



COVID 19 Medicine and Public Health Committee Sub Group Minutes

5th October 2021, 1.00pm

Zoom Link: <https://ucd-ie.zoom.us/j/66799614510>

In attendance: **Professor Cecily Kelleher**, College Principal, College of Health and Agricultural Sciences (Chair) (CK), **Professor Jason Last**, Dean of Students (Vice Chair) (JL), **Dr. Peter Coulahan**, Director of SIRC (PC), **Professor Patricia Fitzpatrick**, Full Professor of Epidemiology and Biomedical Statistics, School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Sports Science (PF), **Dr. Eadaoin Lysaght**, Acting Director of Student Health Services (EL), **Professor Patrick Wall**, Professor of Public Health, School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Sports Science (PW), **Professor Simon More**, Full Professor of Vet Epidemiology & Risk Analysis, School of Veterinary Medicine (SM)

Beth Kilkenny, CHAS College Office, secretarial support

Apologies:

1. Minutes and Matters Arising

Minutes from the previous meeting on 21st September were approved.

2. Campus Re-opening and Other Matters

- Vaccination rollout update

Drop-in vaccination clinics were available on campus last week as planned.

EL raised issue regarding student seeking referral to centre for isolation. It was noted that UCD does not have separately allocated space for isolation this year due to demands on accommodation. A referring GP can contact HSE to request isolation at Citywest service. There was further discussion around impact on housemates of positive cases. It was confirmed that vaccinated close contacts do not need to isolate. Isolation is required in instances of unvaccinated people in contact with positive case, or if vaccinated and symptomatic.

There was discussion around saturation of messaging to students and module coordinators when positive cases arise. PC noted that methods of communication are monitored and changed, and sometimes paused to maximise effect. Student engagement with emails is high. It was noted module co-ordinators can reply directly to emails with any queries.

JL noted exemplary work by PC and colleagues on communications.

- Campus COVID+ cases
- International Students Arrangements

The National Immunisation Office recognises WHO approved vaccines, however HSE recognises only EMA approved vaccines for purposes of contact tracing and exemptions from isolation.

- UCD Healthy Ireland campus initiative

n/a

- Library and Study Space Usage

The library will move to 1m distancing which will double capacity. This will be in line with other libraries in the sector. There is also a need to free up study spaces in order to provide more regulated space. Closer distancing can be applied in these spaces if masks are being worn. PC will issue updated guidance.

- UniCov study

It was noted that Unicov recruitment improving, though still remains off target. President's reports HoS forum requested it should be promoted at offsite campuses e.g. Blackrock where engagement would be beneficial.

- HSE Rapid Testing Proposal

Gerald Barry joined the meeting for this item.

PW raised query regarding CT value and impact on antigen test positivity and infectiousness. This was discussed and a response was circulated to the group after the meeting.

CK summarised proposal for Rapid Antigen Diagnostic Testing at home on a voluntary basis (RADT) presented by Prof Paddy Mallon and Niamh O'Beirne (HSE) to this group on 7th September. This proposal had been discussed by this group and UMT. It had been agreed to engage for Trimester one in focussed cohorts in SVM and residences. This was relayed to HSE.

A subsequent email appears to indicate a change to the proposal. The updated proposal indicates UCD would oversee clinical governance and provide weekly updates to HSE. This presents both legal and resourcing implications. The group considered the proposal under the newly presented conditions.

It was noted that rapid testing works best if focused and compelling reason for participants to take part. There are reduced circumstances now where it would be beneficial particularly if it would not be directly linked into HSE testing and contact tracing.

Action: GB to liaise with PM re updated proposal and revert to CK, JL and PC.

There was discussion around potential for adhoc antigen testing in certain instances, e.g in symptomatic cases. **Action** : EL and GB to discuss further.

