COVID-19 Testing for Care Home Staff in Scotland
Non-Randox test kits

This guidance gives you instructions to test for coronavirus (COVID-19)

In Scotland, the UK Government Social Care portal is currently only being used for care home staff testing and not for testing of care home residents. This guidance should be followed for staff who do not have symptoms. Staff with symptoms should not attend work and should access testing via the Test and Protect section of the NHS Inform website www.nhsinform.scot/self-help-guides/self-help-guide-access-to-testing-for-coronavirus or by calling 111. Local Health Boards will inform care homes of the local system for testing care home residents when this is required.

Before you do any testing

- Read this guidance in its entirety

- Make sure you have booked a courier collection by 7pm the day before you start testing. This can be arranged at www.carehomecollect.co.uk. Please do not make separate arrangements for collection.

- For Island NHS Boards: Please note that different arrangements will be made for collection. Please speak to your health board contacts
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Introduction

Providing routine weekly staff testing within all care homes will help you protect your residents and staff, and is an important part of the national effort to tackle coronavirus. Thank you for everything you are doing to help the country beat the virus at this hugely challenging time.

Order test kits via the online portal for care homes: [gov.uk/coronavirus](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus)

Testing through the Portal in Scotland is only for staff, not residents. Please note that to enable the portal system to operate, you should enter the figure “1” when asked how many test kits for residents you want (and not the number of residents in the home).

Check which type of test kit you will be using

There are two types of test kits delivered to care homes, [Randox test kits](https://www.randox.com/virus-testing/covid19) and all other types which are collectively referred to as [non-Randox test kits](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-time-to-test-your-team).

Both test kits look very similar and test for whether someone currently has coronavirus in the same way. You will be told which test kits you will be using when you receive confirmation of your delivery.

Only non-Randox tests will be used for testing in Scotland.

This guidance document is for non-Randox test kits.

Prepare your care home for testing

You can start to plan for how you will conduct testing in your care home with the following steps. This will help to ensure that you are ready to start as soon as the test kits arrive.

- Familiarise yourself with the guidance and instructions and assist your team to prepare by watching [this instruction video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dQw4w9WgXcQ).
- Discuss the testing approach with your staff.
- Review staff rosters to ensure all eligible staff can be tested within timeframe.
- Make sure that you obtain consent.
- Review your personal protective equipment (PPE) supply and ensure you have the correct PPE to carry out testing.
- Ensure a proper workstation is available for preparing and packing the tests.
- Look out for the delivery confirmation email letting you know when tests will be delivered.
- Make sure you have booked a courier collection by 7pm the day before you start testing. This can be arranged at [www.carehomecollect.co.uk](https://www.carehomecollect.co.uk).
Timetable for testing in your care home

