

Community Pharmacy Bulletin



2 July 2021



NHS England and NHS Improvement – South West

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Coming Up

	July	August	September
Week 1	<p>Public Health England COVID-19 Vaccination Campaign evaluation survey on PharmOutcomes closes 5 July 2021</p> <p>-----</p> <p>CPCS GP Referral pathway engagement deadline to claim for payment 5 July 2021</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Pharmacy Leadership Diversity Webinar 7 July 2021 7.00pm</p>	<p>Public Health England COVID-19 Vaccination Campaign materials to be removed from display 1 August 2021</p>	
Week 2	<p>Snapshot wellbeing survey of the primary care workforce closes 12 July 2021</p>		

	July	August	September
Week 3	Staff Vaccination Survey 12 July 2021, 9am		
Week 4	Community Pharmacy Assurance Framework (CPAF) screening questionnaire ends 24 July 2021		
Week 5		August Bank Holiday 30 August 2021	

Headlines from the Week

NHS England

- [Thank You Day – Sunday 4 July 2021](#)
- [Webinar: diversity and representation in the leadership of pharmacy professions . 6 July at 7pm](#)
- [Ten-year anniversary of pharmacy technicians becoming a registered profession](#)

NHS England South West Regional Team

- None

PSNC Bulletin

- [Share your views on changes to the NHS Service Finder tool](#)
- [CPAF screening now open](#)
- [June 2021 Price Concessions Final Update](#)
- [Extension of pandemic provisions](#)

Department of Health and Social Care Reimbursement of COVID-19 Costs

(taken from Primary Care Bulletin - 29 June 2021 (Issue 140))

All contractors are now being invited to submit claims for the additional costs due to Covid 19 that were incurred between 1 March 2020 and 31 March 2021. For more details, including how to claim, please refer to the [NHS BSA's website](#).

All claims must be submitted to the NHSBSA between 5 July and 15 August 2021. Payments will be made on 1 October 2021. At the same time, DHSC has confirmed that the uplift to the advanced payments received by contractors between 1 April and 1 July 2020, totalling £370m, will be recovered as part of the monthly reconciliation from 1 October 2021 to 1 March 2022 in six equal parts.

Changes to NHS Asymptomatic Staff Testing – Lateral Flow Devices

The attached letter “C1276 – NHS asymptomatic staff testing: Lateral flow device distribution and assuring compliance to testing regimes” provided important changes to the NHS staff asymptomatic COVID-19 testing programme.

Attached are also the following updated documents:

- Standard Operating Procedure – Use of lateral flow devices for asymptomatic staff testing
 - Lateral flow antigen tests for asymptomatic staff testing – Frequently Asked Questions
-

Home Delivery of Medicines and Appliances During the COVID-19 Outbreak

The attached letter “C1333 – Home delivery of Medicines and appliances during the COVID-19 outbreak letter” explains that to provide support to people who have been notified of the need to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace, the Community Pharmacy Home Delivery Service and the Dispensing Doctor Home Delivery Service will be extended from 1 July 2021 to 30 September 2021 (inclusive) for anyone living in England who has been notified by NHS Test and Trace to self-isolate.

COVID-19 Phase 3 Booster Programme

(taken from Primary Care Bulletin – 01 July 2021 (Issue 141))

In planning guidance earlier in the year, it was communicated that there would need to be preparation for the possibility of a COVID-19 booster campaign in the Autumn or Winter. [This letter](#) sets out the Phase 3 programme assumptions to support and guide your planning. The [Joint Committee of Vaccination and Immunisations \(JCVI\)](#) advises that any potential booster programme should begin in September 2021, in order to maximise protection in those who are most vulnerable to serious COVID-19 ahead of the winter months. As this will coincide with the Flu vaccine programme the JCVI suggests that, where possible, a synergistic approach is taken to support delivery and maximise uptake of both vaccines. It precedes advice from the JCVI and other developments over the coming months, and as such plans will inevitably need to flex as new information becomes available. It is recognised that providers need clarity on the role they can play in Phase 3 activity. General practices and community pharmacies will receive details of the service specifications in early July.

We know the critical role that both general practice and community pharmacy have played and will continue to play in the COVID-19 vaccination programme, alongside the seasonal flu vaccination programme. We will continue to work with you on how these programmes will be delivered, as intelligence and advice emerges. We are also keen to learn from your experiences including areas for improvement and how we can balance the vaccination programme with business as usual activity.

Temporary Approval to Suspend the Need for Signatures on Prescriptions (Extension)

(taken from Primary Care Bulletin – 01 July 2021 (Issue 141))

The Secretary of State for Health and Social Care has approved an extension to an existing temporary measure in England to help limit the transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) by suspending the need for patients to sign prescription, dental and ophthalmic forms. The suspension has been in place since 1 November 2020 and is now extended for a further two months until 31 August 2021.