3. AOB

None



COVID 19 Medicine and Public Health Committee Sub Group Minutes

19th October 2021, 1.00pm

Zoom Link: <https://ucd-ie.zoom.us/j/66799614510>

In attendance: **Professor Cecily Kelleher**, College Principal, College of Health and Agricultural Sciences (Chair) (CK), **Professor Jason Last**, Dean of Students (Vice Chair) (JL), **Dr. Peter Coulahan**, Director of SIRC (PC), **Dr. Eadaoin Lysaght**, Acting Director of Student Health Services (EL), **Professor Patrick Wall**, Professor of Public Health, School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Sports Science (PW), **Professor Simon More**, Full Professor of Vet Epidemiology & Risk Analysis, School of Veterinary Medicine (SM)

Beth Kilkenny, CHAS College Office, secretarial support

Apologies: **Professor Patricia Fitzpatrick**, Full Professor of Epidemiology and Biomedical Statistics, School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Sports Science (PF)

1. Minutes and Matters Arising

Minutes from the previous meeting on 5th October were approved.

Minutes from June to September 2021 have now been posted online.

2. Campus Re-opening and Other Matters

UMT agreed today that mask wearing would continue after 22nd October in line with compliance with sectoral guidelines for higher education institutions and as part of wider mitigation strategy. This will be communicated in President's weekly bulletin.

There was further discussion around communication to module coordinators and students after a positive case is notified. It was agreed that the current communication plan is working and should be continued. Module coordinators should continue to be informed of a positive case in their module, they can then contact ad hoc lecturers as required.

Students in a module should also be informed of a positive case. It was noted this can lead to a student receiving a number of emails about the same case due to the Targeted Communication System in Infohub but that notifying students of an index case increases awareness of COVID prevalence.

An email was sent to students last week with Public Health guidance from Dean of Students. Those experiencing new cold or flu-like symptoms should remain off campus and seek a PCR test, and further medical advice if required.

An all staff email is also being sent with a reminder of above Public Health guidance.

PC noted webpage will soon indicate number of cases on campus / in community on a weekly basis.

- Vaccination rollout update

A smaller HSE/IEHG vaccination centre is now located in the Gerald Manley Hopkins centre.

- Campus COVID+ cases : Ongoing monitoring, no specific update.
- International Students Arrangements : n/a
- UCD Healthy Ireland campus initiative: n/a
- HSE Rapid Antigen Diagnostic Testing (RADT) Proposal

Gerald Barry reverted to Paddy Mallon regarding the RADT testing proposal. CK, JL,PC,GB held bilateral meetings to discuss. CK has reverted with detailed response including UCD indemnity declaration to Niamh O' Beirne, HSE Lead, and is awaiting response.

- Unicon – The HoS forum would like to see Blackrock campus engaged in this research programme. CK emailed Dr Cathal O'Broin and Paddy Mallon and suggested they consider drop-in at Blackrock. PC will provide UCD estates contact.
- Library - A query was raised at UMT from the Bursar to facilitate drop-in spaces with logged attendance. The Registrar will bring this proposal to the Library.
- CK noted follow up contact from Orla Hegarty after her attendance at this meeting in September. CK will refer to PC.

3. **AOB:** n/a



COVID 19 Medicine and Public Health Committee Sub Group Minutes

2nd November 2021, 1.00pm

Zoom Link: <https://ucd-ie.zoom.us/j/66799614510>

In attendance: **Professor Cecily Kelleher**, College Principal, College of Health and Agricultural Sciences (Chair) (CK), **Professor Jason Last**, Dean of Students (Vice Chair) (JL), **Dr. Peter Coulahan**, Director of SIRC (PC)

Beth Kilkenny, CHAS College Office, secretarial support

Apologies: **Professor Patricia Fitzpatrick**, Full Professor of Epidemiology and Biomedical Statistics, School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Sports Science (PF), **Dr. Eadaoin Lysaght**, Acting Director of Student Health Services (EL), **Professor Simon More**, Full Professor of Vet Epidemiology & Risk Analysis, School of Veterinary Medicine (SM), **Professor Patrick Wall**, Professor of Public Health, School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Sports Science (PW)

1. Minutes and Matters Arising

Minutes from the previous meeting on 19th October were approved.