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What to expect:</th>
<th>What to do:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Initial Order</strong></td>
<td>Start planning in advance so that you are ready to begin testing when the test kits are delivered to you:</td>
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<tr>
<td>You will receive an email from <a href="mailto:care.home.portal.for.coronavirus.test.kits@notifications.service.gov.uk">care.home.portal.for.coronavirus.test.kits@notifications.service.gov.uk</a> confirming your successful order of tests.</td>
<td>• Read the instructions and watch the instruction video(s)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Prepare a workflow and allocated work stations for testing</td>
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<td>• Ensure you have enough of the appropriate PPE</td>
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<td><strong>Days 1 - 2</strong></td>
<td>Make sure you:</td>
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<td>You will receive a second email confirming the test kits are scheduled for delivery. Take this time to start preparing.</td>
<td>• Communicate to all staff of the plan to start testing</td>
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<td>• Obtain agreement from staff to be tested, and schedule testing of staff taking into account shift patterns</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Day 3</strong></td>
<td>Start preparing for testing</td>
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<tr>
<td>You will receive your delivery of test kits via courier after 10am.</td>
<td>• Re-familiarise yourself and staff with the test instructions to prepare, collect and package the sample for each person being tested</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ensure that all test kits are stored safely at an ambient temperature. Do not refrigerate or leave in direct sunlight.</td>
<td>• Prepare your test record templates and workstations for an easy testing and registration workflow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Before testing</strong></td>
<td>You can book all your courier collections at once or you can book ad hoc courier collections as and when you plan to test. Make sure that you have a confirmed courier collection for the day that you are due to start testing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book a courier collection at least a day before testing (by no later than 7pm)*</td>
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<td>*Island Boards will be following a different arrangement for collection and will be advised separately</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Testing days</strong></td>
<td>For EACH day of testing:</td>
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<td>Testing days, on day(s) of your choice:</td>
<td>• Take time to prepare your staff and testing space</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conduct your tests between 6am - 3pm. Stop testing at 3pm to allow time for packaging before courier collection.</td>
<td>• Follow the test instructions to prepare, collect and package the sample for each staff member between 6am and 3pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courier collection will take place between 4pm and 10pm on each day you have a booked collection.</td>
<td>• Note the barcode number and time of each test against the name of the person tested</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Results</strong></td>
<td>• Register the completed test online as close as possible to the time of the swab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You will receive the test results by email within 72 hours of test kits arriving at the laboratory</td>
<td>• Courier collects completed test samples between 4pm and 10pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• You do not have to share your result with the care home manager, but we strongly recommend you do, both for your own personal care and support, and for the manager to be able to manage the home provision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Take appropriate actions if the test result is positive or inconclusive</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
If you are self-swabbing

Follow the instructions included at the end of this guidance document. Please ignore the postal instructions, instead follow the courier collection guidance for care homes (see page 15)
Who should be tested?

**Staff without symptoms**
All care home staff (including agency workers) without symptoms should be **tested weekly**, even if they have previously tested negative for COVID-19.

**Staff with symptoms should NOT be tested in the care home**
Staff with symptoms should not attend for work and should access a test via the Test and Protect section of the NHS Inform website [www.nhsinform.scot/self-help-guides/self-help-guide-access-to-testing-for-coronavirus](http://www.nhsinform.scot/self-help-guides/self-help-guide-access-to-testing-for-coronavirus) or by calling 111.

**Staff who have no symptoms and receive inconclusive result**
Staff with no symptoms and who have received an inconclusive test result through routine weekly testing should remain at work and be re-tested in the next weekly testing.

**Staff who have previously tested positive for Covid-19**
Staff who have previously tested positive for covid-19 and are now recovered and have returned to work do not require to be tested as part of routine weekly testing of care home staff from then on (unless they develop symptoms).

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**COVID-19 Symptoms**
The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are:

- New continuous cough **OR** Fever **OR** Loss of/ change in sense of smell or taste.
Booking your courier collection

Please read the below instructions that describe how to arrange a courier collection before you start testing

**Please book your courier collection via [carehomecollect.co.uk](http://carehomecollect.co.uk)**

*For Island NHS Boards:* Please note that different arrangements will be made for collection, and you will be advised of these separately

**Arranging your test kit courier collection:**

1. Once you have planned for when to do testing book your courier collection at [carehomecollect.co.uk](http://carehomecollect.co.uk)

2. Make sure that you have your CQC reference number and care home email address ready and follow the steps on screen to arrange your courier
   
   **Note:** you have until 7pm to arrange a next day courier collection

3. Receive your courier collection confirmation email

4. Conduct testing between 6am and 3pm on the day your courier has been arranged (see page 8 for more information about testing)

5. Package your test kits up before 4pm using one of the empty boxes you will have received with your test kit delivery and add the UN3373 label to the box

6. The courier will collect completed kits from you between 4pm and 10pm on the day you have selected

**Tests must be picked up on the same day they are taken**

**Why courier timing is important:**

There is a 48 hour window to get a swab sample to the laboratory for processing. If this window is missed, there is a high chance that the individual may not get their results and a retest may be required at a later time.