This is to avoid cross contamination and help minimise the handling of paperwork when collecting medicines or receiving dental and eye care. Patients will still be required to either pay the relevant charge or prove their eligibility for an exemption from charges.

Supporting a Greener NHS

(taken from Primary Care Bulletin - 29 June 2021 (Issue 140))

The NHS Public Board has reaffirmed their commitment to net zero, supported by a quarter of a billion - pound investment in building a greener NHS. Reaching net zero will not be possible without the support of all 1.3million staff, and with [COP26](#) to be hosted in the UK this Autumn, there is an opportunity to shine a spotlight on the great work happening across the NHS and encourage even more people to get involved.

A new campaign, due to launch this summer, will call on people from all parts of the NHS to pledge their support for a Greener NHS and take sustainable actions that improve their own health and wellbeing, as well as the health of their patients and the public, while reducing the NHS carbon footprint. To find out how you can get involved with building a Greener NHS, get in touch with greener.nhs@nhs.net or visit [Greener NHS](#).

Useful Information

INFORMATION



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Webpages

Please see our websites for more information and any blank templates, forms and documents :

[Cornwall & Isles of Scilly, Devon, Bristol, Dorset, North Somerset, Somerset and South Gloucestershire](#)

[BaNES, Gloucestershire, Swindon or Wiltshire](#)

[Interpretation and Translation Services](#)

To: Trusts:

- Chief operating officers
- Chief executive officers
- Medical directors
- Directors of nursing
- HR directors

Regions:

- Regional directors
- Medical directors
- Directors of nursing

CCG

- Chief operating officers
- Clinical leads

PCN clinical directors

General Practice

Community Pharmacy

NHS England and NHS Improvement
Skipton House
80 London Road
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29 June 2021

Dear Colleagues

NHS asymptomatic staff testing: Lateral flow device distribution and assuring compliance to testing regimes

We are writing to inform you of important changes to the NHS staff asymptomatic COVID-19 testing programme. As you know, **asymptomatic staff testing is an important component of Infection Prevention and Control, which all organisations and staff have a duty to adhere to**. We are grateful for your continued efforts to keep staff and patients safe from potential transmission of COVID-19 in healthcare settings.

At the time when Test and Trace started allocating lateral flow device (LFD) tests to the NHS in November, they were not at that point able to deliver a self-reporting system for staff. We are grateful for the huge amount of work that trusts have undertaken to enable staff to report tests in the interim, as the national system has been developed by Test and Trace. The combination of the move to the 'pull' model and the rollout of the national ordering and reporting systems to NHS staff should overcome some of the limitations and administrative burden of the current system, and allow tests and data to flow more seamlessly.

LFD distribution

From 5 July 2021, the NHS will move to an individual 'pull' model of LFD supply. This means that, from this date, staff will replenish their tests by ordering a box online from

<https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests> to be sent to them at home.

This will mean:

- For primary care, organisations will no longer order tests for their staff via the Primary Care Support England (PCSE) portal. Staff will be able to order their own tests online and input the postcode of their workplace to ensure the tests are registered as belonging to an NHS member of staff. A box of seven tests will be posted to staff at their home address. Staff will continue to report the results of their tests on the [gov.uk website](https://www.gov.uk) as per current practice. Organisations and regions will receive management information from NHS Test and Trace to help them understand what proportion of their staff have ordered and reported tests including contractor group and region.
- For trusts: LFDs for staff will no longer be distributed to trusts. Staff will be able to order their own tests and input the trust name of their workplace to ensure the tests are registered as belonging to an NHS member of staff. A box of seven tests will be posted to staff at their home address. Organisations can choose whether to continue with their internal method of reporting results as per current practice, or whether to direct staff to reporting on the [gov.uk website](https://www.gov.uk) going forwards. Organisations and regions will receive management information from NHS Test and Trace to help them to understand what proportion of their staff has ordered and reported tests.

However, trusts will still receive a supply of LFDs for patient use as per existing use cases (emergency departments, maternity and neonatal, end of life care visitors).

This move will not only make best use of the supplies of LFDs currently available to NHS Test and Trace, but will also provide a greater level of assurance by organisation that devices are routinely being ordered and used.

We are currently updating relevant LFD standard operating procedures (SOPs) and frequently asked questions (FAQs). These, and any other related guidance documents, will be available shortly.

Assuring compliance with staff asymptomatic testing regimes

Since the LFD staff testing programme was launched in November, we know that extensive efforts have been made to communicate with staff across the NHS about their local testing regime in order to keep themselves and their patients safe.

