

We are pleased to share our Extra Care and Supported Living Covid-19 testing update.

This bulletin is circulated to nominated points of contact for Local Authorities and providers in England.

In this week's update; an important update to the test kit registration portal, a change to the 119 options to get through to the Specialist Team, an update on test kit deliveries for Supported Living settings, answers to frequently asked questions and an invitation to our webinars.

If you have any questions, please sign up to attend our new Extra Care and Supported Living testing webinars. We strongly encourage providers and those involved in the testing process join the webinar: https://event.webcasts.com/starthere.jsp?ei=1380165&tp_key=dfecd07a9d

Important update to the test kit registration portal

The 'first line of address' is now a mandatory field on the online registration portal: <https://organisations.test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/register-organisation-tests>

This means that for any tests you are registering, you will need to enter 'first line of address' into the portal for every person you are registering a completed test kit for.

When registering test kits for residents or service users we anticipate that the impact will be minimal as you will already have their address, but for staff members, you may need to contact them in advance to gather this information before registration.

If you already have the first line address for all your staff, and you already input this when registering test kits, you do not need to do anything any differently.

This change has been introduced to help NHS Test and Trace improve contact tracing.

To register a completed test kit for an Extra Care or Supported Living setting, please select 'Other' organisation type.

Important improvements to the 119 Coronavirus Testing Contact Centre

We have changed the way we structure the 119 questions to make the process quicker and clearer for your organisation to reach the specialist organisation testing team.

You should select the following options to be directed straight to the specialist organisation testing team, after calling 119:

1. Select whether you're calling from England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland
2. Select your language requirement for the call
3. Select whether to hear what data is captured, or continue
4. You will then hear the following options:

"If you are calling because you have an upcoming hospital procedure, or from an organisation who receives test kits directly from the national testing programme, press 1, or press 2 to continue"

Press '1' for calling from an organisation who receives test kits. That will get you straight through to the right team

- If you have any questions related to testing, registering kits, delayed results, or issues with couriers, then please call the

Coronavirus Testing Contact Centre on 119 (England). Lines are open from 7am –11pm daily.

- Please contact your Local Authority if you have any questions regarding eligibility for testing. You can find your local authority here: <https://www.gov.uk/find-local-council>

Supported Living settings – an update to the number of test kits you will receive from us

We have listened to your feedback and we are pleased to inform you that from the 6th November, test kit orders placed for Supported Living settings will be sent in batches of 10. This means that Supported Living settings will no longer receive batches of 40 test kits.

Please note there is no change for Extra Care settings, who will still receive test kits in batches of 40.

If you have any spare test kits, they should be stored between 5 and 22 degrees Celsius until their expiry date which is displayed on the swabs. It may be useful to keep spare tests in case they are ever needed, namely in the case of an outbreak if instructed to use test kits by your local Health Protection Team, or if you have received the result 'we could not read your sample' which means you'll need to take another test.

Please do not use any spares for further rounds of asymptomatic testing, unless instructed to do so by your local Health Protection Team.

Join our Extra Care and Supported Living webinars

We would like to invite you to our regular Extra Care and Supported Living testing webinars. We welcome Local Authorities and all staff at the Extra Care and Supported Living settings to this webinar series. We strongly encourage providers and those involved in the testing process join the webinar.

The webinars will last 1 hour and give detailed information about all aspects of testing, including:

- Ordering tests
- Preparing for testing
- Test kit delivery
- The testing process itself
- Registering completed test kits
- How to send test kits back to our labs
- Results and what they mean for your organisation.

The content of the webinars will largely be the same for each session, however will include key updates on testing so is subject to change. We will announce any key updates via this bulletin also.

The session will include a Q&A with representatives from the testing team, who will be able to answer your questions and address any concerns in the session.

To sign up to attend our new Extra Care and Supported Living testing webinars, click here:

https://event.webcasts.com/starthere.jsp?ei=1380165&tp_key=dfecd07a9d

Frequently asked questions

What is my Unique Organisation Number?