2. Campus Re-opening and Other Matters

- Vaccination rollout update

A walk-in facility is offered in the vaccination centre on campus; details of opening hours are updated and posted on the HSE website.

Nationally, boosters are currently being offered for congregated settings e.g. nursing homes, the over 60s, and imminently to healthcare workers.

- Campus COVID+ cases

Cases remain similar to previous weeks, in the 20-30 band.

- International Students Arrangements

Students with non-EU WHO approved vaccines are considered fully vaccinated according to the HSE. PC considers this equivalent to the EU vaccine passport for the purposes of accessing services or managing events on campus. . PC to circulate email indicating confirmation of this from HSE, which can also be posted online. See Appendix for full details from HSE website.

- UCD Healthy Ireland campus initiative: n/a
- HSE Rapid Antigen Diagnostic Testing (RADT) Proposal

Currently awaiting response to email sent to HSE. Despite rising cases in primary and second level, third level not impacted in the same way at present. Cases remain isolated and not in clusters. It was agreed that it may be helpful to have antigen tests available for distribution to

students and no issue sourcing privately at present. Anecdotally, students are using antigen tests independently and seeking subsequent PCR tests where necessary.

Action: HSE response awaited.

- Physical distancing in shared postgraduate spaces

PC has received request seeking permission to reduce distancing in these spaces; it currently stands at two metres, in line with staff offices. It was agreed distancing should remain at two metres.

- Examinations

Initial advice regarding examinations in Trimester one was to minimise usage of RDS and Blackrock. If large examination halls are to be used mitigating measures should and will be in place. The examinations office has noted / been advised as follows:

- Under normal exam regulations there is circa. 1.5m between each student.
- All persons in the exam hall will wear masks.
- Every student will sit at a designated numbered desk and a record of users will be maintained.
- Ample time will be left between each exam session to allow occupants to vacate the building before the next cohort arrive.
- Cleaning materials will be made available to students and they will be asked to clean their desks before and after use.
- Sufficient cleaning staff to clean touch points and toilets will be on hand.
- The lobby of the exam building will have minimal stands, focal points, etc to ensure that students make their way through this area quickly without congregating.
- Consideration should be given to a bag drop facility outside.
- Estates will get an opinion on the suitability of the ventilation system: Exams will have to consider their response to a student who reports symptoms during an exam / a student who begins to display symptoms during an exam.

3. AOB: n/a

Appendix : **Non EMA Vaccinations**

The HSE Vaccination Bulletin No. 32 states : Those who have documentary evidence of a complete COVID-19 vaccination course with a COVID-19 vaccine authorised by the FDA, MHRA or recommended by WHO should be considered fully vaccinated.

On that basis the follow advice is given were requested to those managing events on campus where a vaccine pass is required and there may be attendees from outside the EEA: (from DFA Guidance):

If a person has been vaccinated in a country outside the EEA (that is, a third country) they should have a valid COVID-19 vaccination certificate that has been officially recognised as equivalent to the EU DCC. The proof can be in written or electronic format in Irish or English. Where it is in another language, an official translation into Irish or English is needed. The proof of vaccination must contain the following

1. Confirmation that the named person is fully vaccinated
2. The date or dates they were vaccinated
3. The name of body in the state implementing the vaccination programme that administered the vaccine to them.