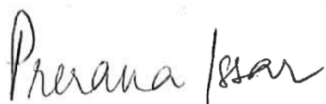
In parallel with communicating the new 'pull' model to staff, we now need to ensure that all staff are continuing to comply with IPC guidance. To this end, NHS organisations should now ensure the following is undertaken:

- Ensure that you have local systems in place for patient-facing staff to demonstrate that they are compliant with your organisation’s asymptomatic staff testing regime when attending their workplace.
- Support the compliance of individual members of staff with your organisation’s testing regime through line management structures, or conversations with local leaders and champions, where required.
- Ensure that the trust board is sighted monthly on organisational compliance as part of their Board Assurance Framework and IPC practice.
- Make use of the NHS Digital gov.uk reporting tool for staff to report their test results, where local trust reporting tools are not able to provide the levels of management information required to support chief executives in their assurance processes. This tool, currently used as standard by primary care staff, has been extended to be open to all NHS organisations.
- Access support from regional testing leads to share good practice in increasing uptake of testing and reporting.
- Work with national and regional teams, and NHS Digital as required, to improve the quality of reporting data. This will support the production of appropriate management information in relation to staff reporting rates.

Although most NHS staff will be participating in the lateral flow testing programme (twice per week), other testing regimes have been set up in some trusts or geographic areas, such as LAMP testing or PCR testing. The above actions should cover all NHS asymptomatic staff testing programmes.

Thank you for your continued efforts as we continue together to mitigate the risks of transmission of COVID-19.

Yours sincerely,



Prerana Issar
NHS Chief People Officer



Ruth May
Chief Nursing Officer, England



Pauline Philip DBE
National Director of Emergency
and Elective Care



Professor Stephen Powis
National Medical Director



Novel coronavirus (COVID-19) standard operating procedure

Use of lateral flow devices for asymptomatic staff testing

For SARS CoV-2 in all NHS Staff

2 July 2021, **Version 1**

This guidance replaces the previous standard operating procedures (SOPs) for lateral flow device (LFD) use in acute trusts and primary care and should be referred to for all tests ordered from 5 July 2021.

Staff using existing LFD kits boxed in 25s (distributed by NHS England and NHS Improvement to employers for their staff) should be instructed to use these before ordering more tests. Staff should also refer to the previous SOP for either [trusts \(Nov 2020\)](#) or [primary care \(Jan 2021\)](#).

This guidance is correct at the time of publishing. However, as it is subject to updates, please use the hyperlinks to confirm the information you are disseminating to your staff is accurate.

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Overall aim

Asymptomatic staff testing is an important component of the infection prevention and control (IPC), which all organisations and staff have a duty to adhere to. Continued efforts are required to keep staff and patients safe from potential transmission of COVID-19 in healthcare settings by ensuring that all staff continue to participate in this important programme.

This SOP is part of our work to provide an integrated testing approach and resilience in NHS staff testing for asymptomatic NHS staff using LFDs on self-swab samples, in parallel with the deployment of loop-mediated isothermal amplification (LAMP) technology for use on saliva samples, together with quantitative real time polymerase chain reaction (qRT PCR).

Objectives

The key objectives of asymptomatic testing are to:

- protect patients
- protect staff
- support the NHS in its infection control risk reduction strategy
- reduce staff COVID-19 absenteeism
- support both COVID-19 and non-COVID-19 clinical pathways over future waves.

Background

Lateral flow antigen testing detects the presence of the COVID-19 viral antigen from a swab sample. The test is administered by handheld devices producing results in around 30 minutes and can be self-administered.

Lateral flow antigen testing has a lower sensitivity than qRT PCR. However, studies to date suggest that these tests are better at returning positive results for individuals who are infectious rather than individuals who may have had COVID-19 recently and are no longer infectious (qRT PCR will detect both).

In parallel, focused efforts to introduce other technologies such as LAMP continue, as well as efforts to increase testing capacity and capability across the different testing technologies in NHS pathology networks.

Over the 27 week period from 26 October 2020 to 9 May 2021, 37,300 healthcare workers registered a positive result using LFDs. These individuals were either detected before they became symptomatic, or would never have become symptomatic, the intervention provided by this core IPC measure reduced the transmission risk among colleagues, patients and other close contacts.

Lateral flow antigen testing

The approach using lateral flow antigen testing is as follows:

- Based on testing characteristics such as sensitivity and modelling data, testing of NHS staff using LFDs should take place twice weekly, using self-administered tests.
- Staff should self-administer the test in line with manufacturer's instructions which are issued with a box of tests (this will differ slightly depending on the manufacturer). Confirmation of positives by PCR test will be through the employing organisation's local procedure.

Symptomatic staff and other staff working in clinically vulnerable areas, or who are participating in studies such as [SIREN](#), should continue their current method of testing and will access qRT PCR testing in line with local guidance and/or study protocols. Depending on the frequency of testing in studies, these staff members may also need to undertake twice-weekly LFD testing. This is especially relevant to the SIREN study, where a comparative analysis will be undertaken between the LFD testing with the qRT PCR testing performed every two weeks.

