



Test and Trace

COVID-19 testing in adult care homes in England

Frequently asked questions

February 2022

Introduction

This document is a collection of frequently asked questions (FAQs), asked by service staff and managers during webinars about the new asymptomatic testing routine in adult care homes in England.

You can access a recorded version of the webinar online by visiting:

https://event.webcasts.com/viewer/portal.jsp?ei=1474646&tp_key=bb376c26e7#.

You can **call 119** if you have questions or need help with coronavirus testing. Lines are open every day from 7am to 11pm.

Testing guidance

You should read this FAQ document in conjunction with the published testing guidance on the GOV.UK website.

- ▶ **Testing guidance for regular and outbreak testing of staff and residents:** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-testing-in-adult-care-homes>

Frequently asked questions

Can we implement the new testing guidance straight away? When does this change need to be implemented?

The new testing guidance should be started as soon as possible, and no later than 16 February. Please use the time between now and then to ensure that you have enough test kits and plans in place to operationalise this change. You can begin as soon as you have everything in place.

Is testing a legal requirement? Is testing mandatory?

Testing is not a legal requirement; but these regimes are based on expert Clinical and Public Health advice, and we strongly advise testing to keep the people you care for, and the people who care for them, safe.

What if staff work multiple shifts in a day?

Individuals do not need to take an LFD more than once per day.

The portal will not allow me to order the number of tests I need.

The number of tests you can order is linked to the number of staff registered to the setting. Please contact 119 if you need to update the staff number.

Once this has been done you will be able to order the correct number of tests.

Staff start as early as 6am, can morning staff do the LFT on an evening so we can deal with any shift covers if a staff tests positive? Covering a shift may become difficult.

We advise tests are taken as close to starting work as is practical, to provide assurance the care worker is unlikely to be infectious as close to the contact with a vulnerable individual as possible. Providers and staff should consider when the best time for this to be done is for them.

Do all LFT results have to be reported?

All LFT results must be reported whether positive, negative, or void. You should report them against your service's Unique Organisation Number (UON). They can be registered either by using the multiple upload spreadsheet or individually by each staff member.

If reporting individually on the [online registration portal](#), staff can create a personal account to reduce the time required to register a test.

If reporting results using the multiple upload spreadsheet, the link and guidance for can be found [here](#).

Why do we have to report all results?

If people only report a positive result, case levels look higher than they really are. So, reporting negative and void results ensures NHS Test and Trace information stays accurate. This enables us to see where there are potential outbreaks, geographically and in which industries.

All medical products are regulated by the MHRA and subject to post-deployment monitoring to ensure safety and ensure that devices continue to perform at expected levels. Reporting results ensures that this can happen, as well as linking individual devices to those who have used them should a problem with a particular batch be identified (although extensive quality assurance is undertaken).

Do I need to retain records of proof of registrations?

All test results should be reported. There is no requirement of providers to keep records of each reported result.

What funding is in place to cover the extra work this change will entail?

Funding is in place to help support staff costs associated with conducting testing. The Infection Control and Testing Fund (ICTF) was extended in September 2021 until March 2022,

providing funding for reasonable administrative costs associated with organising and recording the outcomes of COVID-19 tests.

Full conditions are set out in the [Infection Control and Testing Fund guidance](#) detailing what this funding can be spent on. Providers should contact their local authority if they need additional funding.

Do we still use PCR tests? When?

There will be no change to PCR testing for symptomatic testing, or any other PCR testing for staff e.g., when they are a contact.

Anyone with symptoms should test with a PCR test at home and self-isolate until they receive their result.

Will staff who are fully vaccinated still need to isolate until they receive a negative PCR result if they live with a positive case, or will daily LFT be sufficient?

Yes, if a staff member is fully vaccinated and a contact of a confirmed positive case of COVID-19, including if they live with them, they cannot attend the workplace and must do a PCR test. Once they have received a negative PCR result, they can return to work.

What will happen with the PCR tests we won't be using?

Please store them and they can be used if necessary. For example, for outbreak or symptomatic testing.

Please ensure you check the expiry date and when tests have passed their expiry dates, they are thrown away.

Does the change to daily LFT guidance apply to visitors?

The new guidance of a daily LFD every working day, before starting work applies to both staff and essential care givers. It is advised that all visitors continue to test before every visit, this has not changed. Full visiting guidance can be found [here](#).

What will happen with the courier service?

Please continue to use the courier booking service as normal, and book collections for any regular PCR testing, outbreak testing and symptomatic testing you are conducting.