Similarly, for those recovered from Covid 19 and who do not come from within the EEA they must provide proof of recovery which must contain the following:

1. Full name and date of birth
2. The date of their first relevant positive test result
3. The disease or variant from which they have recovered
4. The country where the test was carried out
5. Details of the body that issued the certificate
6. Dates the certificate is valid from and expires (they must have tested positive at least 11 days ago but no longer than 180 days ago)



COVID 19 Medicine and Public Health Committee Sub Group Minutes

16th November 2021, 1.00pm

Zoom Link: <https://ucd-ie.zoom.us/j/66799614510>

In attendance: **Professor Cecily Kelleher**, College Principal, College of Health and Agricultural Sciences (Chair) (CK), **Professor Jason Last**, Dean of Students (Vice Chair) (JL), **Dr. Peter Coulahan**, Director of SIRC (PC) **Professor Simon More**, Full Professor of Vet Epidemiology & Risk Analysis, School of Veterinary Medicine (SM), **Professor Patrick Wall**, Professor of Public Health, School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Sports Science (PW) **Dr. Eadaoin Lysaght**, Acting Director of Student Health Services (EL), **Professor Patricia Fitzpatrick**, Full Professor of Epidemiology and Biomedical Statistics, School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Sports Science (PF), **Gerald Barry** (GB) Assistant Professor, School of Veterinary Medicine

JL took the Chair at 1.30pm on departure of CK.

Beth Kilkenny, CHAS College Office, secretarial support

Apologies:

1. Minutes and Matters Arising

Minutes from the previous meeting on 2nd November were approved.

JL followed up with Hugh Kane on discussion around recognition of other WHO vaccinations not EMA approved for vaccine passport purposes and is awaiting response.

2. Campus Re-opening and Other Matters

It was noted there is an increasing incidence of COVID in population and further guidance is expected from government later today. It is likely to include rolling out of boosters, and a work from home directive.

Teaching term will continue as planned, and a meeting to review assessment and examinations is taking place between Registrar and Deans this afternoon. There was discussion at UMT regarding extra-curricular activities. Advice, in-line with government messaging, is to minimise socialisation. SIRC will continue to provide online advice on how to mitigate risk and run an event safely. It was noted SIRC cannot review all campus events individually. PC to liaise with TA where necessary on additional supports.

The potential of students declaring close contact status during examination period and implications for extenuating circumstances was discussed.

Concern was noted also regarding in person examinations, particularly the potential of students ignoring symptoms in order to attend and complete assessment. These issues will be addressed at ACEC meeting chaired by Registrar.

- Vaccination rollout update

The rollout of National booster vaccinations will expand now to include 50-60 year olds.

- Campus COVID+ cases

66 cases notified last week. 6 staff, 60 students. There is no link between staff cases. PC noted management of cases becoming difficult due to increasing volume. Extenuating Circumstance applications data to date in some colleges suggests cases have not been passed on consistently to 7999, indicating potential inaccuracy of case numbers to date.

Module coordinators and students have to date been emailed to inform of positive cases but may not be manageable going forward as cases increase. Considering dashboard model.

- International Students Arrangements

GB noted query regarding return to campus in January. Current plan is campus will be open in January. It was noted early communication is requested if plans change.

- UCD Healthy Ireland campus initiative: n/a

- HSE Rapid Antigen Diagnostic Testing (RADT) Proposal

A meeting of representatives of this group and Damien McCallion and Brian Lee of the HSE took place last week. They are working to facilitate distribution of kits in third level as well as secondary and primary education settings. The HSE will supply kits providing UCD agree indemnity and account for distribution as discussed before. The tests could be used in certain settings e.g. field work, and to support outbreak assessment if required in absence of formal HSE contact tracing. No update has been received from HSE since the meeting. PC proposes procurement of tests by UCD independently, as an additional mitigation measure. CK has updated UMT which approved proceeding to procurement if required. Requested detail on scale of proposal.

- Veterinary Medicine Christmas Carol Service

SM requested feedback from the group on the running of the SVM Christmas Carol Service on 30th November. It was noted this is an important annual event for the School. Three options are: in the Ad Astra Hall, an alternative open-air venue, or online. Risk mitigation would include testing of performers and restricting attendance to the fully vaccinated. The precedent for other schools in the university which do not have vet testing capabilities or mitigations was noted.

UMT have not yet made a decision around extra-curricular activities other than to abide by national guidelines.