Efficacy of the tests

Technology assessment

The government has published [research on LFD tests](#) and [analysis of lateral flow tests](#).

Lateral flow device provision

From July 2021 all NHS staff will be able order testing kits directly from www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests.

Staff should follow the instructions and select yes to the question 'Do you work for the NHS in England and take part in their staff testing programme?' Staff are

encouraged to create an account when they place their first order. This should only take a few minutes and will retain ordering information making it quicker to order future tests. Staff can also use the same account to register results. It is possible to order and report tests without creating an account.

When staff receive their box of tests, if any of the items supplied are missing, broken, or if the device is damaged or breaks during use, if the user of the test has any concerns about the performance of the test, or if any adverse incident with the test occurs, then these incidents should be reported. Users should report this information directly to the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) via their reporting portal: coronavirus-yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk.

Testing patient-facing asymptomatic staff

Staff should test themselves twice a week – every three to four days – to fit with shift patterns and leave requirements – for example, Wednesday and Sunday, or Monday and Thursday.

If they are participating in research studies where the frequency of testing is not weekly (eg every two weeks or monthly) they should undertake twice-weekly LFD self-testing. For example, staff members participating in the SIREN study and having qRT PCR testing every two weeks should also be part of the twice-weekly LFD testing.

Asymptomatic staff testing is a core component of the [national infection control guidelines](#), which all organisations have a duty to adhere to.

If a member of staff is unable to perform the test for whatever reason, NHS organisations should enable testing either by LFD or by other available technologies, such as the LAMP technology if it is available to the local NHS organisation. Where testing is not possible, the organisation should have mitigations in place

Staff should be asked to perform the test first thing in the morning, preferably before attending work to fit with shift patterns and leave requirements – for example, Wednesday and Sunday, or Monday and Thursday. In the event of a positive result, they should immediately follow their local organisational protocol for reporting a positive test result – this will normally include contacting their line manager and

occupational health department. If the test indicates an invalid/void result the staff member will need to repeat using a new LFD test.

For any positive result, the staff member should have an urgent confirmatory qRT PCR testing performed, with swabs taken in accordance with their organisational protocols. Until the result is confirmed the staff member should self-isolate in line with government guidelines. If the result comes back as negative, the staff member would be able to attend immediately for duties.

A staff member who tested positive would recommence asymptomatic home testing 90 days after their PCR positive test was taken. The staff member will need to liaise with their NHS organisations to track the date at which the retesting should start.

Further information, including a video showing how to do the test can be found www.gov.uk/guidance/COVID-19-self-test-help#self-test-instructions. Please be aware that the directions of use in each box may differ, so instructions should be read carefully and followed each time a new box is received.

A step-by-step guide for COVID-19 self-testing is available in a number languages at: www.gov.uk/guidance/COVID-19-self-test-help#self-test-instructions.

If required, translation services are available by calling 119. The translation services available at 119 are available to support people throughout the testing process and can access around 200 languages and British Sign Language (BSL).

Reporting of LFD test results and PCR testing

It is a statutory duty that all test results **must** be reported, whether they are positive, negative or invalid/void. This must happen every time an LFD test is completed. Organisations may wish for their staff to follow an established local reporting procedure, in which results are submitted by the individual to their organisation, who then collate and submit all results weekly to NHS Digital's Strategic Data Collection Service (SDCS).

Alternatively, staff can report their results at www.gov.uk/report-COVID19-result. Staff should only report the results through one route to avoid double counting and it is the employing organisation's responsibility to confirm to staff which route they must follow.

NHS England and NHS Improvement is working with NHS Digital, Test and Trace, and regional testing leads to develop a suite of management information to enable NHS organisations to support staff to order and report tests, and to assure themselves that their staff are routinely testing as part of their infection prevention and control practice.

Reporting an LFD test on the GOV.UK website (for staff who are not reporting via their local trust system).

1. Click on the following link www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result and follow the steps below.
2. Select who you are reporting the result for, either 'myself' or 'someone else'.
3. If you haven't already, it is advised you create an account, you will only have to do this once and it will remember your personal details. You may also report without an account if you wish.
4. Select the date you took the coronavirus test.
5. Enter or scan your test ID number. You will find the ID number under the QR code on the LFD.
6. Select the result of the test whether that be 'positive', 'negative' or 'invalid/void'. Check your answers.
7. Receive confirmation of registration via email.

If there are any problems with reporting an LFD test via this route, call 119. If any staff member cannot complete the online form for reporting via this route, they can either:

- Call 119 and select option 1
- Ask someone else to register on their behalf (provided they have written consent to do so and can obtain personal details required to complete the form).

The results from the device should be recorded by the staff member after the time set out on the manufacturer's instructions. The timing is critical, as leaving the test for longer can lead to false positive results and the test will need to be repeated.

