

Covid-19

----- Guidance for practices



Date: 23.12.2020

Please be aware that this is a rapidly evolving situation.

Lateral Flow Testing

What is it?

- Lateral Flow Device (LFD) testing is point-of-care rapid testing, with results available in under 30 minutes.
- It is based on a throat and nasal swab and is used with a kit similar to a pregnancy test with a control line and positive line indicator.
- Polymerase chain reaction (PCR) lab testing is, and will remain, the Gold Standard for testing of symptomatic staff, patients and public. LFD testing is helpful in screening asymptomatic staff groups. A PCR confirmatory test is required for all LFD positives.
- It is highly specific (99.68%) which means that there are few false positive results. However, it is less sensitive at 78.6% (dropping to 58% if used by the general public) so there are many false negatives. The sensitivity increases with high viral load but in the context of high disease prevalence a negative result does not mean that an individual definitely does not have Covid-19. It is important that if someone subsequently becomes symptomatic they self-isolate and arrange to have a PCR test. Further details are available [here](#).

Why do I need to know about this now?

- NHSE wrote to practices on 16 December with [further information regarding LFTs in primary care](#).
- The SOP for Primary Care LFT has been published [here](#).
- Each patient-facing member of staff will have the option of receiving a box of 25 tests to enable regular use (twice weekly, for three months initially) for asymptomatic testing. Practices have been asked to consider how many boxes they require and where they would like them delivered as there are some storage requirements. All staff need to be considered including locums, trainees and aligned staff.
- Practices will receive an invitation directly to order their kits. This needs to be done **before 30 December** as deliveries will start imminently.
- Each practice will need to consider how they train clinical and non-clinical staff to undertake self-testing where possible. Training videos are available [here](#) as well as [written instructions](#). If non-clinical staff are not comfortable doing it themselves each practice needs to consider how this will be arranged on site.

Covid-19

----- Guidance for practices



What do I do with the results?

- Individuals who undertake a test are required to self-report the result using the Government's website: <https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result>. This needs to be done within 24 hours of doing the test. Alternatively, individuals can report their result via phone using the number provided in their testing kit.
- In the case of a positive test this should be reported to their employer and a PCR test arranged. The individual needs to self isolate until the result of their PCR test is available.