- Once live on our systems, each eligible setting will receive an email from organisation.coronavirus.testing@notifications.service.gov.uk that contains their Unique Organisation Number
- This email will only be sent out when the setting is live on our systems and so can place an order for kits
- We are currently in the process of validating the data for Local Authorities that aren't yet live on our systems to ensure the information provided is correct. We will be in touch with Local Authorities directly with next steps
- Please do not attempt to use your CQC location ID to access the portal as this will not work
- If you have received confirmation from your Local Authority that your setting is currently live on our systems, please call 119 and they will be able to support with providing your UON
Does each Extra Care/Supported Living setting receive its own Unique Organisation Number (UON)?
- Every eligible setting that meets both of the testing criteria will receive their own UON to order test kits to complete one round of testing
- Settings have their own UON so that our systems can uniquely identify each setting. Their UON is critical to ensure a setting can access the ordering portal, book couriers and register test kits
- You should only use the UON for the setting it is assigned to
- Providers who manage multiple settings should order test kits, book couriers and register test kits for each setting separately using their respective UONs

Can I share test kits with another provider, friends or family?

- Test kits for your setting must not be shared with anyone outside of your setting

- Sharing test kits may lead to issues with test kit registration, courier collection and also contact tracing
- If you have any spare test kits, they should be stored between 5 and 22 degrees Celsius until their expiry date, which is displayed on the swabs
- Anyone that is symptomatic can get a test here:
<https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>

What if someone cannot tolerate a throat swab?

- If a throat swab is not possible, a double nasal swab can be done
- For double-nasal swabs it is recommended that you also take into account the individual's circumstances when interpreting results.
- For example, when looking at a negative result for a double-nasal swab, you also need to take into account if the person was symptomatic, and if so err on the side of caution, isolate and retest. It could be that the swab may not have collected enough virus to be detectable
- Conversely, if the result is negative and the person seems well, no need to do anything. If you take a double-nasal swab you should note this down and keep this information to refer back to

How can I store spare tests?

- Currently, Extra Care and Supported Living settings are eligible to receive test kits to complete one round of testing
- We send test kits in batches of 40 to Extra Care settings and batches of 10 for Supported Living settings, so we appreciate that you may have a few spare
- Test kits must be stored at an ambient temperature of between 5 and 22 degrees Celsius

- Can store spare kits for future use if you have received a result that states 'we could not read your sample', or if you are directed to use your kits by your Local Health Protection Team in the case of an outbreak

Can I test throughout the whole week?

- Yes, eligible settings can conduct testing throughout the whole week
- Testing can be spread out throughout the week, you do not have to test everyone on one day
- If you are using the courier return method for 9 or more test kits, you can test throughout the whole week, including on weekends. You must book a courier to arrive the day after testing. Can book a courier at <https://testkitcollect.co.uk/> by selecting 'Other' and it will arrive the day after testing between 9am – 1pm
- If you are using the postbox return method for 8 test kits or less, you should not test on Sunday. Please join our webinars for more information

Where can settings go for support?

- Online: Visit <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested#care-home> for complete guidance and <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supported-living-services-during-coronavirus-covid-19/covid-19-guidance-for-supported-living>
- Watch the instructional videos: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1l0jcv37WzI> and <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-taking-swab-samples/how-to-use-the-self-swabbing-kit-for-a-combined-throat-and-nose-swab-video>

- If providers have any further questions, we ask that they call 119.
To get through to our Specialist Team:

1. Select whether you're calling from England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland
2. Select your language requirement for the call
3. Select whether to hear what data is captured, or continue
4. You will then hear the following options:

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Please remember that if, at any stage someone cannot cope with the symptoms, or their condition gets worse, or their symptoms do not get better after seven days, use the <https://111.nhs.uk/COVID-19> service or call NHS 111. In a medical emergency, dial 999.

Thank you,

Extra Care and Supported Living Testing Team