



Testing for a variant of COVID 19

A WRITTEN BRIEF FOR VOLUNTEERS DELIVERING TESTS DOOR-TO-DOOR

Thank you for working in delivering the targeted testing to identify cases of the Covid-19 variant first identified abroad. Before your first shift please familiarise yourself with the enclosed/attached briefing note.

On arrival for your shift, please report to the nominated Team Leader where you will be asked to sign in. Please ensure that you are wearing a face covering and that you are appropriately dressed for the weather. Please bring with you your own pen and any snacks/drinks you may require during your shift.

WHY

As part of our proactive sequencing work, NHS Test and Trace have found evidence that the new variant of Covid-19 first identified abroad has been identified in a small number of localities across England.

To swiftly respond to this, NHS Test and Trace are ramping up targeted testing in areas where the variant first discovered abroad has been found, to enable closer monitoring and work to suppress it where it has been detected.

WHO / WHERE

NHS Test and Trace and Public Health England (PHE) are working in partnership with local authorities in targeting areas within specific postcode areas where this variant has been found that cannot be traced back to international travel.

We are asking as many people (18+ years) as possible in these areas to get tested even though they don't have symptoms, so we can find any cases of the new variant and to help suppress it.

The area in which you are working is a target post code.

WHAT

We will be knocking on residents' doors and delivering tests to residents

If you have any comments please email feedback@number8events.com



We will be collecting tests from residents and returning them to our logistics hub from where they will be sent off for analysis

HOW

We will be walking up each street delivering tests, and collecting them approximately 2 hours later.

For each house number we will be noting how many test kits have been delivered and how many have been collected. This is especially important to ensure that we can go back to collect tests that are not collected.

For any house number where a test kit is not delivered the reason why will be noted (E.g. Not in / refused)

More detailed information on how we do this and a step by step guide will be given via a briefing given at the start of each shift.

POSITIVE TESTS

The PCR tests for this ramped up effort do not distinguish between the variants. NHS Test and Trace will check the genome sequencing of all cases detected in these localities to check whether the case is of the variant.

There is currently no evidence that this variant causes more severe illness, or that the regulated vaccine would not protect against it.

People should continue to follow the lockdown rules and remember '**hands, face, space**'.

If a person tests positive, has any symptoms, or are contact traced following contact with someone who tests positive, they should self-isolate immediately.

HOW CORONAVIRUS IS SPREAD

The spread of COVID-19 is most likely when there is close contact (within 2 metres or less) with an infected person. The risk increases the longer someone has close contact with an infected person. Respiratory secretions (droplets and aerosols) containing the virus are the most common means of transmission. These are produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. Two main routes people could become infected are:

secretions can be directly transferred into the mouths or noses of people who are nearby (within 2m) or inhaled into the lungs;

touching a surface or object that has been contaminated with respiratory secretions and then touching their own mouth, nose, or eyes (such as touching doorknob/bell/handle, gates or shaking hands then touching own face).

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COMMON SYMPTOMS OF CORONAVIRUS

The most common symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are the recent onset of a new continuous cough and/or high temperature, fever or shortness of breath (difficulty breathing in children), loss or change in normal sense of taste or smell.

The advice for anyone is to follow these main guidelines:

If you have the above symptoms, stay at home and do not leave your house for 7 days from when your symptoms started. You do not need to call NHS 111 to go into self-isolation. If your symptoms worsen during home isolation or are no better after 7 days, contact NHS 111 online. If you have no internet access, you should call NHS 111. For a medical emergency dial 999.

Wash your hands for 20 seconds using soap and hot water, particularly after coughing, sneezing and blowing your nose, or after being in public areas where other people are doing so. Use an alcohol based (min 60%) hand sanitiser.

To reduce the spread of germs when you cough or sneeze, cover your mouth and nose with a tissue, or your sleeve (not your hands if you don't have a tissue), and throw the tissue away immediately. Then wash your hands or use an alcohol based (min 60%) hand sanitising gel.

Clean and disinfect regularly touched objects and surfaces (i.e. car door handle, steering wheel and gear stick in vehicle etc.) using your regular cleaning products to reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

If you use PPE, follow the instructions on donning and doffing of a face shield, the disposable gloves and surgical face masks as provided following the instruction. Dispose of all PPE into the clinical waste bag provided back at the Welfare Hub/mobile support vehicle at the end of each delivery round/when necessary.

Do not share face shields (mark your face shield with your name with the permanent marker). Please bring your face shield each day you are working on a subsequent shift / day).

Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water/sanitize hands with alcohol based (min 60%) hand sanitiser before putting on and after taking off PPE.

When putting on a surgical face mask, avoid touching the face and inside of the mask as germs could be transmitted which contaminate the mask

Change the face mask if it becomes damp or if the inside of the mask has been contaminated

SOCIAL DISTANCING

Social distancing measures reduce the social interaction between people and help reduce the transmission of the virus. Follow any guidance given to you about the delivery and collection

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of COVID test kits. Guidance indicates that you should try to maintain a distance of a minimum of 2 metres between people - please see the flowchart process overleaf.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU BECOME UNWELL

If you feel unwell and if you develop/experience COVID-19 symptoms as highlighted earlier, whilst undertaking this activity, maintain your distance from colleagues and members of the public and please inform your Ground Commander immediately who will instruct you what you must do.

Please follow this guidance. If you are unsure of what to do or require further guidance please speak to your Team Leader.