



Jenny Rathbone MS
Senedd Constituency Member for Cardiff Central

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4 April 2023

Dear Jenny

During 'Business Questions' on 9 November 2021 you requested 'a statement from the Welsh Government about the damage done to Welsh citizens as a result of the awarding of the contract for PCR testing to Immensa Health Clinic in Wolverhampton and how many of the false-negative tests affected people living in Wales?'

I apologise for the delay in responding to your request but the investigation of the serious untoward incident involving the Immensa laboratory led by the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) has taken time and was finally published in December 2022. The report is available [here](#).

There were an estimated 43,000 falsely assigned negative COVID-19 tests for England and Wales from the Immensa laboratory during September and October 2021. Public Health Wales (PHW) analysis estimated that this led to around 6,600 incorrectly assigned negative cases in Wales during the affected period (2 September to 12 October 2021). The Welsh Government Technical Advisory Group^[1] undertook an analysis of the impact of the false positives related to the incident in November 2021 and published a [report](#), it concluded that there was a modest impact, albeit with variation between areas in Wales, which is unlikely to have changed the underlying patterns of transmission. UKHSA alongside the publication of the investigation report published the laboratory epi impact for England regions that estimated the incident may have potentially resulted in 24,098 additional cases, 684 additional admissions and 23 additional deaths.

The serious untoward incident report documents the concerns raised by PHW about unexpected results generated by the laboratory in Spring 2021, under the first contract, that were not fully resolved. The recommendations in the report build on the changes already made by UKHSA by addressing the missed opportunities found in the engagement of Immensa's Wolverhampton Laboratory into the NHS Test and Trace laboratory network and in the reviews into the concerns in September and October 2021. The key theme of the recommendations is on creating a single system that combines multiple existing

^[1] [Terms of reference: Technical Advisory Cell | GOV.WALES](#)

mechanisms for investigating issues and incidents with clear governance and that this is supported by a culture of open communications with stakeholders.

My officials are engaging with UKHSA to ensure lessons are learned from the incident and governance and systems are strengthened including the response to concerns raised by external expert partners.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. E. Morgan'.

Eluned Morgan AS/MS

Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services