

Care Home COVID-19 Testing Guidance

Non-Randox test kits (Northern Ireland)

This guidance is for all care homes without outbreaks and includes information about testing for coronavirus (COVID-19).

Before you do any testing

- Read this guidance in its entirety
- Make sure you have booked a courier collection by 7pm the day **before** you start testing. This can be arranged at <https://testkitcollect.co.uk/>

Version Control

Version Control	Date of Issue
Version 1.0	31 July 2020
Version 2.0 Changes to page 6 – retesting to occur 4 weeks post positive test results	10 August 2020
Version 2.1 Added page on further testing arrangements in care homes with a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 Outbreak	19 August 2020
Version 3.0 Updated Testing Instructions	21 August 2020
Version 3.1 Updated courier collection URLs	18 September 2020
Version 3.2 Symptomatic and Asymptomatic worker: flowchart describing return to work following a SARS-CoV-2 test	28 September 2020
Version 4.0 Update in repeating tests in positive cases in regular testing: test after 90 days. Bulk upload information added	29 October 2020
Version 5.0 Update in testing regime: staff weekly testing	4 Nov 2020
Version 6.0 Update in testing regime following CMO letter 18 December 2020	8 Jan 2021

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Introduction

Providing testing within all care homes will help you protect your residents and staff, and is an important part of the national effort to tackle coronavirus. Thank you for everything you are doing to help the country beat the virus at this hugely challenging time.

Order test kits via the online portal for care homes:

<https://request-testing.test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/>

Currently we are using Non-Randox kits in NI.

This guidance document is for Non-Randox test kits.

Prepare your care home for testing

This will help to ensure you are ready to test staff and residents on a regular basis. If residents develop symptoms test immediately, don't wait for the next retesting cycle.

- Familiarise yourself with the guidance and instructions and assist your team to prepare by watching the instructional video for [over 65s and dementia](#) and [specialist](#) care homes and completing [the online self-assessment tool](#).
- Discuss the testing approach with your residents and staff. Spend time preparing residents and explaining the procedure to them
- Make sure that you obtain written consent.
- Review your personal protective equipment (PPE) supply and ensure you have the correct PPE to carry out testing.
- Ensure a proper workstation is available for preparing and packing the tests
- Look out for the delivery confirmation email letting you know when tests will be delivered
- Have a workflow to allow tests to be easily recorded, conducted and registered as swiftly as possible — it is recommended to have two staff members; one to conduct the test and the other to record the relevant information needed for registration
- **If you have received a handheld scanner for easier registration:** make sure you have set it up and familiarised your staff with how to use it. For a quick start guide on how to use the scanning device, turn to page 23.
- Make sure you have booked a courier collection by 7pm the day **before** you start testing. This can be arranged at <https://testkitcollect.co.uk/>

Testing process overview

	What to expect:	What to do :
Initial Order	<p>You will receive an email from care.home.portal.for.coronavirus.test.kits@notifications.service.gov.uk confirming your successful order of tests.</p>	<p>Start planning in advance so that you are ready to begin testing when the test kits are delivered to you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read the instructions and watch the instruction video(s) • Prepare a workflow and allocated work stations for testing • Ensure you have enough of the appropriate PPE
<p>There will be a delay between placing your order and confirming your delivery as we prioritise care home orders. Use the time to prepare your care home for testing.</p>		
Delivery Confirmation	<p>You will receive a second email confirming the test kits are scheduled for delivery.</p>	<p>Make sure you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate the testing plan to all staff and residents • You should obtain consent to conduct the test from the resident in line with your usual policies and procedures. (more on page 11 - obtaining consent) • Obtain agreement from staff to be tested, and schedule testing of staff taking into account shift patterns
Receive test kits	<p>You will receive your delivery of test kits via courier after 10am.</p> <p>Ensure that all test kits are stored safely at an ambient temperature. Do not refrigerate or leave in direct sunlight.</p>	<p>Start preparing for testing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-familiarise yourself and staff with the test instructions to prepare, collect and package the sample for each person being tested • Prepare your test record templates and workstations for an easy testing and registration workflow • Spend time preparing residents and explaining the procedure to them
Before testing	<p>Book a courier collection at least a day before testing (by no later than 7pm)</p>	<p>You can book all your courier collections at once or you can book ad hoc courier collections as and when you plan to test.</p> <p>Make sure that you have a confirmed courier collection for the day that you are due to start testing.</p>
Testing days	<p>Testing days, on day(s) of your choice:</p> <p>Conduct your tests between 6am - 3pm. Stop testing at 3pm to allow time for packaging before courier collection.</p> <p>Courier collection will take place between 4pm and 10pm on each day you have a booked collection.</p>	<p>For EACH day of testing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take time to prepare yourself, your space, your residents and staff • Follow the test instructions to prepare, collect and package the sample for each resident or staff member between 6am and 3pm • Note the barcode number and time of each test against the name of the person tested • Register the completed test online as close as possible to the time of the swab • Courier collects completed test samples between 4pm and 10pm
Results	<p>You will receive the test results by email within 72 hours of test kits arriving at the laboratory</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notify, as appropriate, the resident, GP and family of the test result • Take appropriate actions if the test result is positive or inconclusive

Who should be tested?

Testing should be done for the whole home.


This testing is for residents and staff who are not symptomatic. Regular care home testing is aimed at identifying asymptomatic cases of COVID-19 (that is cases who have no symptoms) and to support early intervention to minimise the risk of spread.

Overview of retesting schedule

Ensure you are ready to test staff and residents on a regular basis: All staff will be tested weekly (every 7 days) and all residents will be tested monthly: every 28 days.

The regular testing cadence

Key: **P** PCR test

Week	1	2	3	4	5+	
Staff	P	P	P	P	P	 Repeat testing cycle for staff and residents
Resident	P				P	

In the case of a suspected or confirmed outbreak

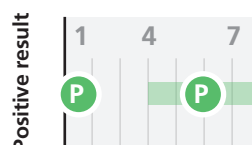
Contact your local HSC Trust and Public Health Agency (PHA) / Health Protection Duty Room (HPDR)

+

P PCR Testing for residents and staff on day 1 and once more between days 4-7 of the outbreak

+

Isolation of staff and/or residents who tested positive.



