

Domiciliary Care / Personal Assistant LFD testing – FAQs

Q1. What type of test are we rolling out?

Domiciliary Care workers and personal assistants are being offered lateral flow antigen testing, using Innova packs of 7 tests (the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) COVID-19 Self-Test (Rapid Antigen Test)).

Information on how to use these tests www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-self-test-help

Q2. What is the specificity and sensitivity of this particular test?

The government has published its latest research on these tests. This can be found here www.ox.ac.uk/news/2020-11-11-oxford-university-and-phe-confirm-high-sensitivity-lateral-flow-tests-following.

Q3. Who administers the test?

The test is self-administered. An instruction video and written instructions, including on interpretation of results, are available for staff to learn to self-administer their test.

Q4. Is the test mandatory or voluntary?

Tests are voluntary, but staff should be strongly encouraged to be involved in regular testing to benefit their colleagues and service users.

Q5. Which staff members will have access to lateral flow antigen tests?

Asymptomatic testing is being made available to domiciliary care staff and personal assistants.

Q6. Should staff members continue testing after they've received the COVID-19 vaccine?

Yes, staff should continue to test even though they have had the vaccine.

Q7. Can these tests be used for clients?

No. These lateral flow antigen tests are solely for asymptomatic staff.

Q8. Can staff use the tests for their symptomatic family members?

No. Staff and family members who have symptoms should access PCR tests in the normal way.

Q9. Can other members of a household who are also carrying out LFT testing share test kits?

No. Other members of a household who have received a test kit from their employer or through another testing programme should use the kit issued to them. Likewise, the staff members should only use the kit issued to them. This is to ensure adequate supplies are available for groups carrying out testing and that test kits are only used for the purpose for which they are issued.

Q10. How frequently should staff be tested?

Staff should test themselves twice weekly; every three to four days apart.

Q11. When should staff test?

Staff should be asked to perform the test before attending work, leaving enough time before the start of their shift to alert their employer who may need to arrange cover, should their lateral flow test be positive.

Q12. Where should staff test?

Staff should conduct the test at home if possible.

Q13. Should staff continue swabbing during annual leave?

Staff may continue to swab while on annual leave of longer than a week, but it is not a requirement.

Q14. What should staff do with the used test kits?

Staff can safely dispose of the test items in their normal household waste but should pour any residual buffer solution away first.

Q15. Is there advice on giving staff time back from undertaking the test at home?

The test should take no longer than 5 minutes to undertake, with a 30-minute wait for results.

Q316. How should the results of these tests be reported?

Staff are asked to record all results (positive, negative, invalid / void) from lateral flow devices. The results from the lateral flow antigen test will be documented at home by the individual using the NHS Digital online platform. Staff can access the NHS Digital platform on www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result

Note that staff working in Northern Ireland but resident in the Republic of Ireland should enter their employer organisation postcode for the home address postcode on the digital portal.

Q17. What happens if staff get a positive result?

Staff should inform their manager of a positive result in the normal way. Staff should arrange a confirmatory PCR test through the National Testing Programme – www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test. The staff member should self-isolate as set out in government guidance.

Q18. What happens if a test is negative, but staff have coronavirus symptoms?

If you have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, please refer to guidance online: www.pha.site/coronavirus. You should book a PCR test via the established testing routes. Staff in secondary care can arrange a test through their local Trust testing arrangements. Other staff can access a test through the National Testing Programme - www.pha.site/cvtesting. The staff member should self-isolate as set out in government guidance.

Q19. Is confirmatory PCR testing accessible through pillar 2, and if yes what field should be filled to avoid symptomatic questions?

Yes. Please tick the box that indicates you are a key worker but not part of a pilot, you will then see an option to say 'I've been told to take a Coronavirus test' on the form.

Q20. Do healthcare organisations pay when ordering test kits?

No. Test kits are centrally procured and provided to organisations participating free of charge.