

# Q & A Lateral Flow Device (LFD) and Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) Testing

## Why must I undertake testing?

Social care staff are strongly encouraged to be tested regularly as part of a co-ordinated approach to eliminating coronavirus in Scotland. Regular testing provides an additional layer of protection for staff, people supported, their families and the wider public.

Testing will pick up cases of coronavirus in people who have it whether they have symptoms or not. This will enable people who have it to isolate to prevent the spread of the virus. At this point in time the Scottish Government have indicated testing will continue to September 2021.

Testing complements existing infection control practices such as wearing PPE, practicing good hand washing techniques, social distancing, staying away from busy places and getting vaccinations.

There are two types of test available: lateral flow device tests (LFD) and Polymerase Chain Reaction tests (PCR).

## What is a LFD test, how does it work and when do I need to take one?

A lateral flow device test (LFD) is very good at identifying people who have coronavirus and who are infectious on the day. It is a very quick and easy test to self-administer. This is why staff are being asked to use these at home twice a week before they attend work, to enable those who test positive to isolate and prevent transmission.

A LFD test involves taking a swab of the nose and throat to collect a sample, which is then inserted into a tube of liquid for a short time. Drops of liquid are added to the test strip and after about half an hour a result will be shown. Staff will be trained to use lateral flow device tests and kits will be provided to take away to be used at home. As part of the detailed training that will be given to all staff required to test, we will include a competency checklist and a range of media to aid understanding. This training will be delivered to staff by their line manager. Refreshers will be undertaken later to ensure staff remain competent in testing practice.

Staff need to be tested every three days, even if they are on annual leave or days off.

## What should I do if my LFD test is positive?

If staff test positive for a LFD test at home then they need to log the result into the NHS portal [www.covidtestingportal.scot](http://www.covidtestingportal.scot) and then let their line manager know asap. They need to then isolate accordingly, and they will be referred for a PCR test through the local priority Health and Social Care Worker testing route by a member of the Senior team / Co-ordinator.

## What is a PCR test, how does it work and when do I need to take one?

A polymerase chain reaction test (PCR) is very sensitive and reliable test that detects if you are infected with coronavirus at the time of the test.

A PCR test involves a swab of the nose and throat, at a dedicated testing centre by healthcare professionals. These swabs are then analysed in a laboratory setting; the results of which are usually available 24 to 48 hours after testing.

You can only access PCR tests through Eildon by direct referral as a priority Health and Social Care Worker.

## Where do I get kits?

Kits will be delivered directly to the service from the Scottish Government. These will then be allocated to staff to take home and use at home.

## How do I log my results?

All test results must be logged through the covid testing portal at [www.covidtestingportal.scot](http://www.covidtestingportal.scot)

There is guidance on how to do this online. If you require assistance and are not due on shift, do not attend the service but contact a member of the senior team/Co-ordinator who will support you to log your information.

## How do I dispose of the used testing kit and equipment?

The outer packaging can be recycled. The rest of the used kits should be bagged and disposed of in normal 'black bin' household rubbish streams.

## How safe is lateral flow testing?

There is no risk to staff undertaking regular lateral flow device testing. There is misinformation circulating on social media about the fact ethylene oxide is used in the sterilization process of the swabs. The amount used is well within the national / international safety standards.

## How will my data be processed?

Data will be collected through the testing portal itself. If you undertake a LFD test and the results are positive, Eildon requires to know this and will refer you as per the priority testing route for a PCR test. This will be recorded through the staff absence management process by HR colleagues as a covid absence.

If your LFD test returns a 'positive' result, Eildon will refer you to NHS Borders for a fast tracked PCR test by completing and emailing a priority testing referral form for Health and Social Care Workers. This form will include the following information:

Name

Date of testing

Result of testing

Contact details (we will ask you to provide this information)

Once you have received your PCR test results, you should notify your line manager. At this stage, the referral form issued to NHS Borders will be deleted from our email records - Eildon does not retain any of the NHS referral forms for longer than is necessary.

If the results are 'positive' HR will process your absence through the sickness absence reporting and recording procedure but will ensure it is recorded as a covid absence. If the results are 'negative', no further action will be taken.

Your information will always be processed lawfully in line with Data Protection Legislations and on this occasion the relevant provisions are:

Article 6: Legitimate Interest / Public Task

Article 9 (2)(b): covers employees helping stop the spread of the virus by running own testing programmes and reporting to relevant local health authorities.

### **Do I need to test when I have been vaccinated?**

Yes, even if you have had one of the approved coronavirus vaccinations, you still require to be tested. Being vaccinated does not mean that you will not contract coronavirus, and therefore testing will help identify if you have contracted the virus as part of the co-ordinated response to eliminate the virus in Scotland

### **Do I require to be tested if I have had coronavirus?**

It is advised that you should not be tested within 90 days of having coronavirus as tests during this time will potentially render false results. We have been advised by Public Health that you are not likely to be infectious during this time. Once the 90 days have passed, you should be tested.

### **What happens if I run out of kits?**

Contact a member of the senior team / Co-ordinator who will ensure that you are provided with sufficient kits as required. If you are planning on taking some annual leave, it is important that you have sufficient kits to cover this period even if you are not attending work. Discuss your requirements with your line manager.