



Weekly staff testing for agency staff who are deployed to care homes for adults and older people

The First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport made commitments to test all staff in Scottish Care Homes for adults and older people for Covid-19 weekly. The purpose of staff testing is to help protect residents and staff, and is an important part of our national effort to tackle coronavirus.

This guidance has been developed to ensure that all staff deployed to care homes for adults and older people from staffing agencies are tested for COVID-19 prior to deployment. Agencies who provide staff to these care homes should utilise the UK Government employee referral portal to proactively ensure that a cohort of staff have been tested who can then be deployed in to care homes at short notice as required.

Agency staff who work in care homes on longer term contracts can access testing through testing in the care homes using the UK social care portal in the same way as substantive staff are tested in the care home.

For other staff who are deployed in to care homes on a short term, often short notice basis the UK Government employer referral portal should be utilised by staff agencies through the UK Government testing programme to ensure their staff are part of the weekly staff testing programme. The relevant details are on the web link below and the instructions on obtaining a login have been pulled out below.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested>

In order to obtain a login, employers of essential workers should email

portalservicedesk@dhsc.gov.uk with:

- organisation name
- nature of the organisation's business
- region
- names (where possible) and email addresses of the 2 users who will load essential worker contact details

Once employer details have been verified, 2 login credentials will be issued for the employer referral portal.

The website does reference testing for symptomatic key workers and citizens but in Scotland we are using the employer referral portal successfully for asymptomatic testing. When the member of staff registers to book a test they will enter their home

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postcode and a list of their nearest test centres will be generated to allow them to book a slot. Tests are generally self-swab although some of the regional test sites do offer administered testing. Results are issued to the individual within 48 hours of the test (although turnaround times are generally quicker). It is the responsibility of the individual to inform their employer of a positive result although data will flow back into public health systems.

Can you please provide assurance that you have a process in place for testing staff prior to deployment to care homes to tracy.slater@gov.scot by Friday 31 July.

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