Testing policy in detail

Residents **with or without** symptoms

Residents who have previously tested positive can be retested after 90 days or immediately if they develop an onset of new symptoms.

Residents who develop new symptoms should be **tested immediately** and should follow the existing self isolation guidance. Testing in this instance will happen via usual HSC Trust mechanisms.

Note: a positive result will also reset the start date for the 90 day period within which the individual should not be routinely tested. If the test result is negative, the 90 day period will remain unchanged (i.e. taken from the first positive COVID-19 result).

As far as possible, residents should be offered the choice to either self-administer the test on themselves or to have the test administered by a suitable member of staff.

Staff **without** symptoms

All care home staff without symptoms can be tested.

Staff who previously tested positive can be retested after 90 days. Note this frequency will be kept under review in light of emerging evidence.

If, after 90 days a resident or staff member tests positive for a SECOND time in a care home and is symptom free, a precautionary approach should be taken and the individual asked to isolate for 14 days (care home resident) or 10 days (staff member).

Staff **with** symptoms should **NOT** be tested in the care home

Staff with symptoms should instead be referred for testing at a regional / local test centre or in their own home. Please visit www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test to arrange a test as an essential worker.

Staff members should register the tests themselves to receive the test results directly, or may give consent to the care home to register and receive their test results. This consent should be given in writing. As test results are personal information no staff member should be compelled to provide consent.

COVID-19 Symptoms

COVID-19 symptoms include a new continuous cough and/or high temperature (>37.8°C) and/or loss of, or change to, sense of smell or taste.

However, symptoms may be more subtle in older people in care homes who may present with Influenza Like Illness (ILI), shortness of breath, new onset confusion, reduced alertness, reduced mobility, or diarrhoea and sometimes do not develop fever. This may be true for COVID-19, so such changes should alert staff to the possibility of new COVID-19 infection.

Please refer to the latest guidance online for up to date [guidance on symptoms](#).

Testing protocol for care homes with a suspected or confirmed outbreak

The current testing protocol in place for care homes with a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 outbreak has been further enhanced. It is important to identify both single cases and potential clusters of cases of COVID-19 in care homes.

- Contact the GP of affected residents to arrange clinical assessment;
- Contact the Public Health Agency (PHA) Duty Room on **0300 555 0119** or by email to: **PHA.DutyRoom@hscni.net** to complete a public health risk assessment;

Whether an outbreak is declared or not, the PHA Duty Officer will progress a risk assessment with the care home and advise staff of what further action(s) are required. **If testing is required as part of this risk assessment, HSC Trusts will support care homes in their area to undertake and complete a full round of testing of staff and residents.**

Please also refer to PHA published poster to guide management of testing.

www.publichealth.hscni.net/covid-19-coronavirus/testing-and-tracing-covid-19/testing-covid-19/covid-19-implementation-planned

When to Test in Care Homes

Testing for COVID-19 in care home settings should be undertaken in one of three circumstances:

1. **Regular care home testing;**
2. **Testing of symptomatic individuals;**
3. **As part of the management of an outbreak of COVID-19.**

Any questions about interpretation of this testing guidance should be directed to the Public Health Agency (PHA) Health Protection Duty Room (HPDR) in the first instance.

HPDR Contact Details:

Telephone: 0300 555 0119

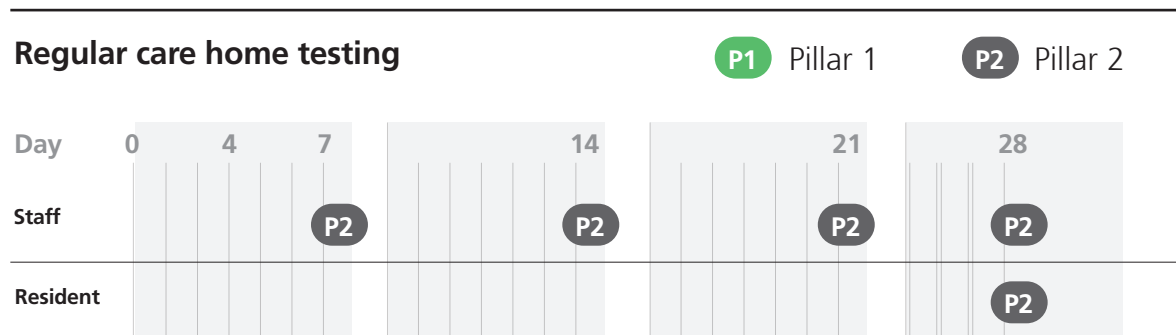
Email: PHA.DutyRoom@hscni.net

1 Regular care home testing

Regular care home testing is aimed at identifying asymptomatic cases of COVID-19 (that is cases who have no symptoms) and to support early intervention to minimise the risk of spread.

Regular testing for care home residents should be undertaken EVERY 4 WEEKS (through the National Testing Initiative - Pillar 2). Residents should be tested at least once a month, even during an outbreak as per Section 3.

Regular testing for care home staff should be undertaken WEEKLY (Pillar 2). Weekly testing of staff will also continue through an outbreak (ref: Section 3)



Please note: Individuals who have a positive COVID-19 test should NOT be retested for 90 days following their positive test (ref: Section 4.2)

2 Care Homes with a Single Symptomatic Individual (Staff or Resident)

a) Single symptomatic individual

Test for COVID-19:

- If the test is positive for COVID-19, proceed to test ALL staff and residents in the care home immediately (Whole Home Testing) and ensure guidance is followed in respect of isolation of the positive case; this is 10 days from onset of symptoms for staff, and 14 days for residents. Inform the HPDR.
- Test all staff and residents again via the Trust on Day 4-7.
- If the test is negative for COVID-19, continue to monitor the situation closely.

b) Second symptomatic individual within 14 day period from the 1st person developing symptoms but 1st person tested negative