3. AOB: n/a



COVID 19 Medicine and Public Health Committee Sub Group Minutes

30th November 2021, 1.00pm

Zoom Link: <https://ucd-ie.zoom.us/j/66799614510>

In attendance: **Professor Cecily Kelleher**, College Principal, College of Health and Agricultural Sciences (Chair) (CK), **Professor Jason Last**, Dean of Students (Vice Chair) (JL), **Dr. Peter Coulahan**, Director of SIRC (PC) **Professor Simon More**, Full Professor of Vet Epidemiology & Risk Analysis, School of Veterinary Medicine (SM), **Professor Patrick Wall**, Professor of Public Health, School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Sports Science (PW) **Dr. Eadaoin Lysaght**, Acting Director of Student Health Services (EL), **Professor Patricia Fitzpatrick**, Full Professor of Epidemiology and Biomedical Statistics, School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Sports Science (PF), **Gerald Barry** (GB) Assistant Professor, School of Veterinary Medicine

Beth Kilkenny, CHAS College Office, secretarial support

Apologies: n/a

1. Minutes and Matters Arising

Minutes from the previous meeting on 16th November were approved.

2. Campus Re-opening and Other Matters

- Vaccination rollout update – National campaign has been escalated and booster is now rolling out across age groups and vulnerable groups. A meeting is scheduled to discuss possibility of making extra space available in Gerald Manley Hopkins building to facilitate this.
- Campus COVID+ cases - 98 recorded cases last week. These were predominantly students. Approximately ten cases reported to date this week. It was noted the number of cases is available on the SIRC website: <https://www.ucd.ie/sirc/coronavirus/covidcases/>

International Students Arrangements - JL continues to follow up with HK re WHO vaccinations; current status is that they are considered fully vaccinated except for purposes of obtaining vaccine passport and close contacts. They will be eligible for booster if double vaccinated. Clarity still required around access to restaurants etc. JL will continue to liaise with HK.

- UCD Healthy Ireland campus initiative – PF noted there is a small amount of on-campus activity and trying to make initiatives available online where suitable.
- HSE Rapid Antigen Diagnostic Testing (RADT) Proposal – No update from HSE. PC rolled out procurement of tests with a view to targeted use. SU have been selling kits on campus, SIRC agreed to subsidise cost to reduce to one euro per test and agreed appropriate messaging on how to use including advice not to use when symptomatic. These are sold from the library shop only and restricted to three per individual sale. 1,500 were sold in 5-6 days. Around 1,800

more being subsidised and will keep this process in place at least until assessment period is over. 2,000 kits have been ordered today to use in targeted way including in Residences over Christmas if required. Students are being encouraged to record test outcomes and close contacts, with emphasis that antigen tests are for non-symptomatic use only.

It was noted there are a number of units using antigen tests in a targeted way across the university and we should consider issuing guidelines for correct usage. PC to produce draft and circulate.

- Veterinary Medicine Christmas Carol Service – SM noted that the planned carol service was cancelled primarily due to a concern around consequences for the hospital should an outbreak occur.
- Assessment – Module Co-ordinators were given option to go online or proceed with in-person examinations at the RDS. Approximately half of in-person exams will go ahead, others will move online. Focus will now be on those who require Extenuating Circumstances, the detail of which is currently being finessed. JL noted official certification will not be required, but where it is available it should be submitted e.g text message from HSE.

3. AOB: PC informed the committee that HR had catalogued how many staff had taken sick leave due to COVID and noted it correlates closely with SIRC records.



