

## COVID-19 testing to support retention of NHS staff in the workplace

- **What is happening locally?**

The health system is working together to support retention of NHS staff in the workplace by providing swabbing facilities for staff groups who have a household member with COVID-19 like symptoms (known as an index case) and are therefore self-isolating for 14 days, or for staff who have COVID-19 like symptoms themselves.

These tests are now available to any member of NHS staff who work in General Practice, Community Pharmacies and HUC (NHS 111).

- **Who would be tested?**

We are currently testing staff who are self-isolating because either:

- A member of their household (adult or child) has COVID-19 like symptoms
- The staff member has COVID-19 like symptoms

In addition, the staff member (or member of their household) should be in the first three days of the onset of COVID-19 symptoms at the time the swab is taken – although testing is considered effective up until day five. No testing through this service should be undertaken after day five.

If the swab result from the index case is negative, and the staff member is symptom free, then the staff member can return to work sooner.

If the swab result from the index case is positive, the staff member will need to continue with their 14-day self-isolation.

- **What is our local plan?**

Currently we are offering a drive-thru swabbing service for key workers in General Practices, Community Pharmacy and HUC, which is being led by Royal Papworth Hospital's Occupational Health Team, at Royal Papworth. A further site is currently being established at Peterborough City Hospital, further information on this will be shared in due course.

In addition, Cambridge University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust have secured additional lab capacity using University labs to support for their own staff. This will increase lab capacity available across the system and in turn provide increased access to swabs.

- **What is the national plan?**

We've been advised by NHSE&I that there are National swabbing centres being established across the Region, which will be in addition to our local plan. For Cambridgeshire and Peterborough our Regional testing centre is located at Stansted Airport and we have secured places for our further key workers from the following areas:

- Nursing and Residential Home staff
- Domiciliary Care Staff
- Prison Staff
- Local Authority Key workers
- Police
- Fire and Rescue Service.

The Multi Agency Incident Cell are supporting facilitation for the key workers mentioned above to gain access to these places.

- **How can I get a test?**

If you are in General Practice, Community Pharmacy or HUC and have a member of staff that meets the criteria outlined above, you need to complete the CCG Swabbing excel spreadsheet and return to [capccg.COVID19staffswabbing@nhs.net](mailto:capccg.COVID19staffswabbing@nhs.net) as soon as possible. Please remember to gain consent from your staff member for their details to be shared before submitting the form.

Once the information is received, we will contact the person referred, by telephone, to confirm all referral details and discuss the next steps.

It is important to note that you cannot just turn up and request a test. You will be invited to a specific, pre-booked time slot.

- **What does the test involve and how long will it take?**

The procedure takes around 10 minutes and swabs will be taken from the nose and throat of the index case. Following this samples will be taken to a lab for testing.

- **What do I do if I come down with COVID-19 like symptoms?**

All staff must follow the national guidance when it comes to self-isolation.

Namely, if they have symptoms that are consistent with COVID-19 - namely a new, persistent cough and/or high temperature – they should stay at home and should not come into work. This is also the case if a member of their household shows symptoms. If they do need to self-isolate, then we recommend they follow [PHE guidance](#).

If a staff member's symptoms start whilst at work, they should go home immediately.

As a general rule, physical contact between members of staff, regardless of any health symptoms, should be kept to a minimum and all practices should adhere to social distancing guidelines wherever possible.

- **I think I've already had COVID-19 so can I be tested to see if I have developed the antibody?**

Tests for immunity are in development and will be rolled out as soon as they have been evaluated and are therefore not yet available.

- **Does the key worker (if no symptoms) need to attend with household member to the appointment?**

No, if the key worker isn't being swabbed only the household member who has been provided an appointment needs to be in the car. If the household member cannot drive someone from the same household can drive them however only if absolutely necessary.

- **Can children be swabbed?**

Yes – children under 18 can be swabbed, however the swabbing will be slightly different to adults. Any children under the age of 1 will need to be swabbed by parent/carer – and will be given guidance on how to do this safely and effectively from the swabbing team at Royal Papworth.

- **If both the household member who is showing symptoms of Covid-19 and the key worker showing symptoms would you swab both or just the key worker?**

In this instance, just the key worker would be swabbed.

- **If a household member has received confirmation of a positive test result (prior to being referred) for Covid-19 will the key worker still be sent for a swab?**

Not in this instance, the key worker would need to follow government guidance and self-isolate for 14 days. No swabbing is needed.

- **Can I now get a test through Boots or Amazon?**

The government has announced that Amazon and Royal Mail are helping with logistics for testing, while Boots has been supporting initial trials by supplying volunteer healthcare clinicians as testers. It will continue this support as the testing is rolled out. Testing will not be done at Boots stores and these tests will not be available over the counter or for purchase online from any retailers.

- **Can I get a test through NHS 111?**

Tests are not being arranged through NHS 111 so please do not call them regarding testing.