Results should be recorded in line with the following:

- **Negative:** The presence of only the control line (C) and no test line (T) within the result window indicating a negative result.
- **Positive:** The presence of the test line (T) and the control line (C) within the result window, regardless of which line appears first, indicating a positive result. The presence of any test line (T), no matter how faint, indicates a positive result.
- **Invalid/void result:** If the control line (C) is not visible within the result window after performing the test, the result is considered invalid.

When an invalid result is observed, the test will be repeated with a new LFD test.

All positive results using an LFD will be followed up by standard qRT PCR testing in the local designated COVID-19 testing laboratory. The request should be made following each NHS organisation's local protocol. If the result is positive, the information will be reported through to Public Health England (PHE) second generation surveillance system (SGSS) via the standard route. PHE will compare results from lateral flow devices and PCR tests to ensure that there is no double counting of an individual's positive result.

The result from the qRT PCR test will be returned as per organisational protocols with clear instructions to staff members to speak to their line manager with any questions.

If a staff member records a negative result but begins to display symptoms of SARS COV 2, they should follow [government guidance](#) and obtain a PCR swab test.

Implementation

NHS organisations are asked to undertake the following:

- Work with regional testing leads to ensure that all existing boxes of 25s delivered to the NHS are used in the most efficient fashion.
- Provide information to staff on how to obtain tests via www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests from July 2021 when boxes of 25s are used.

- Provide their staff with details on the requirements for reporting results – either through the national reporting platform or for an individual organisation’s local reporting route if preferred.
- Ensure staff members know what to do if they test positive and where they will get their swab test for confirmatory qRT PCR. In addition, ensure staff understand that they do not need to self-test using an LFD for 90 days after any positive result is confirmed by qRT PCR.

Key risks

This is not an exhaustive list but includes: test limitations:

1. Failure to follow the instructions for test procedure and interpretation of test results may adversely affect test performance and/or produce invalid results.
2. A negative test result may occur if the specimen was collected or extracted from the swab incorrectly. A negative test result will not eliminate the possibility of SARS-CoV-2 infection.
3. Positive test results do not rule out co-infections with other pathogens and therefore staff members may also have other respiratory infections such as Influenzae A or B.
4. Lateral flow devices do not detect non-infectious virus during the later stages of viral shedding that might be detected by PCR molecular tests. Hence, they will not detect staff members who are recovering from having had the virus.

Any member of staff who does test positive for the virus which is confirmed by qRT PCR will not have to self-test for a further 90 days from the point of becoming positive.

These limitations will be mitigated, as far as possible, by the actions outlined in this SOP.

Some staff will not tolerate the regular use of swabbing. Where possible, staff should be encouraged to report any difficulties they are experiencing via the helpline/assistance point by calling 119.

Further information

For queries and further information relating to LFD tests boxed in 25s, these should be directed to england.covid-lfd@nhs.net or in writing to the **NHS Testing Programme** at the address below. For queries about LFD kits ordered from the GOV.UK website, please call 119.

Contact us:

NHS England and NHS Improvement

Skipton House
80 London Road
London
SE1 6LH

This publication can be made available in a number of other formats on request.



Lateral flow antigen tests for asymptomatic staff testing

Frequently asked questions – primary care (organisations and staff)

2 July 2021, Version 1

From July 2021 all NHS staff will be able to order lateral flow device (LFD) testing kits from the GOV.UK website.

If you are currently using LFD tests boxed in 25s (distributed by NHS England and NHS Improvement to organisations for their staff), please refer to [primary care standard operating procedure \(Jan 2021\)](#) and [primary care FAQs \(Jan 2021\)](#).

Any remaining supplies LFD tests boxed in 25s should be used before ordering further supplies from the GOV.UK website.

For information on HR processes following a positive test and related isolation questions, please refer to the [NHS Employers' website](#).

Introduction

Asymptomatic staff testing is an important component of [Infection Prevention and Control](#), which all organisations and staff have a duty to adhere to. Continued efforts are required to keep staff and patients safe from potential transmission of COVID-19 in healthcare settings, and other places where care is provided, by ensuring that all staff continue to participate in this important programme.

The FAQs within this document aim to provide responses to the questions that are most commonly asked by staff and organisations about asymptomatic testing using a lateral flow device (LFD). This document should be read alongside the [Standard operating procedure for use of LFDs for asymptomatic staff testing \(all NHS staff\)](#).

What is changing?

From July 2021 all NHS staff will move to a new system where they will be able to order their own LFD testing kits from www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests. The testing kits will enable colleagues to carry out regular testing for COVID-19 at home.

The test kits provided via the new system may be different type, it is important that staff familiarise themselves with the tests and the instruction leaflet each time they receive a new box.

This move will not only make best use of LFDs currently available to NHS Test and Trace but will also provide a greater level of assurance by organisation that devices are routinely being ordered and used.

