

## **Coronavirus (COVID-19) testing for domiciliary care providers working within the independent sector in Northern Ireland.**

**All domiciliary care providers working in independent sector in NI, who are not part of a regular testing regime at work, can access twice-weekly Lateral Flow Devices for COVID-19 testing.**

### **Introduction**

Rapid lateral flow testing involves processing a throat and nasal swab sample with an extraction fluid and a rapid lateral flow test (LFT).

The rapid LFT detects a coronavirus (COVID-19) antigen that is produced when a person is infectious with coronavirus (COVID-19).

Rapid LFTs find at least half of the cases that PCR testing detect and about three-quarters of those who have very high amounts of virus present when an individual is tested. High amounts of virus mean that an individual is more likely to be infectious. They are helpful in detecting cases either much earlier or that would not be detected by other testing strategies in use routinely.

Rapid lateral flow testing is not a foolproof solution: it should be seen as an addition to PPE and other infection prevention and control (IPC) measures and must not be seen as a way of relaxing their use.

### **Rapid Lateral Flow Test Kits**

- Completed and registered twice per week
- Rapid results provided within 30 minutes
- Test samples do not need to be sent to a lab to be processed
- All lateral flow test results must be registered at <https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result>
- High sensitivity for infectious individuals; lower sensitivity than PCR, but faster and more frequent – helping us identify the most infectious cases quickly

## Why testing is important

Testing:

- identifies if you currently have COVID-19 so you are able to self-isolate if positive
- protects those receiving care from infection passed to them by those who are confirmed positive
- prevents and controls the spread of the virus by identifying asymptomatic cases

## Eligibility

You're eligible if you:

- work as a domiciliary care provider within the independent sector within Northern Ireland

If you believe you match this criteria please join one of the Q+A echo sessions hosted by PHA and call 119 for any assistance. Please do not access tests through this route if you are already part of a regular testing regime at work, such as a supported living organisation.

## About the testing process

It's very important you read the instructions and follow the steps in the correct order. You will:

- prepare your test area and check your test kit contents
- set up your test
- take your swab sample
- process your swab sample
- read your result
- report your result
- safely dispose of your test kit

## Storage

Store the test kit at room temperature or in a cool dry place (2°C to 30°C). Do not leave in direct sunlight and do not store in a fridge or freezer.

The kit should be used at room temperature (15°C to 30°C).

Prepare your test area and check your test kit contents

You'll need:

- a watch (or a clock)
- tissues
- a mirror
- hand sanitiser or soap and warm water

Do not throw away the test strip until you have reported your test result.

*If something is damaged, broken or missing*

If you notice anything damaged, broken, missing or difficult to use in the kit, do not use it.

If you wish to provide feedback on this please call the [customer contact centre](#).

If you've been harmed or had a reaction using this kit, report it on the [coronavirus Yellow Card site](#).

**Please follow the guidance instructions in your pack on how to complete the test. Visual aids are provided to help you with this.**

Do not leave the test to develop for longer than 30 minutes as this will make the result void.

**Please follow the guidance instructions in your pack on how to read your results. Visual aids are provided to help you with this.**

You must report all results to the NHS – negative, positive and void.

## Report your result

You must report your results to the NHS within 24 hours of testing.

Report your result so the NHS can monitor the spread of the virus, support communities across the UK, combat the virus and save lives. You can also find out more about the result and what you need to do.

You need the QR code, or the ID number under it, on the test strip to report your result.

### [Report online \(fastest\)](#)

Or report by telephone

Call 119 (free for all mobiles and landlines)

Lines are open every day, 7am to 11pm.

Make a note of your test results. This is for your own records. You must still report your result to the NHS.

## Safely dispose of your test kit

Once your test is complete, put all of the used test kit contents in your general household waste.

## Additional guidance for managers

Social care managers are responsible for making sure that all their staff are following the guidance in this step-by-step guide for self-testing.

Before you distribute any rapid lateral flow self-test kits to staff, read this guidance in its entirety. Make sure you understand what is expected of staff with regard to self-testing. Make sure you have set up systems to share your unique UON with staff, track kit distribution, staff training, and staff results

## Tracking kit distribution

The organisation distributing test kits is obliged to keep a detailed record of any test kits provided for use at home or outside the organisation. In the unlikely event of any issues with a batch of test kits, organisations will be required to track the location of tests kits. In order to do this the details below should be recorded and stored.

- first name, last name, telephone number and/or email address of test subject
- details of lot and batch number
- date of issue to user

The boxes of rapid lateral flow test kits should not be split up. Each member of staff should be given a complete box.

### Tracking staff results

When staff complete rapid lateral flow self-tests, managers will not automatically receive a copy of staff results by email or text. Managers must request this information from their staff directly. Make sure you have set up a system for staff to share their positive test results with you.

Once you have set up a system for results to be shared, make sure all staff are aware of the expectations for sharing their results before the first day of self-testing.

Any staff member who reports a positive rapid lateral flow test result should self-isolate immediately and complete a PCR test to confirm the positive result. Staff with a positive result should not come to work. You should distribute a confirmatory PCR test to staff with their rapid lateral flow test boxes. If they do not have a PCR test available at home, they should [order a PCR test online](#).

If you need help or have a complaint, call 119 (free for all mobiles and landlines)

Lines are open 7am to 11pm every day.