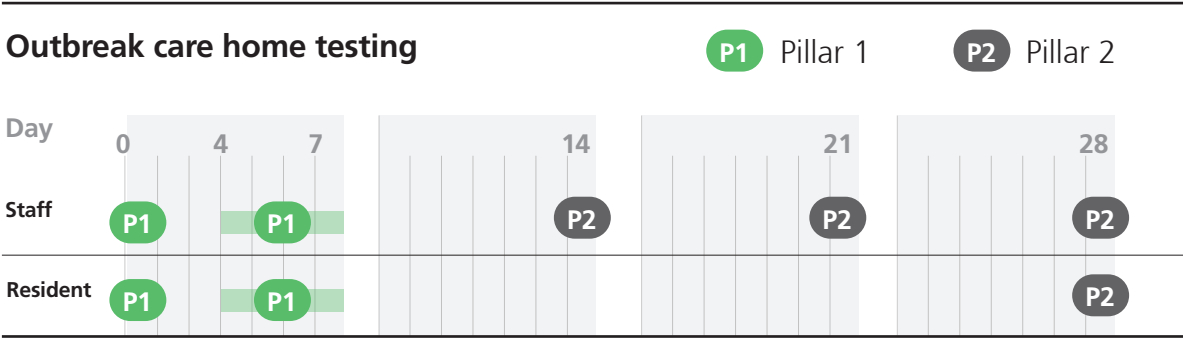
Test 2nd individual for COVID-19:

- If the test is positive for COVID-19, proceed to test all staff and residents in care home immediately and ensure guidance followed in respect of isolation of positive case; this is 10 days from onset of symptoms for staff, and 14 days for residents. Inform the HPDR.
- If the test is negative for COVID-19, continue to monitor the situation closely.

If, following the two negative test results, there are no further individuals reporting symptoms for 14 days following symptom(s) onset in the last person, then the care home will return to the cohort of ‘green homes’ (without an outbreak) in which the regular programme of testing is conducted through the Pillar 2.

3 Outbreak Testing

Care Homes with Two or More Symptomatic Individuals (Staff or Resident) within a 14 Day Period



* the need for Day 0 test will depend if outbreak is triggered by regular testing or by testing a symptomatic case – please contact HPDR for advice if required.

Once an outbreak has been declared by the PHA, the day the outbreak is declared by the HPDR is Day zero ‘0’.

- Whole Home Testing should be completed immediately (round 1).
- If the positive cases triggering the outbreak have been identified during regular weekly staff testing (round 1), ALL residents should be tested immediately (same day if possible, but within 24 hours via the Health and Social Care (HSC) Trust - Pillar 1); this completes round 1 of Whole Home Testing.
- Second round of testing should be undertaken 4-7 Days after first round in Pillar 1.
- A third round of testing should take place at Day 28 in Pillar 2.
- Results of all testing should be shared and discussed with the HPDR.
- Regular weekly staff testing and testing residents every 4 weeks should continue using Pillar 2 regardless of the length of the outbreak.

Isolation and IPC requirements in managing the outbreak will be directed by the HPDR.

4 Additional testing guidance

4.1 Testing at 28 Days Following an Outbreak

It is a requirement to complete Whole Home Testing at Day 28 regardless of the outbreak status in the care home. The care home will continue with regular 28 days testing during any outbreak situation which will determine any onward transmission of infections.

Any additional requirement for testing during an outbreak will be decided on case by case basis, taking into account the effectiveness of control measures and any evidence of transmission.

Scenario 1

Positive cases (asymptomatic) are identified through the regular 'green home' testing programme (Pillar 2) triggering an outbreak (need to have 2 cases to trigger an outbreak).

- The day the outbreak is declared by the HPDR is Day 0.
- If the positive cases triggering the outbreak have been identified during weekly staff testing (round 1), ALL residents should be tested immediately (same day if possible but within 24 hours) – this completes round 1 of Whole Home Testing.
- A second round of Whole Home Testing is required at Day 4-7.
- Continue with 28 Days testing as part of regular testing programme for residents and weekly testing for staff as follows:
 - 28 days from the date of the test of the last ASYMPTOMATIC case OR 28 days after onset of symptoms of the last SYMPTOMATIC case.

Scenario 2

Symptomatic cases reported to the HPDR triggering an outbreak (two or more possible or confirmed cases).

- Whole Home Testing should be arranged as soon as possible (round 1)
- A further round of Whole Home Testing is required at Day 4-7 (round 2)
- Continue with 28 Days testing as part of regular testing programme for residents and weekly testing for staff as follows:
 - 28 days from the date of the test of the last ASYMPTOMATIC case OR 28 days after onset of symptoms of the last SYMPTOMATIC case

4.2 Individuals in Care Homes who Test Positive for COVID-19

Any individual who tests positive for COVID-19, and remains asymptomatic should not be tested for 90 days.

This is because any repeat test may result in a positive result due to the presence of residual (dead) virus within the individual's system, but does not represent active infection with the virus. Testing outside this policy may add to confusion and act as a trigger for inappropriate decision making.

4.3 Managing a Second Positive Test Result for COVID-19 in a Care Home Setting

Asymptomatic Individuals

- If, after 90 days a resident or staff member tests positive for a SECOND time in a care home and is symptom free, a precautionary approach should be taken and the individual asked to isolate for 14 days (care home resident) or 10 days (staff member).
- Recommencing routine testing - as long as an individual with a second positive test remains asymptomatic, they should not be retested for the recommended period i.e. 90 days from their most recent test. The individual can then be included in the next round of regular home testing.

Symptomatic individuals

- If an individual becomes symptomatic at any stage after their initial test (i.e. before the 90 day period is completed or after 90 days has elapsed but before next round of regular routine testing), they should be managed as a suspected COVID-19 case and asked to isolate and be tested.
- Tests should be processed in all symptomatic residents using HSC Trusts (local labs) in Pillar 1.

Note: a positive result will also reset the start date for the 90 day period within which the individual should not be routinely tested. If the test result is negative, the 90 day period will remain unchanged (i.e. taken from the first positive COVID-19 result).

