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Adults' Health and Care

Provider newsletter

18 June 2024

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COVID-19 treatment eligibility and access to COVID-19 LFD test kits

At the beginning of April 2024, there were changes in national guidance, meaning that the groups of people eligible for COVID-19 treatments have greatly expanded.

The following information aims to summarise and clarify the new guidance on treatment eligibility and testing for COVID-19

Who is now eligible for COVID-19 treatments if they have symptoms and test positive for COVID-19?

- Those with [medical conditions](#) at high risk for progression to severe COVID-19 OR
- People aged 85 years and over OR
- People aged 70 years and over **and** are resident in a care home or are already hospitalised OR
- People who have a BMI of 35 kg/m² or more, diabetes or heart failure **and** are resident in a care home or are already hospitalised OR
- People with end-stage heart failure who have a long-term ventricular assistance device OR
- People on the organ transplant waiting list
- Individuals may be identified as eligible for COVID-19 treatment by their registered GP or by their hospital specialist

[More information about eligibility](#) is available

If Adult Social Care Providers are unsure whether their clients/residents are eligible, they should **ask the registered GPs in advance of the residents/clients becoming symptomatic**

How do you access COVID-19 LFDs for those who are eligible for treatment?

- Anyone who is eligible may pick up **free LFD test kits at a local pharmacy**. They should do this pre-emptively **before** their residents become symptomatic.
- For residents in adult social care settings, care staff may provide a list of eligible people to their local pharmacy and **pick up free LFD kits (in advance of needing them) for their residents/clients**
- [Find a pharmacy that offers free COVID-19 rapid lateral flow tests](#) to see if a pharmacy is participating, or you can call your local pharmacy.
- NHS colleagues are working with NHS.uk to improve the functionality of these pages to make it easier for patients to see which of their local pharmacies are offering the service.
- If you are still not able to find a participating pharmacy, Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) should hold a [list of all pharmacies offering the service in their areas](#).

Care homes for residents over the age of 70 years should **ensure that they hold a small stock of covid-19 LFD test kits ready for use if someone/several people become/s symptomatic**

How do you access COVID-19 treatment for those who are eligible?

- Local systems (ICBs) have **until July 2024** to make arrangements for everyone who is eligible for treatment to be able to receive treatment as per the [NICE guidelines](#) published.
- You will be able access treatment for those eligible via the registered GP, NHS111 or the hospital specialist (note: UKHSA do not arrange treatment). Local pathways may be set up before then, and if so, your GP, NHS111 or hospital specialist will know what to do.
- If your local system has not yet set up the arrangements for everyone who is eligible to receive treatment, then it is still worth carrying out an LFD test on symptomatic people who are eligible. This is because, in the event of an outbreak, it provides very useful information for yourselves and for the local UKHSA Health Protection Team when you report an outbreak of acute respiratory infection (ARI) to them.

Other points of note that have emerged in the last few months:

- The expanded eligibility for covid treatments (and LFDs) only applies to care home settings. All other care settings (Extra care/Supported living/ day

centres etc.) are not required to test for COVID-19 unless there are residents who meet any of the other risk factor eligibility criteria.

- Staff do not have to test for COVID-19 unless they are eligible for COVID treatments themselves.
- Do not undertake covid LFD testing on people who do not have respiratory symptoms.
- Please ensure you are familiar with the contents of the [national ARI guidance](#) and the [new visiting regulations](#) and do not impose blanket restrictions on visiting in an outbreak or without discussion with the HPT or ICB IPC team.
- The PPE ordering portal closed in May.

Better health for Adults with Learning Disabilities

Join us for a transformative half-day event dedicated to supporting the wellbeing of individuals with learning disabilities.

The NHS Long Term Plan made a commitment to continue LeDeR and improve the health and wellbeing of people with a learning disability. We are pleased to announce Public Health, Southern Health Foundation Trust, the Wessex Cancer Alliance and Hampshire County Council have come together to organise this free event to support better health for adults with a learning disability.

The event takes place on Thursday 20 June, 12-4pm at Elizabeth II Court, The Castle, Winchester, SO23 8UJ.

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