COVID 19 Medicine and Public Health Committee Sub Group Minutes

14th December 2021, 1.00pm

Zoom Link: <https://ucd-ie.zoom.us/j/66799614510>

In attendance: **Professor Cecily Kelleher**, College Principal, College of Health and Agricultural Sciences (Chair) (CK), **Professor Jason Last**, Dean of Students (Vice Chair) (JL), **Dr. Peter Coulahan**, Director of SIRC (PC) **Professor Simon More**, Full Professor of Vet Epidemiology & Risk Analysis, School of Veterinary Medicine (SM), **Professor Patrick Wall**, Professor of Public Health, School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Sports Science (PW) **Dr. Eadaoin Lysaght**, Acting Director of Student Health Services (EL),

Beth Kilkenny, CHAS College Office, secretarial support

Apologies: **Professor Patricia Fitzpatrick**, Full Professor of Epidemiology and Biomedical Statistics, School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Sports Science (PF)

1. Minutes and Matters Arising

Minutes from the previous meeting on 30th November were approved.

2. Campus Re-opening and Other Matters

- Vaccination rollout update

Booster roll-out to be escalated in light of emerging Omicron variant. Request that Gerald Manley Hopkins be expanded to allow for more berths, or to revert back to O'Reilly Hall. Current agreement for GMH Building is in place to mid-January. It was noted this was discussed at UMT this morning, and UCD Estates are to review and revert. JL noted the HSE are looking at another site, which may negate requirement for expansion at UCD. This decision should be confirmed today. It was noted that as vaccination roll out extends and continues, all students should be eligible to receive Booster, including those who have received non-EMA vaccines.

CK and JL met with Health Science Deans to discuss vaccination of students going on placement. It was noted that HSE has not made vaccination mandatory and it was agreed that UCD will follow HSE guidelines around placements. School of Medicine will add COVID-19 vaccination to their vaccination schedule.

Examinations are in process, and majority of in-person assessment should be finished by 17th December.

- Campus COVID+ cases - 25 known cases reported this week.
- International Students Arrangements – No update.
- UCD Healthy Ireland campus initiative – No update.

- **Rapid Antigen Diagnostic Testing (RADT) –**

An IUA grant has been made available for third level institutions to procure tests. This will be a pro-rata grant based on student numbers and is likely to be a one-off grant. 50,000 tests have been ordered and first batch of 10,000 is due to be delivered this week. UMT proposes twofold usage of antigen tests on campus; continue in targeted way to have some available for investigation of outbreaks, these would be purchased by UCD and free at use; subsidised tests purchased using IUA grant would continue to retail on campus for nominal amount with production of student card.

Bursar is managing the finance issues. Money accrued from sales would be ringfenced. It was noted that the grant will not cover the full cost of purchase and additional costs might be incurred by the Student Union in processing sales.

No proposal to make kits freely available to staff, except in case of outbreak situation. Staff can avail of subsidised kits. Some units are purchasing locally and PC had circulated note issuing guidance for usage. This document was approved. Data shows no significant transmission amongst faculty and staff.

The group was asked to consider whether antigen testing could be used in-lieu of social distancing in the workplace. It was agreed that RADT is not a replacement for other control measures in government protocols.

3. AOB:

- JL raised matter of contact tracing and communications to students. Volume of cases being managed towards end of trimester was leading to high volume of communications to students. Group is proposing making following changes to contact tracing process: notification of case via google form as well as or instead of 7999, not to notify all students in a class when there is a positive case but using targeted communications when an outbreak or potential outbreak is observed. Module coordinators would still be informed.

CK noted concern regarding email due to delay in processing, and noted efficacy of phone number to date. It was agreed it would be more effective to have one method rather than two.

- The need to consider general messaging to students was discussed, including potential communication post examination period and at the beginning of Trimester two. JL to discuss with Registrar if a message is planned and if so any COVID messaging could be incorporated. JL noted changes to Unicov project which will also need to be communicated in New Year.