4.4 Testing Prior to Discharge from Hospital to a Care Home

IMMUNOCOMPETENT

- If previously tested negative during routine testing in hospital – the person needs to be tested (48hours before discharge). If the result is positive and their discharge is planned within their 14 day isolation period, they should only be discharged to a setting that can provide appropriate isolation i.e. single room, own bathroom etc.
- An immunocompetent resident who has tested positive within the previous 90 days, and remains asymptomatic, does not need to be re-tested before discharge to the care home.
- If a resident is re-tested within 90 days from their initial illness onset or test date and found to still be positive for SARS-CoV-2, a clinically led approach should be used to interpret the result and inform subsequent action taking into account several factors, such as: COVID-19 symptoms, underlying clinical conditions, immunosuppressive treatments and conditions, and additional information such as cycle threshold values. Seek advice from an infection specialist/microbiologist as required.
- If a person is re-tested by PCR after 90 days from their initial illness onset or test and is found to be positive, this should be considered as a possible new infection. If they have developed new COVID-19 symptoms, they would need to self-isolate again and their contacts should be traced.

IMMUNOSUPPRESSED

- The decision to test or not to test immunocompromised residents is a clinical/specialist decision that needs to be considered on a case by case basis taking into symptoms, underlying clinical conditions, resident current treatments and conditions, and other additional information. Seek advice from an infection specialist/microbiologist as required.

4.5 Information

HSC Trusts and Care Homes are reminded of the importance of having complete information on ALL requests for COVID-19 tests, submitted through both Pillars 1 and 2, which should include the following information as a minimum:

- Individual's Health and Care Number (HCN) – individuals may access this through their GP or their HCN number will also be on medical cards, any HSC documentation people may have received, or on prescriptions;
- Care Home name/code; and
- Indication if the test is for a staff member or resident.

Booking your courier collection

Please read the below instructions that describe how to arrange a courier collection before you start testing

Please book your courier collection at

<https://test-kit-collection.test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/>

Arranging your test kit courier collection:

1

Once you have planned for when to do testing book your courier collection at <https://test-kit-collection.test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/>

2

You will need your **unique organisation number** and **postcode** to register. You must book for next day before 7pm. You can book up to 6 days in advance. You can book ad hoc courier collections through this portal

3

Receive your courier collection confirmation email

4

Conduct testing between 6am and 3pm on the day your courier has been arranged (see page 12 for more information about testing)

5

Package your test kits up before 4pm using one of the empty boxes you will have received with your test kit delivery and add the UN3373 label to the box

6

The courier will collect completed kits from you between 4pm and 10pm on the day you have selected

Tests must be picked up on the same day they are taken

Why courier timing is important:

There is a 48 hour window to get a swab sample to the laboratory for processing. If this window is missed, there is a high chance that the individual may not get their results and a retest may be required at a later time.

You will be able to book multiple collections, but **please make sure that you only test on a day where you have a confirmed courier scheduled to collect your test kits that same day between 4pm and 10pm.**

If you have received test kits for testing in your care home from any other source (for example directly from Your local Health Trust, please keep these tests separate and do not return these tests with the same courier.

Note: Do not send any personal information along with the completed test kits, in the form of a record keeping spreadsheet or otherwise.



Important

Please only test on a day that you have a confirmed courier collection arranged

Contact the customer contact centre on 119 the following morning if your courier has not arrived. They will book an urgent courier collection for you.

1 Prepare for testing

Learn how to conduct the test

To ensure that tests are carried out safely, you must ensure that suitably competent staff conduct the tests. Every person involved in conducting the test in your care home **MUST read the detailed instructions provided** and watch the instructional videos for **elderly** and **specialist** care homes before conducting the swab test. Residents who would prefer to self administer the test on themselves should watch this **self-swabbing instruction video**, as should staff. Staff are expected to self swab.

If a test isn't correctly undertaken it may lead to inaccurate test results.

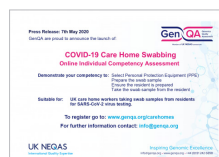
It is recommended that staff complete the **COVID-19 Care Home Swabbing Online Individual Competency Assessment** to improve the success of the swab test. It is quick and easy to use and follows on from the above video. Individuals can register at www.genqa.org/carehomes and will be given a login for immediate use. Alternatively care home managers can create an organisational account and arrange this centrally. Please contact info@genqa.org to set this up.



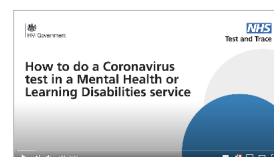
Care home instruction video
<https://youtu.be/110jcv37WzI>



Self-swabbing instruction video
<https://youtu.be/zCqo7MhQT6U>



Competency Assessment
www.genqa.org/carehomes



Testing in a mental health or learning disabilities care setting
<https://youtu.be/oluTQCVKM1A>

PPE (Personal Protective Equipment)

We recommend that you share with your staff, and follow, the current guidance from Public Health England on **how to work safely in care homes** and this short video guide on **putting on and removing PPE**. You should not conduct any tests if you don't have the correct PPE.

PPE is not needed for people who are self swabbing.

Obtaining Consent

You should obtain consent to conduct the test from the resident, consulting family members and their GP as appropriate and in line with your usual policies and procedures. Some residents, for example some people with dementia, learning disabilities or mental health conditions, may lack the relevant mental capacity to make a decision about their own testing. If the person lacks the relevant mental capacity to consent to the test, and they are aged 16 or over, you should consider if the principles of the Mental Capacity Act 2016 allow you to make a 'best interests decision' to swab and receive results, on their behalf.

As far as possible, residents should be offered the choice to either self-administer the test on themselves or to have the test administered by a suitable member of staff. Likewise, the resident should be offered the choice to receive the results directly (rather than via the registered manager on their behalf), in which case you should follow the same process set out in this guidance but using the resident's contact details to register the test online.

Obtain written agreement for all staff to be tested and how the results will be shared. For example, directly with the staff member or to the care home directly via the care home manager.