Please note, the statutory requirement to report all test results has **not changed** and staff must report all results in line with their organisation's policy

Before moving to the new system primary organisations should use up their existing stock of Innova 25s and continue to provide staff with boxes until they have run out.

For staff

1. How can I order tests?

Test can be ordered at: www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests. When ordering, follow the instructions and select 'yes' to the question 'Do you work for the NHS in England and take part in the asymptomatic staff testing programme?' It may be helpful to create an account when you first use the site. This should only take a few minutes and means your details and preferences are saved for future orders.

Please note, you should order more tests when you are near the end of your current pack and your organisation has advised you that they have any further boxes to issue to you.

Most orders are delivered next day.

2. Can I get more tests from another route that is more convenient for me (eg a local community pharmacy, or as a parent of a school age child)?

If you are able to order tests through the route described above, then you should do so, as this assures your organisation that its staff are compliant with testing requirements. If you do access LFDs through a different route, please ensure that your organisation is aware that you are participating fully in a twice a week LFD testing regime.

3. How frequently should I carry out an LFD test?

You should carry out LFD testing twice weekly, so every three to four days to fit with shift patterns and leave requirements: for example, Wednesday and Sunday, or Monday and Thursday.

4. When and where should I do the test?

You should perform the test at home before attending work, leaving enough time before the start of your shift to alert your employer if the test is positive.

5. What are the reporting requirements?

The result, whether it is positive, negative or void/invalid, should be reported every time you complete a self-test. It is a statutory requirement to report all results.

6. How can I register my result on-line?

1. Click on the following link www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result and follow the steps below.
2. Select who you are reporting the result for, either 'myself' or 'someone else'.
3. If you haven't already, it is advised you create an account, you will only have to do this once and it will remember your personal details. You may also report without an account if you wish.
4. Select the date you took the coronavirus test.
5. Enter or scan your test ID number. You will find the ID number under the QR code on the LFD.
6. Select the result of the test whether that be 'positive', 'negative' or 'invalid/void'.
Check your answers.

7. Receive confirmation of registration via email.

7. What happens if I get a positive result?

You should inform your employer of a positive result. A quantitative real time polymerase chain reaction (qRT PCR) test will then be arranged in line with your organisation's current process.

You and your household should isolate as set out in government guidance: [Stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#).

8. What happens if my LFD test is negative, but I have coronavirus symptoms?

If you have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, please follow the NHS guidance at: www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-COVID-19.

9. If I have had a positive COVID-19 qRT PCR test, when should I start regular LFD testing again?

If you tested positive, you should recommence home testing 90 days after your positive qRT PCR test was taken.

10. Should I continue testing after a COVID-19 vaccine?

Yes, everyone who has been vaccinated should continue to test.

Vaccinated people will have more protection from COVID-19, and there is some early evidence that it can prevent a person's ability to transmit the virus, but it does not yet give guarantee that you cannot transmit the virus to patients and staff.

11. If I am already being regularly tested through existing regimes – should this be replaced by lateral flow tests?

If you are already enrolled in another testing regime through your NHS organisation, this should not be replaced by LFD tests unless agreed by your organisation.

If you are participating in research studies (such as [SIREN](#)) where the frequency of testing is not weekly (eg monthly) you should continue to undertake twice-weekly LFD self-testing if you are a patient-facing member of staff or are an essential office based worker.

12. Is confirmatory qRT PCR testing accessible through NHS Test and Trace, and if yes what field should be filled to avoid symptomatic questions?

You should use whatever qRT PCR testing route is in use by your organisation. If this is through NHS Test and Trace, 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'.

13. Should I continue testing during annual leave?

You can continue to test while on annual leave, but it is not a requirement.

14. Is it acceptable for me to share a test kit or reuse the tests?

You should not share tests with other people; all seven tests in the kit should be used by the same person. You can only use each item in the test kit once and test components should not be reused.

The LFD testing kits that you order on behalf of yourself as an NHS employee should be used by you and are for asymptomatic testing.

If members of your household are showing symptoms of coronavirus they should follow the government guidance and obtain a qRT PCR test at www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test.

15. What is the protocol for informing and testing patients who have been in contact with a staff member who has had a positive LFD test?

Your organisation's protocols for tracing contacts should be followed.

16. Will the asymptomatic testing regime mean I no longer need to self-isolate if I have been exposed to a positive COVID-19 case?

The government advice on self-isolation should be followed at all times after coming into contact with a positive case. Regular LFD tests do not remove the need to self-isolate should you be informed that you need to.

17. Can 10-day isolation following contact tracing be shortened through use of this testing?

Not currently. Ten-day isolation following notification that you have been in close contact with a COVID-19 case without relevant personal protective equipment (PPE) should be followed in line with government advice.

