



We are pleased to share our regular coronavirus testing update for care home managers.

This regular update will keep you informed of important announcements and updated guidance from the National Testing Programme.

Programme progress

We have had a positive response to the roll-out of regular whole home testing with most care homes having now registered. However, as a result of several factors including unexpected delays, we have not been able to reach all care homes for older people and people with dementia as quickly as we had hoped.

While we are taking all possible steps to increase our supply this does mean that we have to revise the previously advised timelines for rolling out regular testing in care homes, but we will deliver kits sooner if we are able to do so:

- We will now reach all care homes for older people and people with dementia by the 7 September 2020
- If you have already started regular testing, there may be a wait for your second month's order to be fulfilled until we have reached all care homes for older people and people with dementia
- All other adult care homes will be able to start to place orders for test kits from the 31 August 2020

In the period up to 7 September, we will also take the following steps to target testing capacity where it is most needed:

- We will prioritise providing test kits to care homes in areas on the Contain Framework Local Authority Watchlist as set out in the Weekly PHE Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Surveillance Report (found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-covid-19-surveillance-reports>)
- All care homes that have symptomatic residents will continue to be able to access testing through their local PHE Health Protection Team
- We will continue to look for options that can reduce delays, such as encouraging testing throughout the whole week, especially on weekends where this is possible. This will enable us to increase the amount of testing we can do and make full use of the available lab capacity

We want to reassure you that care home testing has not stopped. We are issuing over 50,000 tests a day to care homes across the country, with the majority of these in high priority outbreak areas. Any symptomatic person is still able to get a test and care homes with suspected positive cases will be able to access whole home testing via their local Health Protection Team.

Key updates

LampORE rapid testing

You may have seen in the media yesterday reports of encouraging progress with the LampORE rapid tests. The new rapid LampORE

test has been found to detect the presence of COVID-19 in under 90 minutes.

There will be a validation programme over the next few weeks at regional laboratories. Should the results be as expected, we will look to roll out this technology more widely.

Coming soon: Bulk registration

As part of our efforts to make the testing process more accessible, we have listened to the sector and through our user experience research, we have heard clearly that registering tests individually is unnecessarily burdensome.

We are therefore pleased to inform you that soon, care homes will be able to bulk register tests, which will speed up the process and alleviate the administrative burden.

Thank you to all care home staff who have provided invaluable feedback on their experiences, as this is constantly helping us improve the testing process and better meet care home needs.

Guidance will be issued to care homes explaining the bulk registration process.

We will also be hosting a special series of webinars to introduce the new bulk registration process and Unique Organisation Numbers, look out for invites coming soon.

Coming soon: Unique Organisation Numbers

Soon all care homes will receive an email informing them of their new Unique Organisation Number (UON).

Please look out for this email and take note of your Unique Organisation Number.

When launched, you will need to use your UON to access services across all of our care home testing programme portals. This includes the following portals:

- Order new test kits (<https://request-testing.test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk>)
- Register completed test kits for results (<https://gov.uk/register-organisation-test>)
- Book a courier to collect completed kits (<https://carehomecollect.co.uk>)
- Contact the national testing programme helpdesk (call 119)

Across these portals, you will no longer need your care home ID, your UON will be how we'll identify you going forward.

We will be covering Unique Organisation Numbers, along with the new bulk upload process in our special webinar series, look out for invites coming soon.

Reminder: Randox pause

On the 6 July, we contacted all care homes who had received Randox test kits, informing them to immediately pause their use of these test kits, subject to further investigation.

If you have Randox test kits in your care home, please do not dispose of them. We ask that you retain them and continue to store them in a safe place so that they are not used or mixed with other test kits.

This pause only applies to Randox test kits and does not affect the validity of any results.

We have identified all care homes who require replacement kits to complete regular retesting or complete their first round of whole home testing. Replacement kits have been delivered to the majority of these homes, with the remaining receiving theirs this week.

To see the full government statement please visit <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/update-on-randox-test-kits>.

Important tips: Preparing your test kits

Each day tens of thousands of results are communicated to care homes across the country, we know that behind each result is a huge amount of planning, preparation, effort and care by staff and residents.

Unfortunately, there are a small number of tests that we are unable to extract a result from when they arrive at our labs. The main cause of this is vial leakages, which can occur during transit between homes and the labs.

To reduce the risk of vial leakage, always ensure that you break the swab at least 1cm below the lid of the vial so that they aren't touching, and ensure the lid is screwed on tightly.

Reminder: Outbreak management and rapid testing for care homes with outbreaks

If a case of coronavirus is identified in your home, you should notify your Health Protection Team (HTP) immediately and follow the agreed process for notifiable diseases as outlined at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/notifiable-diseases-and-causative-organisms-how-to-report>.

You can find out who your local Health Protection Team is here: <https://www.gov.uk/health-protection-team>.

A coronavirus case could be identified either through a lab-confirmed case or in certain circumstances when a resident's GP and Health Protection Team agree following a clinically suspected case.

If an outbreak is suspected, the HPT will then organise rapid testing of your whole care home (residents and staff) and retesting on days 4-7 of all staff and residents who initially tested negative to reduce the false-negative risk.

Join our regular care home testing webinar

We are running our webinars throughout August, every Tuesday and Thursday at 11 am. Please join us to learn more about the Randox pause, retesting, the care home testing process, and take part in the Q&A.

Link to register for the webinar:

<https://event.on24.com/wcc/r/2375949/724EF6345473A192F6B9C19334699A29/1077953>

Thank you for all the work you are doing

We know how hard you are working to keep your staff and residents safe. Since we started the testing programme, we have sent you more than a million tests, thanks to your effort and commitment.