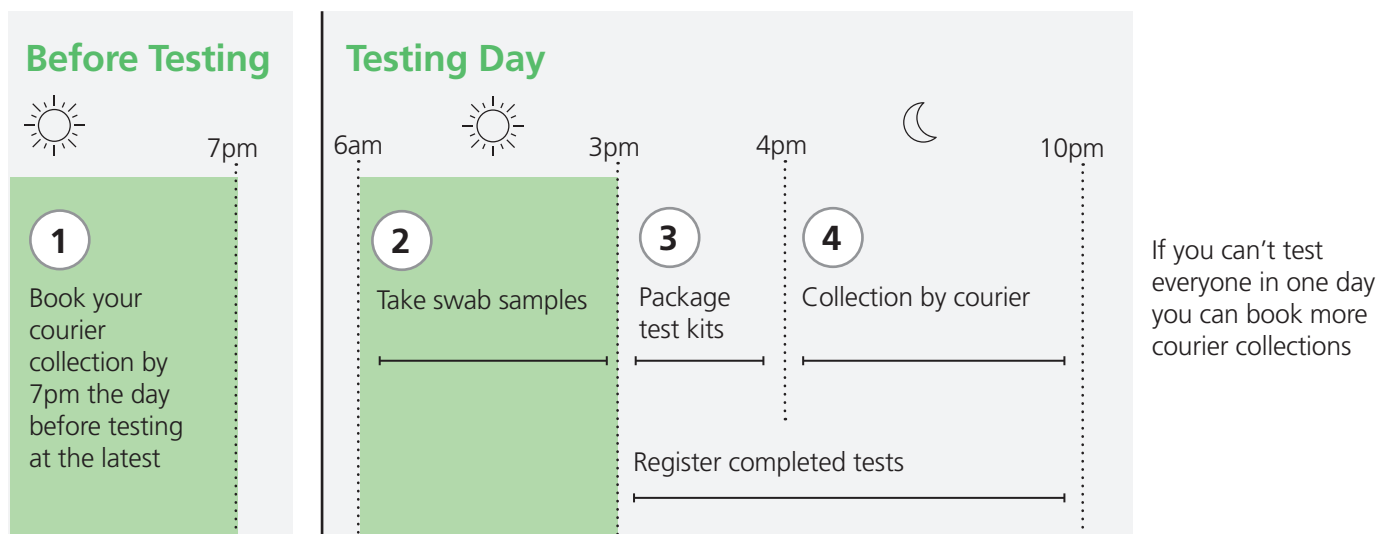
2

Conduct testing

Swabs should be taken between 6am and 3pm

for collection by courier between 4pm and 10pm the same day

This ensures that night shift staff can be tested at the end of their shift, and ensures tests are delivered to the laboratory within 48 hours of collecting each sample.



It is recommended you have two colleagues conduct the test

One recording the test, and the other swabbing the resident. This ensures that there is no cross contamination between the test materials and the materials you are using to record the information.

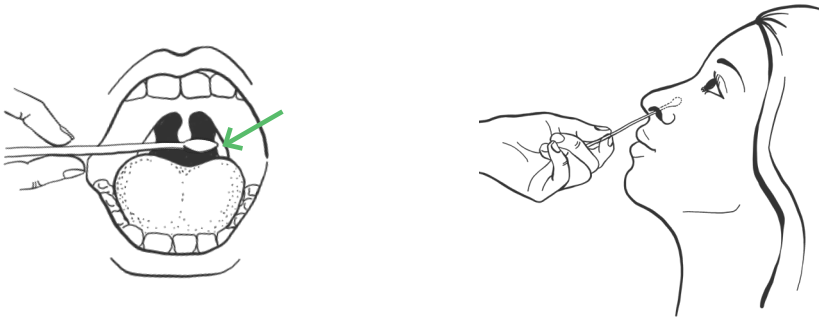
Have a clean workstation for test preparation.

Preparing your resident for testing

Take a moment to reassure the resident to help them feel more comfortable while you perform the test. Follow local guidance on obtaining consent for the test.

Check nasal passages for any recent nasal surgery or abnormalities, cuts or injuries that would make swabbing difficult. Have the resident gently blow their nose and cough into a tissue to dispose of any excess mucus, and dispose of the tissue immediately in a bin.

Combined nose and throat swabbing



Where possible a combined nose and throat swab should be taken.

However a person-centred approach should be used to assess which sample to take from each resident.

Taking a throat swab is more invasive than taking a nose swab and can be uncomfortable. To take a throat swab safely, the person being swabbed needs to be able to understand and comply with instructions, including having the ability to maintain their mouth wide open for the period of the swabbing. This can be difficult not only for people with advanced dementia, but also for those with limited strength due to severe frailty.

Where a combined nose and throat swab is not possible, a nose swab from both nostrils should be taken, if this is feasible. The swab does not need to be pushed far into the nostril. Extra care is needed when interpreting the results from a nasal swab compared to a full throat and nose swab. If the result is negative but the resident has persistent symptoms, a clinical assessment should be made to determine whether a repeat test is required. Isolation should continue until symptoms resolve.

Unused test kits and further testing

Any residual test kits not used should be retained by the care home for future ad hoc tests if required. Please do not return unused test kits with the courier even if they insist. Store test kits in a safe place with an ambient temperature of between 5 and 22 degrees Celsius.

Care homes should follow a regular retesting cycle by:

- retesting **staff** with PCR swabs on the **same day every week**
- retesting **residents** with PCR tests **every 28 days**.

Use any spare test kits to test new residents and staff as soon as they join your care home. If any residents develop symptoms test immediately, don't wait for the next retesting cycle and contact your HPT.

Book a courier collection for any tests (ad hoc or planned) at <https://test-kit-collection.test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/>. Make sure you book the courier first and then test on the same day as the courier collection. It is important to test on the same day as courier collection as once a test has been used it must be tested by the lab within 48 hours of swabbing or the test will become void.

Testing for coronavirus (COVID-19)

Before you test:

- Make sure you have booked an end-of-day courier collection before you start testing. (See guidance)
- Read the online guidance, watch the instructional video and complete a competency assessment before carrying out swabbing at [gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested)
- Make sure you have consent from the person you are testing.
- Where possible, we recommend two people support testing; one to test and the other to record the test details.

