

The following key messages are aimed at GP practices, PCN Directors, Primary Care Leads, Practice Managers and Practice Staff and Community Pharmacists and relate to COVID19 testing and vaccination delivery

## Current Issues and actions:

**PCR Tests:** General Practice settings are encouraged to access a small stock of PCR swab testing kits. These can be used with patients who present with Covid symptoms and symptomatic GP staff and their household members where needed. Note there will be no public communications around this, as the first point of call should still be one of the national routes. Assistance in ordering these can be made via the Specialist Team via 119. Please follow the link for information. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-testing-in-general-practice>

**LF Testing:** Regular staff testing for Covid-19 is critical to protect staff and patients and slow the spread of Covid-19. Testing helps to monitor the spread of the infection and any new variants. Testing is vital even if you've been vaccinated as vaccination does not provide 100% immunity and it is still not clear if those vaccinated can still transmit the virus.

Since rapid testing was introduced, over 120,000 positive cases that would not have been found otherwise have already been identified by LFDs.

All practices are strongly advised to engage all practice staff in regular lateral flow testing. This will aid in the protection of colleagues, patients and manage the spread of covid 19. **It is a statutory requirement that ALL** test results regardless of outcome (pos, neg, invalid) must be reported.

National data for primary care testing has shown that London has only 11% of the tests kits received within primary care, are being used and test results reported accordingly, via the reporting portal. <https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result>. Reporting is quick and easy and once an account is set up the reporting takes less than 2 mins, with a confirmatory text and email to follow test uploads.

## Antigen Testing:

### How to access antigen testing?

Health and care staff and members of the public experiencing COVID 19 symptoms can access a test via the National Self – Service Portal, where there will be an option to select an appointment at a local Mobile Testing Unit (MTU) or a home test kit. For further instruction please follow this link <https://self-referral.test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/test-type>

## Antibody Testing:

GPs may offer antibody testing to patients where there is a real clinical need, noting the current limitations around what a positive or negative result means. And regardless of the results, government guidelines on social distancing, use of facemasks and PPE as directed should still be followed

All paid staff in the Adult Care sector can now apply for an at-home test. The test, which is posted to the individual's home address, involves them taking a finger-prick blood sample (using a lancet), which is then sent back via post to a laboratory for testing. The test can be accessed using the following link <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-antibody-tests/coronavirus-covid-19-antibody-tests>