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Guidance

## Coronavirus (COVID-19) testing for hospices

Sets out how hospices can access COVID-19 testing for staff and patients on-site, for staff visiting patients in their own homes, and for visitors to hospices.

From:

Department of Health and Social Care (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-of-health-and-social-care>)

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Wales, England, and Northern Ireland

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### Introduction

NHS Test and Trace is making weekly COVID-19 testing available to all hospices in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Separate arrangements are in place for hospices in Scotland.

All registered hospices have been contacted with details of how to apply for test kits for their staff and patients. Hospices will be responsible for ordering test kits for both 'inpatient' and 'community-based' settings. Different testing routes apply depending on where the testing will be carried out, and these routes are described in detail in this document.

We will also cover rapid testing for visitors and visiting professionals for inpatient hospice settings.

### Why testing is important

## Testing:

- protects your patients, staff and visitors
- prevents and controls outbreaks by identifying cases early
- provides reassurance, allowing those who test negative to carry on working

## Webinars

For more information you can join our webinars, which are hosted on a regular basis.

These live webinars will talk you through the end-to-end process for hospice testing and will include a live question and answer session with the hospice testing team, who will be happy to answer your questions.

Sign up to hospice testing webinars ([https://event.webcasts.com/starthere.jsp?ei=1416043&tp\\_key=228ba3ce61](https://event.webcasts.com/starthere.jsp?ei=1416043&tp_key=228ba3ce61))

## 1. Summary: testing for hospices

### About the service

The service covers 3 individual elements:

- inpatient hospice testing – where hospice staff look after patients on site
- community-based hospice testing – where hospice staff visit patients in their own homes
- visitor testing – for testing visitors, including visiting professionals such as faith leaders, before they come into contact with staff or patients in a hospice

## Regular asymptomatic testing for hospices in England

### Staff

All hospice staff should test with:

- 1 polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test every week
- 1 rapid lateral flow test on the same day as the PCR
- 1 rapid lateral flow test midweek, 3 to 4 days after their PCR test

### Patients

- Patients may be tested upon admission (if appropriate) and ad hoc if required
- Staff must take a rapid lateral flow test before starting work if returning from leave or if they have worked somewhere else in between
- If a staff member tests positive from a rapid lateral flow test, they must take a confirmatory PCR and self-isolate until result available

## Rapid response testing for hospices in England

If a positive case is identified in a hospice setting (from a **P.C.R** or rapid lateral flow test), all staff should undertake daily rapid lateral flow test testing for 7 days.

If one of these is positive, a confirmatory **P.C.R** must be taken and then self-isolation until result is available.

In addition to this, if any positive cases found in a hospice (either **P.C.R** or rapid lateral flow test), the hospice manager should contact their local health protection team (**H.P.T**) immediately, and follow the advice given.

## **Regular asymptomatic testing for hospices in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland**

Hospice testing in each of these countries uses only **P.C.R** testing.

### **Wales:**

- all staff once a week using a **P.C.R** test
- patients upon admission (if appropriate)

### **Northern Ireland:**

- all staff once a week using a **P.C.R** test
- patients upon admission (if appropriate)

### **Scotland:**

Testing is delivered locally through the local NHS

## **Unique organisation number (UON)**

- NHS Test and Trace assigns all participating organisations a single unique organisation number (**UON**)
- Managers will receive their **UON** via the email address registered with Care Quality Commission (**CQC**) – please make sure that the person who receives these emails understands the importance of this message and knows who to contact
- A **UON** is an 8-digit number that is exclusive to an individual organisation – this can be used to login to all online elements of the testing process

Managers will need to use their **UON** for:

- ordering test kits (<https://request-testing.test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/>)
- contacting the national coronavirus contact centre for support (dial 119, or 0300 303 2713 in Scotland)

Staff will need to use their **UON** for:

- registering completed test kits (<https://gov.uk/register-organisation-tests>) to make sure they will receive their results

If you have any issues with this process, please call 119.

## 2. PCR kits

### Ordering test kits

Hospice managers can order PCR kits online (<https://request-testing.test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk>)

You will need:

- your UON
- the total number of 'staff' and 'patients' for testing ('staff' only for community hospices)

Enter the number of staff who require testing, and the number of inpatient beds for the number of non-staff.

Hospices in England can also order rapid lateral flow tests. These will be provided in boxes of 7.

Once you have placed an order, you will receive a confirmatory email from [organisation.coronavirus.testing@notifications.service.gov.uk](mailto:organisation.coronavirus.testing@notifications.service.gov.uk).