1

Wash your hands and put on the necessary Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Wash your hands thoroughly for 20 seconds, using soap and warm water. Make sure you wear your mask, visor, gloves, and apron when testing.



2

Clean surfaces

Clean and dry a surface to place the test kit on. Unpack everything from the kit onto the clean surface.



3

Find the tonsils (back of the throat)

Look inside the person's mouth and find their tonsils. This is the area where you will take the swab sample. You can use a torch to help.

If tonsils were removed, swab where they would have been at the back of the throat.

4

Ask the person to gently blow their nose and cough into a tissue.

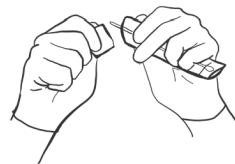
This is so excess mucus does not interfere with the test. Throw the tissue away in a closed bin.



5

Open the swab inside sealed wrapper

Open the package and carefully take out the swab. You'll use it for both the throat and nose.

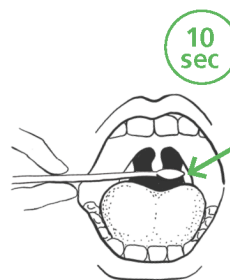


Important: The fabric tip of the swab must not touch anything apart from the tonsils, back of throat and nose. If it touches anything else, use a new swab

6

Take the throat sample

Holding the swab in your hand, open the person's mouth wide and gently rub the swab over both tonsils and the back of the throat for **10 seconds** (use a torch and/or mirror to help you do this).



Important: You will use the same swab for both the throat and nose.

This may be uncomfortable, and they may feel like gagging, but it should not hurt.

Take care not to touch their tongue, teeth, or gums, or any other surfaces with the swab.

If it is too difficult to do a throat swab take a swab from both nostrils instead, but only as a last resort.

7

Take the nose sample

Put the same end of the **same swab** gently into the nostril by about 2.5cm (1 inch) or until you feel some resistance. This may feel uncomfortable. **Do not insert the swab any deeper if there is strong resistance or pain.**

Rotate the swab for **10-15 seconds** and slowly remove it.

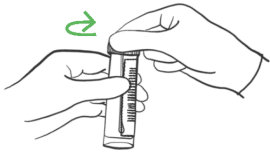


8

Place swab into plastic vial

Make sure the fabric tip is facing down as you place it into the vial. Snap off the stick end, so that it fits inside the vial without bending.





9

Securely fasten the lid

The lid should screw on and fit securely.

If the swab stick is too long still, you may need to use scissors to cut it to size. Clean and dry the scissors first.

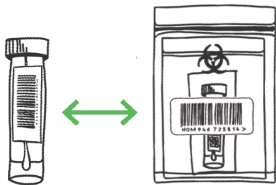
Securely fasten the lid on the vial. Make sure the lid is securely fastened and sealed so that no liquid can leak.



✗ Lid not secure
✗ Bent stick
✗ Too short
✓

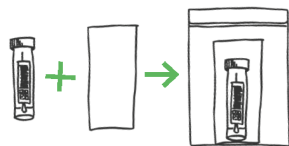
Important: Your vial, biohazard bag and box should have pre-affixed barcode labels.

If any barcodes are missing, or they do not match, please contact the helpdesk on 119.



10

Check that the vial has the same barcode stuck on it as the barcode on the biohazard bag.



11

Place vial and absorbent pad into the resealable clear plastic bag

Place the plastic vial and the absorbent pad into the resealable clear plastic bag.

Seal the bag.



12

Place into the larger biohazard bag with the same barcode as the vial

Seal the bag using its silver seal.

13

Package the complete test kit in the box provided.

The box should have a UN3373 label and an identical barcode to the vial and biohazard bag. **Check that the barcodes match.**



14

Fill out the test record and keep for your records

You can choose to fill in the record keeping spreadsheet with **personal information** of those being tested, before you start testing, or ask a colleague to fill in this information while you carry out the test. Your colleague should also record the **barcode number** and the **time of the swab** as the test is conducted. This is to ensure that you avoid touching anything while testing.

You can stick one of the barcodes to the record keeping spreadsheet to make the administration process easier and to help ensure that the test is connected to the right individual. Note: Do not send the spreadsheet along with your completed tests

TEST DETAILS - COMPLETE FOR REFERENCE ONLY		SYMPTOMS		SUBJECT DETAILS							
Test kit UIN or barcode (Your printed barcode)	Date and time of swab taken (Your printed barcode)	Showing symptoms?	Date of onset of symptoms	First name	Last name	Date of birth	Gender	Ethnic group	NHS number (Use to match to GP records)	Country (Country person is)	
(MANDATORY)	(MANDATORY)	(OPTIONAL)	(MANDATORY)	(MANDATORY)	(MANDATORY)	(MANDATORY)	(MANDATORY)	(MANDATORY)	(OPTIONAL)	(MANDATORY)	
	Yes	22/06/2020	Yes	Tom	Macdonald	08/07/1948	Male	Asian and White	1111111111	England	
	Yes	21/06/2020	Yes	Jessie	Arms	08/08/1942	Female	White	2222222222	Wales	

Important

Change your apron and gloves each time you do a test. Throw these away in a closed bin.

Finish testing by 3pm each day to allow time to package your completed tests securely using the packaging provided. Courier collection will take place between 4pm and 10pm.

Make sure you record the individual's information correctly on the test record and match them with their test barcode.

Register the completed test online as soon as possible at gov.uk/register-organisation-tests

3

Record and register your test

Record swab samples

When you conduct the swab test, you must register each completed test online (see separate instructions in this pack). This will record the URN or barcode of each swab against the name and details of the individual who has been tested. This will also enable you to receive the test results back by email within 72 hours of the test arriving at the laboratory. You should monitor your email account carefully.

Ensure that each swab sample is clearly recorded against the correct resident details.

