

This newsletter is for all adult social care services



Dear Colleague,

Welcome to your testing update from NHS Test and Trace. Below you will find important updates regarding updated guidance on the list of COVID-19 symptoms and symptomatic testing, COVID-19 treatments, ceasing PCR testing and recent webinars.

Updates to 'COVID-19 Testing in Adult Social Care' guidance including symptomatic testing

The '[COVID-19 Testing in Adult Social Care](#)' guidance document has been updated to address queries that have been raised since its publication on 31 March. The key update to the guidance includes a change to Section 2.1 'Symptomatic Testing for Staff and Residents' which now directs you to the [IPC COVID-19 Supplement](#) to explain when symptomatic testing processes should be followed.

The IPC COVID-19 Supplement will be updated soon to reflect clarifications to symptomatic testing. See below for a summary of the updated guidance on when to follow the symptomatic testing process.

Staff symptomatic testing

Staff who have symptoms of a respiratory infection, and who have a high temperature or staff who have symptoms of a respiratory infection and do not feel well enough to attend work should take an LFD test

as soon as they feel unwell (day 0). Staff with respiratory symptoms who feel well enough to work and do not have a temperature, do not need to take a symptomatic test and can continue working.

If the result of this LFD test is positive, staff should follow the advice in the section **If a staff member receives a positive lateral flow or PCR test result in the IPC COVID-19 Supplement**.

If the LFD test result is negative, they should take another LFD test 48 hours later, staying away from work during this time. If this is also negative, they can return to work if well enough to do so.

Symptoms of COVID-19, flu and common respiratory infections include:

- continuous cough
- high temperature, fever or chills
- loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell
- shortness of breath
- unexplained tiredness, lack of energy
- muscle aches or pains that are not due to exercise
- not wanting to eat or not feeling hungry
- headache that is unusual or longer lasting than usual
- sore throat, stuffy or runny nose
- diarrhoea, feeling sick or being sick

Symptomatic testing for those receiving care

Individuals receiving outside of care homes and extra care and supported living settings do not need to test when they experience COVID-19 symptoms and therefore do not have access to test kits for this purpose unless they are eligible for COVID-19 treatments. Individuals should [follow the guidance for the general population to stay at home and avoid contact with others when they are symptomatic..](#)

COVID-19 treatments are now available for those who are eligible

Individuals who have been told they are eligible for COVID-19 treatments (by letter or by their GP) are now able to access treatments following a positive LFD result. These individuals will now have received an initial box of LFD kits to use at home if they develop symptoms. If they have not received them, they can order them on GOV.UK or call 119. Please note that if an individual does not have access to the LFD sent to them to use if they become symptomatic, they can use any other NHS Test and Trace LFD to access COVID-19 treatments, as long as the result is reported correctly.

Please ensure that when reporting a positive LFD result that all personal details (including date of birth, postcode and if available, NHS number) are correct and up to date so the Covid Medicine Delivery Unit (CMDU) can get in touch within 24 hours regarding treatment. If an eligible individual tests positive and has not been contacted by their CMDU within 24 hours, their GP should be contacted or if out of hours, 111.

Ceasing of PCR testing

Due to updates in policy and subsequent guidance that was issued at the beginning of April, there is no longer guidance for services to use PCRs for testing, including when symptomatic. Therefore, PCR tests should not be used and registered by settings. For those settings that have a stock of PCR tests, we ask that you please store them until further notice. We will be issuing further advice on what to do with excess stock shortly. Please dispose of any expired kits appropriately.

Webinar recording, FAQs & transcript

On 7 April, a webinar, chaired by Chief Nurse for Adult Social Care, Professor Deborah Sturdy OBE, was held to support Adult Social Care service managers in implementing the recently announced changes to testing, self-isolation and other IPC measures in their services.



If you missed the webinar, or would like to watch it again, you can access the recording here: [DHSC webinar on changes to COVID-19 measures in adult social care services - YouTube](#)

Please note, an FAQ pack answering the key questions raised during the webinar as well as a transcript of the webinar will be shared soon.

Many thanks,
NHS Test and Trace

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For urgent issues or queries, please call 119 for assistance

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