COVID 19 Medicine and Public Health Committee Sub Group Minutes

11th January 2022, 1.00pm

Zoom Link: <https://ucd-ie.zoom.us/j/66799614510>

In attendance: **Professor Cecily Kelleher**, College Principal, College of Health and Agricultural Sciences (Chair) (CK), **Professor Jason Last**, Dean of Students (Vice Chair) (JL), **Dr. Peter Coulahan**, Director of SIRC (PC) **Professor Simon More**, Full Professor of Vet Epidemiology & Risk Analysis, School of Veterinary Medicine (SM), **Professor Patrick Wall**, Professor of Public Health, School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Sports Science (PW)

Beth Kilkenny, CHAS College Office, secretarial support

Apologies: **Professor Patricia Fitzpatrick**, Full Professor of Epidemiology and Biomedical Statistics, School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Sports Science (PF), **Dr. Eadaoin Lysaght**, Director of Student Health Services (EL)

1. Minutes and Matters Arising

Minutes from the previous meeting on 14th December were approved.

2. Campus Re-opening and Other Matters

Spring trimester teaching is due to commence on Monday 17th January. Campus will reopen on this date with mitigations in place as per trimester one.

- Rapid Antigen Testing – Procurement and Distribution

A meeting took place yesterday at which CK, PC and JL of this group were present, along with Turlough Kiernan from Procurement office, to discuss procurement and distribution of antigen tests.

JL shared summary document which outlined action to date and plan going forward. 60,000 kits have already been procured, these will be collectable from agreed list of buildings upon production of student card, maximum 2 per student/collection. It is not planned currently to monitor individually but this is possible if demand is outstripping supply. Student Union shops will continue to sell subsidised kits for 1 euro, and SIRC will keep stock of 2,000 for outbreak management.

After discussion it was agreed to recommend to UMT to procure an additional 120,000 – 150,000 tests. This will take into account distribution to general student population as well as retaining stock for outbreak management, including within campus residences as required. The HEA funding for the purchase of tests was to the amount of nine million euro for the sector, which would be distributed on a per student number pro-rata basis. The tests being sold via SU shops are from a different stock of that procured centrally.

The context and purpose of testing at this stage in the pandemic was also discussed. This rapid testing proposal will help build capacity in broader mitigation context. The HSE is developing a public portal

for recording the result of a positive antigen test and is also sending antigen tests to notified close contacts.

It was agreed that staff can avail of subsidised SU stock. It was noted that some units are purchasing tests locally also.

PC noted that the 7999 number will remain as primary notification route, but an online notification form will also be made available due to anticipated demand in light of rising case numbers. This information can be included on the document.

PC and JL to finalise the draft document and send to this group and Prof Rogers and Turlough Kiernan. It can then be circulated to UMT after MR has approved.

- Vaccination rollout update

The space in Gerald Manley Hopkins building is still available but is not currently being used by the HSE for vaccination rollout. A 40 berth centre has been opened at the RDS. A HSE pop-up clinic by GPs will be held for students on 20th January.

- Campus COVID+ cases- No update
- International Students Arrangements – No update.
- UCD Healthy Ireland campus initiative – No update.

3. AOB:

- **Provision of FFP2 Masks To Staff**

A query was received by SIRC regarding the provision of FFP2 masks to staff. It was agreed that these types of masks do not need to be provided to staff as based on current HSE guidelines they are only recommended for use in clinical patient handling settings; and in UCD where their use is shown as required by risk assessment (such as in a Covid lab). Current HSE Guidelines are that cloth or surgical masks are sufficient for most persons / occupations (<https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/covid19/preventing-the-spread/when-to-wear-face-covering/>)

If staff would like a higher grade mask then Estate Services still have a large number of the triple layered blue fabric masks available and these offer a higher grade of protection than cloth masks. Data gathered in Semester 1 suggests minimal transmission between students and staff in a teaching setting.

- **Use of HEPA Filtration Units**

It was noted by PC that some other Universities are using HEPA filtration units in some areas. UCD's default position is to continue to use high levels of ventilation and CO2 monitors in order to provide a high degree of protection from Covid 19. Data collected on case numbers to date suggests that this approach has been successful. In order to use HEPA filters efficiently ventilation would have to be reduced (with the resultant increase in CO2 levels) and based on the size of the room a number of filtration units could be required. This approach will be kept under review as the Semester progresses.

Ends