Extra care should be taken when more than one swab is being collected in the home from residents and staff. You should follow these steps:

- If possible, complete each test in full on a patient by patient basis including swabbing, packaging and record keeping, before moving on to the next person.
- To help with your record keeping, you should download a copy of [the record keeping spreadsheet](#) fill in the personal details of the individuals being tested on your device, and save. Then, use a printed copy of the spreadsheet to capture the date, time and associated barcode or URN number of each test. You will need all of this information to register each person's test kit online.
- Please only use the spreadsheet provided as part of the registration process on: <https://organisations.test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/register-organisation-tests>
- Keep hold of the record keeping spreadsheet for your personal record. Please do not send any personal information along with the completed tests to the lab. This will be reported as a clinical incident and could delay getting your results back.

TEST DETAILS - COMPLETE FOR REFERENCE ONLY		SYMPTOMS		SUBJECT DETAILS										
Test kit URN or barcode *For printed use only	Date and time of swab taken *For printed use only	Showing symptoms?	Date of onset of symptoms	First name	Last name	Date of birth	Gender	Ethnic group	NHS number Used to match to GP records	Country Country the person lives in.	Postcode Used to match to GP records. Person's permanent address	First line of address	Currently in Work?	Are you currently symptomatic?
(MANDATORY)	(MANDATORY)	(MANDATORY)	(OPTIONAL BUT MANDATORY IF SYMPTOMATIC)	(MANDATORY)	(MANDATORY)	(MANDATORY)	(MANDATORY)	(MANDATORY)	(OPTIONAL)	(MANDATORY)	(MANDATORY)	(MANDATORY)	(MANDATORY)	(OPTIONAL)
FOR PRINTED USE ONLY	FOR PRINTED USE ONLY													
FOR PRINTED USE ONLY	FOR PRINTED USE ONLY													
FOR PRINTED USE ONLY	FOR PRINTED USE ONLY													
FOR PRINTED USE ONLY	FOR PRINTED USE ONLY													
FOR PRINTED USE ONLY	FOR PRINTED USE ONLY													
FOR PRINTED USE ONLY	FOR PRINTED USE ONLY													
FOR PRINTED USE ONLY	FOR PRINTED USE ONLY													
FOR PRINTED USE ONLY	FOR PRINTED USE ONLY													

It is crucial that you register each completed test online at gov.uk/register-organisation-tests

This registration process is essential, as without it, the laboratory will not be able to provide you with the test results. Note that you must complete this on the SAME DAY that you conduct the swab testing and as close as possible to the time that the swab is taken.

There are two ways of registering:

A

Register the tests individually

- You can use the link above to register staff or resident tests individually

B

Register the tests in bulk in batches of 100

- You will need to use separate record keeping spreadsheets for staff and residents
- You may pre-populate the record keeping spreadsheet with all the personal details before testing.
- Download this spreadsheet and save it as a Master copy to use in future retesting
- Print out the spreadsheet to fill in the barcode (URN) and the date and time of testing.

Once you have successfully registered each test you will receive a confirmation email or text message. You will receive the test results by email or text within 72 hours of the test arriving at the laboratory. You should monitor your email account carefully. Registered managers should not use a personal email or phone number to receive test results for any residents or staff.

When you receive the test result email, this may not include the name of the resident or staff member. You should therefore retain a careful record of each test URN/barcode and the name of the resident or staff member. Staff members should also retain a record of their own test URN/barcode.

Register test kits for your organisation

Use this service to register coronavirus (COVID-19) tests for your organisation.

Before you start

- read the [online guidance pack](#) and your printed instructions
- if you need to, book your [courier collection here](#)
- take your test on the same day you're returning your kit

Make sure people getting tested have freely given you consent to:

- register them
- get their results sent to the contact details you enter

What you'll need

- your 8 digit organisation number
- a completed and updated version of our [record keeping spreadsheet](#) if you're registering lots of tests
- the barcode or unique reference number for each test kit
- the email address (and ideally mobile number) where you can get the test results

How we use personal data

Important

When registering over 100 staff or 100 residents at once, you will need to download additional spreadsheets. Do not exceed 100 tests per spreadsheet.

Scanning barcodes

You can use a handheld scanner (provided by the National Testing Programme) to speed up the process of entering barcodes into the portal for individual or bulk registration. For more information on this turn to page 19.

What you'll need to register your test online

Before testing

You may pre-populate sections on the registration portal spreadsheet.

- 1. UNIQUE ORGANISATION NUMBER (UON):** This is the unique 8-digit number provided to you by the National Testing Programme which will be sent to you via email. Otherwise visit <https://organisation-number-lookup.test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/> for a reminder.
- 2. STAFF OR RESIDENT:** Select Staff or Resident.
- 3. FIRST AND LAST NAME:** Of the person who has been tested.
- 4. DATE OF BIRTH, GENDER, AND ETHNIC GROUP:** Of the person who has been tested.
- 5. FIRST LINE OF ADDRESS, COUNTRY AND POSTCODE:** This will be the care home address (for residents) or a home address (for staff members).
- 6. NHS NUMBER:** Of the person who has been tested, if available (not required).
- 7. WORKING CIRCUMSTANCES, AREA OF WORK, OCCUPATION, AND EMPLOYER:** Of the person who has been tested, if available (not required).
- 8. EMAIL AND PHONE OF THE PERSON WHO SHOULD RECEIVE THE TEST RESULTS:** i.e. the resident or staff member. In certain cases it may be more appropriate for the registered manager to receive the test results on behalf of residents and, in exceptional circumstances staff, if consent has been obtained. Registered managers should not use a personal email or phone number and must ensure that written consent has been obtained via usual policies and procedures. As test results are personal information no resident or staff member should be compelled to provide consent.
- 9. SYMPTOMS:** Indicate whether the person being tested is experiencing symptoms at the time the test is taken. Note: this response should be NO as this is not for symptomatic testing.

During testing

This information will need to be collected while testing.

- 10. ENTER THE TEST BARCODE:** Enter the 11 character reference below the barcode on your test kit, or scan the barcode using your phone or computer camera, or handheld scanner (see page 19 for more information on scanners). Take care to double check that this number is correct.
- 11. DATE AND TIME OF THE TEST:** to ensure tests have reached the lab within the 48 hour window required for a valid test result.

