

Care home testing update: Lateral Flow Device (LFDs) approval for self-test granted

This announcement is for care homes in England only.

Following our communications on updated staff testing using Lateral Flow Device (LFD) tests, we are pleased to inform you that we now have approval for care home staff to conduct self-test LFDs. This means your staff are now able to take and register their twice weekly LFD tests at home, before they arrive at the care home to start work.

This only applies to care home staff and not to other settings in adult social care.

We are working with care homes to ensure they have enough LFD kits to enable the provision of a box of 25 LFD tests to care home staff. These are the same LFD kits that you have been using previously.

If you have enough LFD tests to be able to provide each care home staff member with a box of 25 LFD tests, please feel free to start this process. If you do not have enough kits, please do not ring 119, we will launch the online replenishment portal w/c 1st February, which will allow you to place an order for LFDs.

The online replenishment portal is very similar to the current process you follow for ordering the standard PCR test kits that are used for regular staff and resident testing. The only difference being that from this portal you will select LFD test kits, rather than your standard PCR test kit order. You should continue to order regular PCR kits for staff and residents as per usual.

Once you have placed an order, your delivery will provide you with enough LFD test kits for you to provide each staff member with one box of 25 test kits, which should last them 1 month of testing. Within this order you will also be provided with a confirmatory PCR, for each staff member, which will be part of the replenishment package, and is used should an individual receives a positive LFD.

Please only place an order if you require a replenishment of LFD test kits. There is no obligation to place an order if you have enough LFD test kits already in your home.

As a reminder, these LFD test kits are a new technology which provide a rapid Covid-19 test result in 30 minutes and do not require a lab to process. These should be used in addition to regular PCR testing.

Self-test Guidance

Please share the published self-test guidance to all your staff members who will be testing at home. It is the care home manager's responsibility to maintain records of the kits that are distributed, including the LOT number, which can be located on the box of 25 LFD tests.

You can find the self-test guidance at the following link:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/955242/care-home-lfd-self-test-guidance-v22-01.pdf

Registering LFD test results

All lateral flow device tests must be registered (whether positive, indeterminate/void, or negative) as a legal requirement at:

<https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result>

Understanding results, and the prevalence rate is crucial for public health teams to understand the prevalence of coronavirus in care homes across the country and be able to support the care sector appropriately. It is therefore very important that care homes have made the necessary arrangements with staff self-testing at home to ensure that all results from lateral flow device tests are registered online.

Registration should be done within 24hrs to ensure that results can assist NHS Test and Trace in understanding transmission and prevalence.

Training

All care home staff members that are using LFD tests must have completed the training on the NHS Test and Trace online training portal. The training videos last about 15 minutes followed by a competency assessment.

Link: <https://go.tessello.co.uk/TestDeviceTraining/>

Token: 3wkcVi4UTX

Any care home staff member who has not yet completed the training can use the above link to create an account, access the training videos, and complete the competency assessment. Once the training is complete, screenshots of the competency assessment can be sent to the care home manager to be stored for internal records.

Please note, the registration process on the training portal is different to the one described above. You must follow the registration process highlighted in the section above (please see pages 16 to 19 in the self-test guidance for further detail on the registration process).

It is critical that your care home staff member does not begin LFD testing until they have completed the assessment.

Webinars

Another reminder, we are continuing our regular care home testing webinars. You can sign up for the webinars here:

https://event.webcasts.com/viewer/portal.jsp?ei=1369434&tp_key=296e54cdc9

These webinars last 90 minutes and give detailed information about all aspects of care home testing. The session will include a live Q&A with representatives from the national care home testing team, who will be able to answer your questions and address any concerns in the session.

If you are not able to attend the webinars, please sign up and a recording of the session will be made available to you after the webinar has been completed.

Who should you contact in an emergency?

Please remember that if, at any stage over the next few days, someone at your organisation 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

NHS Test and Trace.

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