### Preparation

You will receive an email from [organisation.coronavirus.testing@notifications.service.gov.uk](mailto:organisation.coronavirus.testing@notifications.service.gov.uk) who will confirm the estimated delivery date.

Test kits will be delivered to the registered address. It is their responsibility to accept delivery of kits and arrange for despatch or collection. Re-ordering should be done on a monthly basis.

### Distributing test kits to staff who are testing remotely

Once kits have been delivered it is the manager's responsibility to distribute to staff or arrange for collection. Staff can pick up kits at the same time as other materials (for example, personal protective equipment (PPE) or other medical supplies).

Each member of staff should receive 4 PCR kits and (if in England) 2 boxes of 7 rapid lateral flow test kits every 28 days so that weekly testing can continue without interruption.

### Conducting PCR tests

Staff will conduct a combined throat and nose self-swab for the test.

Follow the instructional video on how to do a throat and nasal swab (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-taking-swab-samples/how-to-use-the-self-swabbing-kit-for-a-combined-throat-and-nose-swab-video>).

Always leave 7 days between tests where possible. Additionally, continue testing at home if on holiday (in the UK) or off work due to any illness which is not related to coronavirus.

## Registering PCR tests

You must register every test kit online (<https://gov.uk/register-organisation-tests>).

You will need:

- your UON
- the barcode number of the test kit you're registering
- the email address and mobile phone number to which the test results should be sent
- the patient or staff member's personal details

## Registering multiple PCR tests at once

See guidance on how to make multiple registrations and to use our multiple upload portal (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/organisation-testing-registration-record-of-users/unique-organisation-number-uon-and-multiple-registration-guidance>). On that page you can also download a record-keeping spreadsheet.

## Returning PCR test kits by courier

Inpatient hospices returning more than 5 PCR kits should return them using a courier. Individual test kit boxes should be placed into a large cardboard box.

Make sure you have a UN3373 label on the return outer box to comply with safety regulations. You can use your own box when returning via courier only if you place the UN3373 label on it (or print or write in pen on the box).

## Booking your courier

Book all couriers online (<https://test-kit-collection.test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/>)

You will need your UON and post code to book a courier. You must book for next day before 7pm.

You can specify pick-up slots when you book the courier online. Subject to availability you can choose from:

- 9am to 1pm
- 2pm to 6pm
- 4pm to 9pm

If your courier does not arrive at the booked time, call 119. Do not contact the courier direct.

## Returning PCR test kits by post

Staff testing remotely, or inpatient hospices returning fewer than 5 tests should return test kits via a Royal Mail priority box:

- Each test kit contains a pre-paid return label
- Attach the label to the outside of the delivery packaging next to the security seal

- If you do not have enough return labels, call 119

Only use a Royal Mail priority post box. It will be labelled with the priority box sign and one of the regional NHS logos.

Find your nearest priority post box and its collection times (<http://www.royalmail.com/services-near-you>)

## Receiving PCR test results

The person tested will receive:

- an email
- a text message (if a mobile phone number was provided at registration)

The results will also include guidance on next steps for the person tested. Staff should inform their employer of a positive result immediately. After testing positive, you do not need to test again for 90 days unless you become symptomatic.

Find out what to do when you get your results (<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/what-your-test-result-means/>)

## 3. Rapid lateral flow test kits

### Using the test kits for staff

Staff members will conduct a combined throat and nose self-swab for the test. Follow the instructional video on how to do a COVID-19 self test (rapid antigen test) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=S9XR8RZxKNo&list=PLvaBZskxS7tzQYIVg7lwH5uxAD9UrSzGJ>).

### Reading your result

If a staff member receives a negative result with a rapid lateral flow test and remains without symptoms they can continue working. Staff members must continue following all infection prevention and control (IPC) measures such as wearing PPE, washing your hands and socially distancing where possible.

If any staff member tests positive, they will need to conduct a confirmatory PCR test and immediately self-isolate until they receive their PCR result. Following a confirmed (PCR) positive test, staff should stop regular rapid lateral flow tests and PCR testing for 90 days.

If a staff member develops new COVID-19 symptoms within the 90-day window, they should apply for a COVID-19 test through regular testing channels (<https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>).

## 4. Visitor testing

Visitor testing is not mandatory, but is advisable to help protect visitors, staff and patients. Visitors should be tested on entry every time they visit the hospice, regardless of how recently the previous visit took place.

### On-site testing (including for visitors and people living in the setting)

See Coronavirus (COVID-19) testing for adult social care settings (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-testing-for-adult-social-care-settings>) for full details of how to conduct on-site testing.

