data develops. At this stage, there is a risk of data entry errors or delay, which may require that data are revised and updated in future. The process of finding and removing duplicate records may also need refining, which could result in revisions to the data.