You will be able to book multiple collections, but please make sure that you only test on a day where you have a confirmed courier scheduled to collect your test kits that same day between 4pm and 10pm.

If you have received test kits for testing in your care home from any other source (for example your local Health Board), please keep these tests separate and do not return these tests with the same courier.

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**Important**

Please only test on a day that you have a confirmed courier collection arranged
Learn how to conduct the test
To ensure that tests are carried out safely, you must ensure that suitably competent staff conduct the tests. Every person involved in conducting the test in your care home MUST read the detailed instructions provided and watch this instruction video prior to conducting the swab test.

If a test isn’t correctly undertaken it may lead to inaccurate test results. Please note that all non-Randox test kits require the swab to be left in the testing medium. Please see instructions on p.10

PPE (Personal Protective Equipment)
The training video on the HPS web site above provides information on appropriate PPE.

Obtaining Consent
Formal written consent from staff is not required but agreement to be tested should be obtained from all staff to be tested.
Conduct testing

Swabs should be taken between 6am and 3pm for collection by courier between 4pm and 10pm the same day

This ensures that night shift staff can be tested at the end of their shift, and ensures tests are delivered to the laboratory within 48 hours of collecting each sample.

Before Testing

1. Book your courier collection by 7pm the day before testing at the latest

Testing Day

2. Take swab samples

3. Package test kits

4. Collection by courier

Register completed tests

If you can’t test everyone in one day you can book more courier collections

Unused test kits and further testing

Any residual test kits not used should be retained by the care home for future weekly staff testing. Please do not return unused test kits with the courier.

Store test kits in a safe place with an ambient temperature of between 5 and 22 degrees Celsius.

In this initial phase of testing there is no ability to order further tests for your care home after an initial order to test all staff.

If you have unused test kits you may use them to test again in the future. Please book a courier collection via www.carehomecollect.co.uk. Make sure you book the courier first and then test on the same day as the courier collection. It is important to test on the same day as courier collection as once a test has been used it must be tested by the lab within 48 hours of swabbing or the test will become void.
Combined nose and throat swabbing

Where possible a combined nose and throat swab should be taken. Taking a throat swab is more invasive than taking a nose swab and can be uncomfortable.

Where a combined nose and throat swab is not possible, a nose swab from both nostrils should be taken, if this is feasible. This should be a single swab sampling from both nostrils. The swab does not need to be pushed far into the nostril. Extra care is needed when interpreting the results from a nasal swab compared to a full throat and nose swab.

Packaging the samples

1. Place swab into plastic vial
   Make sure the fabric tip is facing down as you place it into the vial. Snap off the stick end, so that it fits inside the vial without bending.

2. Securely fasten the lid
   The lid should screw on and fit securely. If the swab stick is too long still, you may need to use scissors to cut it to size. Clean and dry the scissors first. Securely fasten the lid on the vial. Make sure the lid is securely fastened and sealed so that no liquid can leak.

3. Check that the vial has the same barcode stuck on it as the barcode on the biohazard bag.

Important

Your vial, biohazard bag and box should have pre-affixed barcode labels.

If any barcodes are missing, or they do not match, please contact the helpdesk on 0300 303 2713.
2 Conduct testing

4 Place vial and absorbent pad into the resealable clear plastic bag
Place the plastic vial and the absorbent pad into the resealable clear plastic bag.

5 Place into the larger biohazard bag with the same barcode as the vial
Seal the bag using its silver seal.

6 Package the complete test kit in the box provided.
The box should have a UN3373 label and an identical barcode to the vial and biohazard bag. Check that the barcodes match.

Important
Change your apron and gloves each time you do a test. Throw these away in a closed bin.

Finish testing by 3pm each day to allow time to package your completed tests securely using the packaging provided. Courier collection will take place between 4pm and 10pm.

Make sure you record the individual’s information correctly on the test record and match them with their test barcode.