## Self-test (visitor testing at home)

### Before you start testing

Conduct a rapid lateral flow test on the day of your visit to a care setting to help keep us safe, reduce the spread of coronavirus and prevent outbreaks.

Adult social care settings can provide you with a box of rapid lateral flow tests to take at home. Find out more about the different ways to access rapid coronavirus testing (<https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests>).

To ensure that your test is linked to the care setting you're visiting, ensure all tests are reported to their [UQN](#). How to do this is detailed below.

You must be able to show staff the text (SMS) message or email from NHS Test and Trace as evidence of a negative test.

It is at the discretion of the setting manager whether they wish to accept visitors who have self-tested at home.

### Registering visitor rapid lateral flow tests

Every rapid lateral flow test must be registered online (<https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result>) once completed.

Complete the registration as soon as the test result is determined. You need the ID number on the test strip to register the result.

When using the online form, there is the option to create a user account. When you create a user account, you link your email address to your personal details. After you register your first rapid lateral flow test using your user account, your personal details will be saved, and you will not have to re-enter them when you register in future. Creating an account should take about 2 minutes and will save about 5 minutes each time you register a test in the future.

### Registration step by step for visitors

1. Visit Report a COVID-19 rapid lateral flow test result (<http://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result>).
2. Select 'Myself' when asked who you are reporting a result for.
3. You can choose to continue 'without an account' or 'create an account'. Creating an account will save your details each time you report a test result. Creating an account only takes 2 minutes and you'll save 5 minutes when reporting each test result.
4. If continuing without an account, select, 'A social care service' when asked who the test was for.
5. Select 'I'm visiting someone who gets care or support'.
6. Enter the [UQN](#) of the care setting you are intending to visit. This should already have been provided to you by the setting manager.

7. Check the details of the organisation are correct.
8. Tell us when the test was taken. (This should always be 'today' as visitors to adult social care settings must show proof of a negative test conducted on the same day as their visit).
9. Enter the ID number printed on the plastic test strip. You can also scan the QR code on the test strip if you are using a mobile device.
10. Follow the remaining steps, entering your personal details to complete your report.
11. You will receive a text message and email from NHS Test and Trace confirming your test result has been reported. You must take one of these with you to the setting you are visiting, as proof of a negative result.

## Visitor test results

### Negative

The visitor can continue with the visit if other J.P.C. measures are adhered to. The visitor should only enter designated parts of the setting and must wear appropriate P.P.E. including a face mask, gloves, apron and follow J.P.C. measures in line with the national policy. J.P.C. measures remain important because the test is not 100% sensitive.

### Invalid or void

The visitor will need to re-test using a spare rapid lateral flow test kit to receive a conclusive result. If the re-test comes back as invalid, we recommend that you do not allow the visitor to complete the visit as planned, but this is at the discretion of the hospice manager.

### Positive

If the visitor tests positive, whether the visit goes ahead is at the discretion of the hospice manager. A positive rapid lateral flow test result requires a confirmatory P.C.R test be taken and returned to the lab. If the additional P.C.R kits came with a Royal Mail label, the kit can be posted in a priority post box. If not, ring 119 to book a same-day courier. The visitor should immediately return home and isolate to wait for their P.C.R test result.

## Support and resources

### Coronavirus testing contact centre

Call 119 (England). Lines are open from 7am to 11pm daily.

After selecting your country, language requirements and data preferences, press '1' for calling from an organisation who receives test kits directly from the national testing programme.

Consent form templates that can be used for staff and patients have been shared with local authorities.

### Guidance on testing people who lack mental capacity

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-looking-after-people-who-lack-mental-capacity/the-mental-capacity-act-2005-mca-and-deprivation-of-liberty-safeguards-dols-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-pandemic-additional-guidance>)



## Learning disability-specific guidance:

- Having a swab test taken (video) ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iEGnsy\\_ABJo&list=PLfVgWWNqce45o8XjfHNcVJCjJmF8u-\\_&index=16](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iEGnsy_ABJo&list=PLfVgWWNqce45o8XjfHNcVJCjJmF8u-_&index=16))
- COVID-19: supporting adults with learning disabilities and autistic adults (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-supporting-adults-with-learning-disabilities-and-autistic-adults>)

## Easy reads on coronavirus and testing:

- COVID-19 **P.C.R.** home test kit instructions (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/testing-for-coronavirus-at-home>)

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## Brexit

Check what you need to do (<https://www.gov.uk/transition>)

## Explore the topic

- End of life care (<https://www.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/end-of-life-care>)
- Testing for coronavirus (COVID-19) (<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-taxon/testing>)