Additional information for primary care organisations

18. How do the tests from GOV.UK differ from the boxes of 25s provided by employers?

The main differences between these tests are:

- The number of swabs, extraction tubes, extraction buffer volumes, test cartridges.
- The method of swabbing.

Staff should self-administer the test in line with manufacturer's instructions which are issued with a box of tests (this will differ slightly depending on the manufacturer). Confirmation of positives by PCR test will be through the employing organisation's local procedure.

19. If staff still have tests within the supply of 25s provided to them by their employer (ordered from Primary Care Support England [PCSE]), should they use these before ordering from GOV.UK?

Yes, all existing tests should be used before ordering from www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test.

20. How often can staff re-order to ensure they have sufficient LFD supply?

It is recommended that staff order 1 box at a time. This provides enough for twice weekly testing for a three-week period. Delivery is usually the next day.

21. Can staff chose where to have tests delivered to?

Deliveries should be requested to the member of staff's home address.

22. Can primary care organisations procure their own supply of lateral flow tests?

LFD tests are purchased and provided centrally by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC). Primary care organisations should not purchase them directly from suppliers.

23. How can staff at local vaccination service sites access lateral flow tests?

From July 2021 primary care staff working at local vaccination service (LVS) sites should also order their lateral flow tests through at www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests. Primary care organisations should ensure their staff working in the associate LVS are aware of the requirements to order their own LFD tests. This should include staff who have been brought in exclusively to work at the LVS, but do not normally work in any of the primary care organisations connected to the LVS site.

24. How should extended access or integrated urgent care (IUC) providers order tests?

If you are an extended access or IUC provider who also holds a primary care contract, you should direct staff (who do not already have LFDs through another NHS route) to tests themselves at www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests. If you do not hold a primary care contract you should also direct staff to order through this route.

25. Which staff members in primary care should test using lateral flow antigen tests?

All asymptomatic staff who are delivering NHS services in primary care across all four contractor groups (medical, dental, optometry, and community pharmacy) in England are encouraged to test.

26. Can these LFD tests be used for patients?

Patients who wish to test themselves may order tests for personal use from www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests.

27. What are the reporting requirements for primary care employees?

All test results must be reported whether they are positive, negative or invalid/void and this is for every test completed.

Primary care employers should encourage staff members to test twice weekly and register all results (positive, negative and invalid/void) at www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result themselves. It is a statutory requirement to report results every time a self-test is completed.

28. How will primary care contractors know if their staff are testing and reporting?

Management information will be provided from the GOV.UK ordering and reporting systems.

29. If a staff member has a positive LFD how will their employer be informed?

Staff should be instructed to inform their employer of a positive result. A confirmatory qRT PCR test will be arranged. The staff member and their household should then isolate as set out in [Stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#).

30. At what stage is Test and Trace informed of the test result?

Test and Trace will be informed once the confirmatory qRT PCR test result is known. If this is a positive result, the result will be referred to Test and Trace.

31. Can LFD tests be used as a response to COVID-19 outbreaks?

Should an outbreak be declared in your organisation, you should follow the government guidelines on [COVID-19: management of staff and exposed patients or residents in health and social care settings](#).

32. Is asymptomatic staff testing mandatory or voluntary?

Regular asymptomatic testing is voluntary, but staff should be strongly encouraged to be involved in LFD testing to protect themselves, colleagues and patients. Asymptomatic staff testing is an important component of [Infection Prevention and Control](#), which all organisations and staff have a duty to adhere to.

33. How effective are LFD tests in detecting COVID-19?

The government has published [research on LFD tests](#) and [analysis of lateral flow tests](#).

34. Is ethylene oxide is used in the sterilisation of LFD tests and is this safe?

LFD tests have been certified safe to use both in the EU and UK by the Department of Health and Social Care. Ethylene oxide is used in the sterilisation of swabs only.

Ethylene oxide is one of the most used sterilisation methods in the healthcare industry – it is an important sterilisation method that manufacturers widely use to keep medical devices safe.

Any traces of ethylene oxide remaining in the lateral flow device or packaging after sterilisation are below limits that would be considered hazardous for health and comply with international standards.

35. Will there be information in other languages available for the self-test kits?

A step-by-step guide for COVID-19 self-testing is available in a number languages at: www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-self-test-help#self-test-instructions.

Translation services are available by calling 119 providing access to around 200 languages and British Sign Language (BSL), easy read and large print. This is to support people throughout the testing process.

For queries and further information relating to LFD tests boxed in 25s, including questions about this document should be directed to england.covid-lfd@nhs.net or in writing to the address below. For queries about LFD kits ordered from the GOV.UK website, please call 119.