Register the completed test online as soon as possible at test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/care-home

If you have any questions please call
0300 303 2713
Lines open from 7am - 11pm daily

For people who have hearing or speech impairments, please call
18001 0300 303 2713
Record swab samples

When you conduct the swab test, you must register each completed test online (see separate instructions in this pack). This will record the URN or barcode of each swab against the name and details of the individual who has been tested. This will also enable you to receive the test results back by email within 72 hours of the test arriving at the laboratory. You should monitor your email account carefully.

Ensure that each swab sample is clearly recorded against the correct staff details.

Extra care should be taken when more than one swab is being collected in the home from staff. You should follow these steps:

- If possible, complete each test in full on a staff by staff basis including swabbing, packaging and record keeping, before moving on to the next person.

- Add an additional sticker or label to each sample collection vial to clearly identify the staff member, for example their name, initials, date of birth, or employee number until the details are registered online. Please take care to ensure that you do not cover the barcode on the vial, and remove or obscure all patient identifiable data from the vial before sending the swab test to the laboratory.

- Please use the suggested record keeping template for your own recording of the URN or barcode of each test kit alongside the staff name and test details. You should prepare this as far as possible ahead of conducting the test, update it with the time of the test, and then use this to register the test online (see separate instructions in this pack).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of resident</th>
<th>Date of birth</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Symptoms (Yes/No)</th>
<th>Test kit URN or barcode</th>
<th>Date of swab test</th>
<th>Time of swab test</th>
<th>Time registered online</th>
<th>Time of courier collection</th>
<th>Test result</th>
<th>Date resident (or family) informed of test result</th>
<th>Date GP informed of test result</th>
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Register completed tests online

It is crucial that you register each completed test online at [www.test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/care-home](http://www.test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/care-home)

When you conduct the swab test, you must register each completed test online to receive the test results by email within 72 hours of the test arriving at the laboratory. You should monitor your email account carefully. This registration process is essential, as without it, the laboratory will not be able to provide you with the test results. Note that you must complete this on the SAME DAY that you conduct the swab testing and as close as possible to the time that the swab is taken.

Once you have successfully registered each test you will receive a confirmation email or text message.

When you receive the test result email, this may not include the name of the staff member. You should therefore retain a careful record of each test URN/barcode and the name of the staff member.


What you will need to register your test online:

1. **CARE HOME ID**: Enter your Care Inspectorate number (it looks like this: ‘CS1234567890’)
2. **ENTER THE TEST BARCODE**: Enter the 11 character reference below the barcode on your test kit, or scan the barcode using your phone or computer camera. Take care to double check that this number is correct.
3. **FIRST AND LAST NAME**: Of the person who has been tested
4. **STAFF OR RESIDENT**: Select Staff member
5. **SYMPTOMS**: Indicate whether the person being tested is experiencing symptoms at the time the test is taken. Please note symptomatic staff should not use the portal for testing
6. **GENDER AND DATE OF BIRTH**: Of the person who has been tested
7. **EMAIL AND PHONE OF THE PERSON WHO SHOULD RECEIVE THE TEST RESULTS**: In most cases this will be email address of the staff member to receive their own test results.
8. **POSTCODE**: This will be the individual staff member’s home address
9. **NHS NUMBER**: Of the staff member who has been tested, if available (not required)
Securely package and give the completed tests to the courier

For Island NHS Boards: Please note that different arrangements will be made for collection, and you will be advised of these separately.

![Important]

Make sure you have received email confirmation of your courier collection before you test.

Package your test kits before 4pm

Use one of the empty boxes you will have received with your test kit delivery and add the UN3373 label to the box.

The courier will collect completed test kits from you between 4pm and 10pm on the day you have selected.

Tests must be picked up on the same day they are taken

There is a 48 hour window to get a swab sample to the lab for processing. If this window is missed, there is a high chance that the individual may not get their results and a retest may be required at a later time.

You will be able to book multiple collections, but please make sure that you only test on a day where you have a confirmed courier scheduled to collect your test kits that same day between 4pm and 10pm.

If you have received test kits for testing in your care home from any other source (for example directly from Public Health England or your local Clinical Commissioning Group), please keep these tests separate and do not return these tests with the same courier.

