

Extra Care and Supported Living testing update: Rapid Lateral Flow Testing available to support visits in and out of settings from today

This announcement is for Extra Care and Supported Living settings in England only.

We are pleased to announce that from today, visits in and out of extra care and supported living settings can now be supported by rapid lateral flow testing. Both 'high risk' and 'wider' settings (as defined by the extra care and supported living testing risk-based criteria) will be able to order rapid lateral flow tests for this purpose.

Testing is one tool that can be used to help mitigate the risks to identify asymptomatic visitors who are likely to be infectious before they visit so they are able to self-isolate immediately.

For full guidance on visits in and out, please follow the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supported-living-services-during-coronavirus-covid-19/covid-19-guidance-for-supported-living>

For the on-site testing rapid lateral flow test guidance, please follow the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-lateral-flow-testing-in-adult-social-care-settings>

To learn more, please join one of our webinars for full details about testing, including to support visiting. Our next webinar is on

Wednesday 31st March at 11am, and a recording made today can also be watched on demand using the same link:

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

Key messages:

- Extra care and supported living settings will be able to access rapid Lateral Flow Tests (LFTs) to support safer visits from today
- Managers can place an order for tests using their Unique Organisation Number (UON) from the standard test kit ordering portal
- Each setting will receive four test kits per person living in the setting per week which can be used to support both visits in and visits out
- Setting managers may decide to use some of their additional rapid lateral flow testing allocation for testing of the person being supported to support safer visits at their discretion and with the consent of the person being supported
- All testing for visitors and people receiving visits should be conducted on site assisted by trained staff. Test kits must not be given out for self-testing.
- Testing and PPE should be viewed as a tool to mitigate risk, rather than a requirement for people to visit settings or receive visitors. Managers may wish to provide visitors with appropriate PPE where visiting is judged to be high-risk and the PPE can be tolerated by both the visitor and the person being visited
- In the event of an outbreak, managers should take advice from the local health protection team who will undertake a risk assessment and determine subsequent next steps. Your HPT might recommend some visiting restrictions, these

should continue until such time as it is understood that the outbreak has been brought under control

Top tips to prepare for visitation:

- Communicate testing offering and expectations to the people living in these settings, families and visitors
 - Prepare staff for visitation, including appropriate training and reading the guidance for rapid lateral flow testing in adult social care settings
 - Have devices available if visitors require assistance registering their result
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Visitor testing is a tool to help mitigate the risks of visiting.

Testing is not a requirement for visiting and managers should not refuse visits to visitors who have not taken a test unless they are symptomatic or should be self-isolating for another reason (e.g. if they are a contact of someone who has tested positive). We recommend visitors participate in on the door testing to reduce risk of introduction of infection through asymptotically infected people, in particular for higher risk settings with shared living accommodation spaces which have more potential for outbreaks.

Registering LFT results

All LFT results (negative, positive, or void) must be registered online and this can either be done by the visitor themselves or a staff member.

You should register all LFT results at:

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

Registration should be done within 24hrs to help NHS Test and Trace understand results. This is crucial for us to understand the prevalence of coronavirus in care homes across the country and be able to support the care sector appropriately. It is therefore especially important that you have made the necessary arrangements to make sure that all LFT results are registered online.

Funding

We are aware that expanded rapid lateral flow testing may place additional resource burdens on extra care and supported living settings. The Department of Health and Social Care announced an additional £138.7 million grant to support rapid testing on 18th March, to succeed on top the £149 million Rapid Testing Fund announced in December. We will publish the full grant conditions shortly.

Webinars

Please join our next Extra Care and Supported Living webinars, our next webinar is on Wednesday 31st March at 11am, for further information on how rapid lateral flow testing can support visiting. You can sign up for the webinars here:

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

These webinars last 60 minutes and give detailed information about all aspects of extra care and supported living testing. The session will include a live Q&A with representatives from the national extra care and supported living 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.

Many thanks,

NHS Test and Trace