NHS Testing Programme
NHS England and NHS Improvement
Skipton House
80 London Road
London
SE1 6LH

NHS England and NHS Improvement
Skipton House
80 London Road
London
SE1 6LH

29 June 2021

To:

- Community pharmacies
- Dispensing GP practices

Dear Colleagues,

Home delivery of medicines and appliances during the COVID-19 outbreak

Thank you for your continued work to support the response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

To help provide support to people who have been notified of the need to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace, the Community Pharmacy Home Delivery Service and the Dispensing Doctor Home Delivery Service will be extended from 1 July 2021 to 30 September 2021 (inclusive) for anyone living in England who has been notified by NHS Test and Trace to self-isolate. Upon receiving contact from NHS Test and Trace, the individual is provided with a unique NHS Test and Trace Account ID, which is an 8-character mix of letters and numbers.

This service is only available to people during their 10-day self-isolation period and who have provided their NHS Test and Trace Account ID when requesting the service. See Appendix 1.

Pharmacies and dispensing doctors across England will be required to ensure those people who have been notified by NHS Test and Trace to self-isolate can receive their prescription medicines and appliances by home delivery during the ten-day self-isolation period, if they are unable to arrange for medicines to be picked up. See Appendix 2.

It remains the case that, where possible, a friend, relative, carer or volunteer should be asked to collect medicines. The NHS Volunteer Responders Programme remains active; all shielding, self-isolating and/or otherwise vulnerable patients can access this support by calling 0808 196 3646. Please pass this number on to your patients

who could benefit from this support. Further details on the NHS Volunteer Responders Programme can be found [here](#).

Guidance on the community pharmacy essential service element, the pharmacy advanced service specification, and the service specification for the Dispensing Doctor Home Delivery Service can be found [here](#).

All community pharmacies and dispensing doctors in England will receive the essential service payments.

Any pharmacy or dispensing doctor making a delivery to a patient – in line with the service specification for the advanced service for community pharmacy, or the service specification for the Dispensing Doctor Home Delivery Service, respectively – can claim a fee for delivery during the period for which the service is commissioned.

Only self-isolators that have provided their NHS Test and Trace Account ID reference number when requesting the service are eligible to receive it. A record of the NHS Test and Trace Account ID reference number must be made and retained as part of the contractor's delivery record to ensure effective ongoing service provision, and for post-payment verification purposes – see [service specification and guidance](#). Pharmacies and dispensing doctors should familiarise themselves with the details of the service before making a claim.

Claims

Community pharmacy contractors can claim payment for delivery of medicines to self-isolators under the Community Pharmacy Home Delivery Service on the [Manage Your Service \(MYS\) portal](#).

Contractors must submit their claims for payment via the MYS platform by the fifth of the month after the service was provided. Claims for this service will not be accepted after the fifth of the following month. Payment for the essential service will be made automatically.

Dispensing doctors can claim payment for delivery of medicines under the Pandemic Delivery Service using [this form](#). Contractors must submit their claims for payment by the fifth of the following month. Claims for this service will not be accepted after the fifth of the month after the service was provided. Payment for the mandatory element of the Pandemic Delivery Service will be made automatically.

Yours sincerely,



Ali Sparke

Interim Director of Primary Care COVID response

NHS England and NHS Improvement

Appendix 1

Self-isolators are people identified by NHS Test & Trace and they will be contacted via phone, text or email. This is for both COVID-19 positive cases and close contacts. Self-isolators can also be identified via the NHS app. However, due to the anonymous operation of the app, they are not registered on the Test and Trace database and will not receive a NHS Test and Trace Account ID reference number. They may obtain a NHS Test and Trace Account ID reference number through a 'financial support' button on the app, but only if they are eligible for the £500 Test and Trace Support Payment Scheme. App users who have not been contacted by NHS Test and Trace through other channels, and who are not eligible for the support payment scheme, will not be able to obtain a NHS Test and Trace Account ID reference number and they will not be able to access the free medicines delivery service at this stage.

Appendix 2

People notified by NHS Test and Trace of a positive test result must complete their full 10-day isolation period. This isolation period starts immediately from when the symptoms started, or, if there were no symptoms, from when the test was taken. This means that if, for example, symptoms started at any time on the 15th of the month (or if no symptoms but the first positive COVID-19 test was taken on the 15th), the isolation period ends at 23:59 hrs on the 25th.

Should COVID-19 symptoms develop within the initial 10-day isolation period after receiving an initial positive test (where no symptoms were being exhibited), or as a contact, and the advice given is to continue to isolate for a short period beyond the initial 10 days, self-isolating people will still be provided the medicines delivery service against their initial NHS Test and Trace Account ID reference number. The maximum amount of time someone could be self-isolating is 20 days i.e. in the

unlikely event they develop symptoms on the 10th day of their self-isolation period. This is based on [guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#).

Each time someone enters the NHS Test and Trace system, they will receive a new NHS Test and Trace Account ID reference number. Therefore, if someone has been identified as a contact, they will receive one through their first contact with Test and Trace, and then if they go on to test positive, they should receive another one.