



Information

for adult social care providers

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Issue 15: Testing for COVID-19

Dear colleague,

Please find an update on the process for providers to access testing for their staff, as well as the latest national guidance, information about how access to support for mental health and wellbeing and an update on how care homes can access food supplies.

Testing for COVID-19

This information has been provided by Tim Locke, COVID-19 Key Worker Testing Programme from the Department of Health and Social Care. Tim can be contacted on 07779 770013 or tim.locke@dhsc.gov.uk.

Background

As you are aware the government is rolling out testing for all front line workers. There are four ways in which testing can be done: At home, by a mobile and a pop-up or satellite drive through, or a fixed drive through.

The aim is to get people tested as quickly as possible using the best possible method. Home testing is not the quickest way to get tested, 72 hours for results as opposed to 24hrs for drive through, but it could be the best option for many.

Home testing is aimed at those who can't get to a test centre for any reason, such as due to disability, too ill, no car, long drive etc. The reason we would encourage people to access a test centre would be the speed of results, additionally the test is done by a professional and may have fewer errors than one carried out by post.

Testing

You will recognise this is moving very quickly so information provided today can be replaced by something better tomorrow. As of 23 April the system is as follows:

For each organisation one point of contact will be required. This is the person who is going to upload the data into SharePoint. That person is responsible for getting names of front line workers to be tested on to the list.

Please send the name of the identified representative, the organisation and their email address to tim.locke@dhsc.gov.uk. Once this is received providers will be sent

a spreadsheet to complete and a link to SharePoint, an online portal for recording the information of those needing testing, the following day.

How home testing is currently operating (noting that this could change)

Tests are available to people in your organisation who are isolating either because they have symptoms or someone they live with has symptoms.

When they contact your organisation to report that they or somebody they live they live with have symptoms, you will need to establish the following information and be ready to provide this. Please note this information is needed for the front line worker only, even if somebody else has symptoms:

- Their name in full
- National insurance number
- Email address
- Adult or child with the symptoms
- Organisation

The deadline for providing this information into Sharepoint is 2pm each day. If you are delayed please call 07779 770013 and where possible the people you want to be tested will be added to the list.

If you have a person who needs testing now call or email Tim, adding the word 'testing' in the subject line. If you don't have anybody who currently needs testing, it is hoped the online system will go live next week.

An email is then sent to the address provided in the spreadsheet with a link for front line workers to order tests. It is limited to five per household, please contact Tim if this is an issue. The kit will then be sent using that information by Amazon.

Once the kit is used the person sends the kit back using a Royal Mail collection service, information on how to arrange that is provided within the kit.

The results should be received within 72 hours from Amazon delivery. This works on the recipient sending it back within 24 hours of receipt.

If results are not received, there is a phonenumber the person can call within the pack.

Three things to address

Capacity is not currently an issue. If providers are going to ask for more than 500 tests please get in touch with Tim and he will try to ensure this demand is met.

The test only works on people with symptoms, so as soon as someone is isolating because of symptoms within the household please get them tested.

As you can imagine there are many people with the same name, therefore the National Insurance number is crucial in terms of being a unique identifier,

If you have any questions, please read the [Government Home Testing Pilot FAQ and Guidance](#) (323kb PDF) or contact Tim using the details above.

Support for care homes to access food

Defra have informed us that the www.food2care.co.uk platform is designed to enable care homes to order straight from local/regional wholesalers (and therefore bypass these issues around access to supermarkets).

Also available are [The Care Provider Alliance \(CPA\) resources](#) – including food2care. A wider suite of resources is also available on the [CPA website](#).

More generally, Defra have noted that retailers have managed to increase their online capacity of both click and collect and delivery slots available to customers. As supply is beginning to return to normal, they have also been able to lift or significantly relax their item limits on home delivery orders, so hopefully that particular barrier will start to recede.

Mental health and wellbeing support

Shout have created a support text service for those workers on the frontline. This service is free to all major mobile networks. Text FRONTLINE to 85258 where you can start a conversation via text.

‘Shout’ supports everyone who texts in, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week with anything they may need. Visit www.giveusashout.org

I hope that you will find this information useful. We will continue to keep you updated as processes and situations change.

Yours sincerely

Jon Wilson
Director of Adults & Communities