

Testing for SARS CoV 2

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Testing for SARS CoV2 (COVID19)

Two broad types of tests that answer slightly different questions:

Do I have the virus – antigen tests?

These tests confirm if someone has COVID-19. This is a molecular test called PCR and the first version was developed rapidly by PHE and is performed in the laboratory.

Given limited capacity the primary recipients of these tests are the most sick and vulnerable patients in acute care settings.

Spare capacity can be used to test healthcare and other key workers and their household contacts to identify whether they should continue to isolate or if they could return to work.

Have I had the virus – antibody tests?

Serology tests identify antibodies in blood to show whether a person has had COVID-19. It is hoped that these can be delivered as point of care tests.

This could allow a person who is immune to resume their roles which is especially important in healthcare settings but also for daily life.

Testing Options:

- Pillar 1 – NHS swab testing for those with a medical need (patients) and key workers (health and care staff) – local labs
- Pillar 2 – commercial swab testing – through regional and mobile testing units – and care home programme
- Pillar 3 - Mass-antibody testing to help determine if people have immunity to coronavirus
- Pillar 4 – Surveillance testing to learn more about disease – dom care sero-prevalence survey being undertaken now
- Pillar 5 - Diagnostic capacity expanded nationally

Care home specific info Staff:

Symptoms – stay off work and inform line manager

Get a test – swab from back of throat and nose.

Either SomersetStaffTesting@somerset.gov.uk –use referral form / 1 per staff

OR www.gov.uk/apply-coronavirus-test-essential-workers

If positive stay off of work and self isolate until 8th day after onset of symptoms – as long as no fever in previous 48 hrs

Household members of positive staff should isolate for 14 days from the day they developed symptoms

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/ask-for-a-test-to-check-if-you-have-coronavirus/>

Care home specific info residents:

- If you suspect or have a coronavirus outbreak in a care setting (1 or more resident/s or staff affected), call the local PHE Team. Phone: 0300 303 8162 (incl out of hours) – they will send swabs with instructions to confirm outbreak
- On 11th May the digital care home testing portal was launched.
<https://www.gov.uk/apply-coronavirus-test-care-home>
- If you are CQC registered and provide care for those with dementia or those over 65 years, you are eligible to register for whole home testing
- Each week SCC nominates homes for testing as a priority, this is for those settings that from support calls have told us there are struggles

Test & Trace

- This was launched last Thursday (at PM brief)
- All the positive COVID19 results from all testing get fed into the 'test & trace system'
- Anyone with a specific close contact with somebody who test positive will be expected to isolate themselves for 14 days (7 days from symptoms)
- Close contact is >15 mins within 2m of infected person
- A worker or resident in a care setting who tests positive will flag as linked to a 'complex situation' and so will be managed by our colleagues within PHE
- Robust risk assessment undertaken of each contact, as they understand the impact on staffing of removing workers for 2 weeks
- Where you have staffing issues and need to share staff across homes or where staff cannot isolate for whatever reason Trudi and Mel need to be advised (MEL TO CHECK THIS)
- If staff are self isolating and they need support with shopping, accessing prescriptions etc...0300 790 6275 if you need help corona helpers

Conclusion

- Testing will ultimately save lives
- A number of homes have gone to extraordinary lengths to ensure their residents and staff are tested and for that we are enormously grateful
- We want to help solve the problems with the system, in the first instance if you could use the national helpdesk 0300 303 2713, then tell us, but also please do use the complaints process- this is your audit trail for CQC scas.Covid19TestingComplaints@nhs.net