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Our Ref: TC.CS.120520.DL

12 May 2020

Dr Dai Lloyd, MS  
Chair of the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee  
Senedd Cymru

Dear Dai,

**Health, Social Care and Sport Committee  
Public Health Wales Evidence on the Coronavirus Pandemic**

Thank you for your and the Committee's time during the Public Health Wales evidence session to discuss the response to the Coronavirus Pandemic.

During the session, there were questions relating to a 9,000 testing capacity target by the end of April 2020. I replied that I was not familiar with that target and trajectory. I would like to apologise sincerely to the Committee members for the confusion my response generated. This was not my intention and I hope you will agree that I have always been open in any engagement I have had with Senedd Committees.

From the start of the pandemic, we have worked tirelessly both to increase our domestic testing capacity within Wales and also to access wider United Kingdom (UK) Government-led testing capacity. Our primary focus for the end of April was achieving a domestic capacity of 5,000 antigen tests per day.

The 9,000 relates to the 5,000 domestic testing capacity that was our primary focus for the end of April and the additional 4,000 was a figure based on assumptions at the UK level and was not associated with our 5,000 capacity planned for the end of April.

The Welsh Government has indicated that the additional 4,000 tests (on top of the 5,000 tests in Wales) was not a target for testing in Wales, but reflected the UK level assumptions at the time.

I now realise that this differentiation was at the core of the confusion my answer caused and I apologise again to the Committee.

The Committee will appreciate that within the context of a global public health emergency every country worldwide is competing for testing capacity. Both Public Health Wales and colleagues in the Welsh Government have been working within a rapidly changing environment, at times within hours and days, where assumptions that had been based on a global and UK supply chain for equipment and chemical reagents at any given time, often turned into delays or indeed fell away.

However, I am pleased to let the Committee know that our testing capacity in Wales reached 5,330 tests per day on the 9 May 2020 and we will continue to increase our testing capacity over the coming weeks.

Public Health Wales has played an important part in the COVID-19 response to date, and we look forward to continuing to do so as one of the key partners delivering the forthcoming Welsh Government plan and we look forward to engaging with the Committee as we move towards and into the recovery phase of the pandemic.

I hope that this letter clarifies the position.

Yours sincerely,



**Dr Tracey Cooper**  
**Chief Executive, Public Health Wales**

Copy: Jan Williams, Chairperson, Public Health Wales

Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg  
We welcome correspondence in Welsh