When a registered manager is receiving the test results on behalf of a resident:

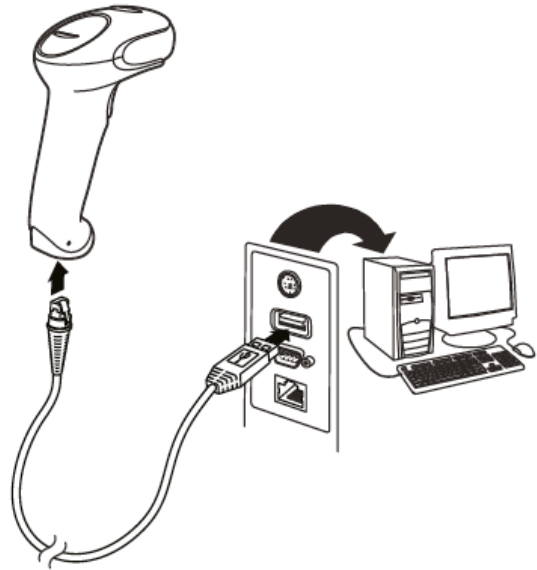
The registered manager should not use a personal email or phone number to receive test results for any residents. When you receive the test result email, this may not include the name of the resident. You should therefore retain a careful record of each test URN/barcode and the name of the resident.

All test results for residents should be notified to the resident, their GP and family (if appropriate).

When you receive the test results you should follow the DOH Guidance on admission and care of people in care homes.

Setting up your handheld scanner

- 1 **Turn off** your computer's power before connecting the scanner.
- 2 **Plug the cable** into the bottom of the scanner and plug the other end into a computer.
- 3 **Turn on** the computer once the scanner is fully connected
- 4 The computer should recognise the scanner automatically as a USB keyboard device.



Registering with a handheld scanner



For single registration

To use the scanning device when registering a single person on the registration portal:

- 1 On the page "Enter the unique test kit barcode" Click in the "Test kit barcode reference" box
- 2 Scan the barcode using your handheld scanner. This automatically adds it to the box
- 3 Click in the "Confirm test kit barcode reference" box
- 4 Scan the barcode again using you handheld scanner. This automatically adds it to the box
- 5 Click "Continue"

Further instructions on how to use the handheld scanning device are located on the registration portal, under the drop down field in blue **"how to use a barcode scanner"**

A screenshot of the GOV.UK website showing the "Enter the unique test kit barcode" page. The page has a header with the GOV.UK logo and a "Get a coronavirus test" button. Below the header, there's a "Back" link and a title "Enter the unique test kit barcode". The main content area explains that the user needs to find the 12-character barcode on the plastic tube and enter it. It lists three ways to enter the barcode: using a camera on a phone or computer, using a handheld scanner, or entering it manually. There are links for "What does the barcode look like?" and "How to use the barcode scanner". Under the "Use handheld scanner or enter manually" section, there are two input fields: "Test kit barcode reference" and "Confirm test kit barcode reference", followed by a green "Continue" button. The footer contains links for "Help", "Privacy", "Cookies", "Accessibility", "Terms and conditions", and a copyright notice for the Crown Copyright.

Multiple registration on next page



For multiple registration on the bulk upload portal

For bulk uploads, scanning should be completed through the registration portal, not the bulk upload spreadsheet. To use the scanning device when registering multiple test kits:

- 1 On the page "Check the test kit details for each person"
Click in the "Test kit barcode reference" box
- 2 Scan the barcode using your handheld scanner.
This automatically adds it to the box
- 3 Click in the "Confirm test kit barcode reference" box
- 4 Scan the barcode again using your handheld scanner. This automatically adds it to the box
- 5 Confirm all records are correct and click the
"I confirm all details are correct" box
- 6 Click "Continue"

Further instructions on how to use the handheld scanning device are located on the registration portal, under the drop down field in blue **"how to use a barcode scanner"**

If you have any issues using the scanners or have technical support questions please contact:

Codeway Mobile & Scanner Support Team

Email: scannersupport@codeway.com

Telephone: 01206 986492

Opening Hours: Monday to Friday 09:00 to 17:00

5

Securely package and give the completed tests to the courier



Important

Make sure you have received email confirmation of your courier collection before you test.

Package your test kits before 4pm

Use one of the empty boxes you will have received with your test kit delivery and add the UN3373 label to the box

The courier will collect completed test kits from you between 4pm and 10pm on the day you have selected.

Tests must be picked up on the same day they are taken

There is a 48 hour window to get a swab sample to the lab for processing. If this window is missed, there is a high chance that the individual may not get their results and a retest may be required at a later time.

You will be able to book multiple collections, but **please make sure that you only test on a day where you have a confirmed courier scheduled to collect your test kits that same day between 4pm and 10pm.**

If there is a problem with your courier collection

If your courier has not collected your test kits by 10pm, please call the helpline number at the bottom of this page to request an urgent collection the following morning. You will receive an email confirmation of your revised collection time.

If the courier arrives before 4pm and your test kits are not yet ready for collection, please politely ask the courier to wait or return at 4pm the same day.

If you have any other problems with your delivery or collection that are not addressed above, please call the helpline number at the bottom of this page

Further advice

If someone in your home has symptoms or if regular testing returns a positive case

- contact the GP of affected residents if necessary to arrange clinical assessment.
- contact the Public Health Agency (PHA) Duty Room on 0300 555 0119 or by email to: PHA.DutyRoom@hscni.net – whether an outbreak is declared or not, the PHA Duty Officer will progress a risk assessment with the care home and advise staff of what further action(s) are required.

Support with conducting tests in your care home

If you have any questions regarding conducting tests on residents in your home, call the customer contact centre for advice on **119**.

Further guidance for care homes

For the latest information and guidance on self-isolation and test results see <https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/covid-19-coronavirus/testing-and-tracing-covid-19>. This will continue to be updated regularly.

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): guidance for care staff supporting adults with learning disabilities and autistic adults](#)