If there is a problem with your courier collection

If your courier has not collected your test kits by 10pm, please email COVIDCareHomeTesting@dhsc.gov.uk or call the helpline number at the bottom of this page to request an urgent collection the following morning. You will receive an email confirmation of your revised collection time.

If the courier arrives before 4pm and your test kits are not yet ready for collection, please politely ask the courier to wait or return at 4pm the same day.

If you have any other problems with your delivery or collection that are not addressed above, please email COVIDCareHomeTesting@dhsc.gov.uk or call the helpline number at the bottom of this page.
Further Advice

Early reporting of a coronavirus outbreak in your care home

You should report any suspected coronavirus outbreak to your local health protection team.

A single case of infection should prompt contact with your local Health Protection Team as it may also signal the start of a possible outbreak. An outbreak is NORMALLY defined as two linked cases of a disease. For care homes specifically, with respect to COVID-19, an outbreak should be suspected when there is a single new case with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 infection arising in the care home, likely to be due to spread of the virus within the care home. Assessment of resident cases when considering any potential outbreak should also include symptomatic cases who have either been transferred from the facility to hospital as a result of infection or a suspected COVID-19 individual who has died within the same time period. These criteria may apply to other residential settings if there are groups of clinically vulnerable individuals or extremely vulnerable individuals living in group settings. This will need to be considered on an individual basis.

You can find contact details of your local health protection team in the Annex.

Support with conducting tests in your care home

If you have any questions regarding conducting tests on staff in your home, please call the Contact Centre for advice (phone number at the bottom of this page).

If you require assistance with conducting the tests in your home (swabbing of staff), please contact your named clinical contact to discuss what support is available from primary care and community health services in your local area.

Further support from Health Protection Scotland

If you are experiencing difficulties with implementing the above guidance, or if you are experiencing new cases or deaths or any other serious problems, you should contact your local health protection team.

Further guidance for care homes

Guidance for care home staff WITHOUT symptoms

If you have any questions please call 0300 303 2713
Lines open from 7am - 11pm daily
For people who have hearing or speech impairments, please call 18001 0300 303 2713

Asymptomatic carer who tests POSITIVE for COVID-19

- The carer should self-isolate until 7 days from the date the test was taken. They can return to work on day 8 providing they remain asymptomatic. The household members of the carer should self-isolate for 14 days from the day the carer’s test was taken.

- If during the 7-day isolation period, the carer develops symptoms of COVID-19, they should self-isolate until 7 days from THE ONSET OF SYMPTOMS. They can return to work on day 8 providing they are well enough and have not had a high temperature for 48 hours. The household members of the carer should self-isolate for 14 days from receipt of the carer’s test result. However, if any household member of the carer develops symptoms of COVID-19, they should self-isolate for 7 days from the onset of their symptoms.

- THE CARER DOES NOT NEED A REPEAT TEST once their isolation period has been completed.

Asymptomatic carer who tests NEGATIVE for COVID-19

- The carer can remain at work and must continue to follow infection control precautions, including PPE.

- The carer does not need a repeat test, unless they develop symptoms.

- If the carer subsequently develops symptoms of COVID-19, they should self-isolate for 7 days from the onset of symptoms and should arrange for a repeat COVID-19 test. Further information regarding the return to work criteria can be found at: HCW guidance

Asymptomatic carer who receives an inconclusive test result

- Care home staff with no symptoms who have received an inconclusive test result through routine weekly testing should remain at work and be re-tested in the next weekly testing

Guidance for care home staff WITHOUT symptoms is under development. Please refer to the full Health Protection Scotland guidance which will be updated regularly.

HCW guidance
Need help?

If you have problems with portal operation please contact COVIDCareHomeTesting@dhsc.gov.uk in the first instance, followed by the Portal helpline on 0300 303 2713.

For any local issues that remain unresolved, please contact your local NHS Board contact.

Thank you for supporting us.