

To: 5.1.2e [5.1.2e@rivm.nl]
From: LCI Voorwacht
Sent: Fri 5/22/2020 1:25:09 PM
Subject: FW: EWRS: Ireland created a new selective exchange
Received: Fri 5/22/2020 1:25:09 PM

Ireland

[Director HPSC](#)

Description

Dear German, French and Dutch EWRS Colleagues, We in Ireland are investigating a cluster of outbreaks in Meat Processing/Packing facilities that appear similar to those occurring in other EU countries. As of May 19, 2020, we have detected 865 cases of COVID-19 associated with 16 processing facilities across Ireland, representing about 6% of our total meat processing workforce. The earliest cases associated with meat processing facilities date from March 18, 2020; the first outbreak was declared on April 17 2002. Four-fifths of cases are male. The modal age category for cases is 35-44 years with a skew towards younger ages. Only about 1.5% of cases have required hospital admission. We continue to have cases detected in Ireland. A national Outbreak Control Team established to look into this issue has developed a number of work packages, first of which was provision of Interim Guidance in the Management of Outbreaks in Meat Factories (available at <https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/guidance/outbreakmanagementguidance/outbreakcontrolinmeatfactories/Interim%20Guidance%20COVID-19%20Meat%20Factories.pdf>), based on a combination of the conclusions of the recent MMWR article, COVID-19 Among Workers in Meat and Poultry Processing Facilities — 19 States, April 2020 (available at <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6918e3.htm>). Our initial investigations strongly suggest, that, as in the US, meat plants would appear to possess a certain, particular set of features that facilitates internal transmission of COVID-19, probably resulting in these plants functioning - under certain circumstances - as seedbeds and amplification sites for COVID-19 infection, with the consequent risk of enhanced disease transmission into the local community (we are however, also looking at the contribution that importation of cases from outbreaks in a community setting might make to this burden of disease). Review of our clusters suggests that working, living, travel, and social arrangements may be important drivers in the spread of infection. The physical layout of workspaces, the logistics of work practices, and accommodation that facilitate the easy spread of infection are potential drivers of infection acquisition. We are planning research to investigate potential plant operational factors, workforce social factors and plant environmental factors that could facilitate disease transmission. We have made contact with the CDC Team who authored the MMWR article with a view to seeing if they were undertaking further research into their outbreaks. We are contacting you since you have reported similar outbreaks (although we feel certain that other MS must also be seeing such clusters too) and we wonder had you planned any investigation/research into your outbreaks in meat processing plants/abattoirs, and would you see benefit in linking with Ireland and other EU MS who are facing these issues? Best wishes Ireland EWRS Team

Van: 5.1.2e@ecdc.europa.eu <5.1.2e@ecdc.europa.eu>

Verzonden: vrijdag 22 mei 2020 14:23

Onderwerp: EWRS: Ireland created a new selective exchange

Early Warning and Response System

Dear EWRS user,

You have been invited to participate in a new selective exchange:

Title	COVID-19 Outbreaks in Irish Meat Processing Facilities
From	Ireland
Who has access	Germany, France, Ireland, Netherlands
Contains personal data	No

To access the selective exchange thread of comments, please follow the link below:

[Access selective exchange](#)

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Phone

5.1.2e

English speaking only.

