



# Information

for adult social care providers

CORONAVIRUS  
**PROTECT  
YOURSELF  
& OTHERS**

 Leicestershire  
County Council

## Issue 61 – 10 December 2020

Dear colleague,

Please find below three updates on the topic of testing.

### Accuracy of lateral flow tests

There have been a number of questions surrounding the accuracy of lateral flow tests. The below information is from Dr Susan Hopkins, Senior Medical Adviser to PHE and NHS Test and Trace:

- No test will detect every single case, but these lateral flow devices are proving to be accurate and reliable and we are confident that they can be used to rapidly identify many people who are silently carrying the virus.
- When used in combination with other vital infection prevention control measures such as wearing appropriate PPE, washing hands regularly and social distancing, these tests will enable people to live their lives in as normal a way as possible.
- In care homes, these tests can help make planned visits safer by identifying visitors that are unknowingly carrying high levels of virus, and so preventing them from passing it on to their loved one.

Extensive clinical evaluation of the lateral flow tests, conducted by Oxford University and Public Health England, has confirmed they are highly reliable, sensitive and accurate in multiple settings. By using these tests, we can quickly identify people who may not be displaying symptoms but have a high viral load and are the most likely to spread the virus further.

A Department of Health and Social Care spokesperson said:

*With up to a third of individuals with Covid-19 not displaying symptoms, broadening testing to identify those showing no symptoms and who can infect people unknowingly will mean finding positive cases more quickly and break chains of transmission.*

*The country's leading scientists have rigorously evaluated the Optigene LAMP test and Lateral Flow Test and confirmed the accuracy of the tests for asymptomatic testing.*

## **Coronavirus testing for home care workers**

Coronavirus testing is now available for providers to access for home care staff - please see the Government guidance for further information:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-testing-for-homecare-workers>

Within the guidance information on webinar training sessions is available. These sessions will provide advice on requesting your tests, along with information for you and your staff on completing the tests and sending them back. Once you have attended the webinar you'll receive regular bulletins with up to date information around deliveries and resources.

Key points to remember and share with your staff are:

- Test kit orders can only be delivered to a care agency's address as registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC). Orders cannot be delivered to other locations, such as an individual home care worker's personal address
- Tests must be carried out and posted back between Thursdays and Sundays each week – this is when the test centre has spare capacity to undertake this level of testing, so it is important that care professionals stick to these days to ensure a swift turnaround of results
- Care professionals must register the test as 'If you're testing on site for an organisation' and not a 'home test' and must use the agency's Unique Organisation Number (UNO) when registering
- Homecare workers should always check the last collection time at their nearest Priority Post Box at <https://www.royalmail.com/services-near-you#/> and test kits must always be posted before the last collection time, on the same day that the swab is conducted

If you have any issues or queries regarding home care testing please contact Testing Contact Centre on 119, which is open daily between the hours of 7am – 11pm.

## **Coronavirus testing for Extra Care and Supported Living settings**

DHSC has announced that from the 9 December 2020, eligible Extra Care and Supported Living settings will be able to place orders to regularly test their residents and staff.

Testing will be available in Extra Care and Supported Living settings that meet the following criteria:

- a closed community with substantial facilities shared between multiple people, and
- where most residents receive the kind of personal care that is CQC regulated (rather than help with cooking, cleaning and shopping)

Staff should be tested on a weekly basis and residents should be tested every 28 days.

Orders should be placed every 28 days from: <https://request-testing.test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk>

Full guidance is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-testing-service-for-extra-care-and-supported-living-settings>

Extra Care and Supported Living settings that are beginning these tests are encouraged to join one of the DHSC webinars.

To sign up to attend the Extra Care and Supported Living testing webinars, click here: [https://event.webcasts.com/starthere.jsp?ei=1380165&tp\\_key=dfecd07a9d](https://event.webcasts.com/starthere.jsp?ei=1380165&tp_key=dfecd07a9d)

Yours sincerely

Jon Wilson

Director of Adults and Communities

Mike Sandys

Director of Public Health

*The archive of all previous COVID-19 provider bulletins released since March 2020 can be found at <https://resources.leicestershire.gov.uk/adult-social-care-and-health/working-with-you-during-coronavirus>*