

Date: October 2020

Dear Sir/Madam

Covid-19 Testing Programme for Personal Care Assistants

The Coronavirus National Testing Programme has now expanded capacity to test other frontline workers who are having to self-isolate due to having coronavirus-like symptoms or because a member of their household has symptoms.

This expansion includes all personal care assistants (PAs), across both health and social care, who meet the criteria set out above.

The full list of eligible employers now includes:

- All NHS and social care staff, including hospital, community and primary care, and relevant staff providing ancillary support to frontline NHS services (e.g. accommodation, catering) and voluntary workers.
- All PAs, across both health and social care
- Police, fire and rescue services.
- Local authority staff, to include core and essential workers such as those working with vulnerable children and adults, with victims of domestic violence, and with the homeless and rough sleepers, and those staff essential to the continuity of business
- Defence, prisons and probation, and judiciary staff.
- Front-line benefits workers

More detailed information on the types of workers who may now be eligible for testing can be found at www.gov.uk/coronavirus-get-tested

Any of your PAs who think they are eligible and need to be tested are **being instructed to speak to you as their employer first.**

Please note that any of your PAs who think they are eligible and need to be tested are being instructed to speak to you as their employer first. There are now two options that your PA/you can take to be tested:

Option 1 – Via the Employer Portal

You may have already seen that you can register as an employer on the new employer referral portal where you can upload details in the secure portal of essential workers who

are self-isolating. The Personal Assistants will then receive an email or text inviting them to book a test for the symptomatic member(s) of their household.

(If your PA is eligible for testing, and they opt for the Employer Portal route, you, as the employer will need to **complete the 'Confirmation of employment and eligibility for testing-letter of ID'**, this can be found on page four of the invitation, and **forward this, along with the accompanying PowerPoint, to your PA**. Your PA will then be able to register themselves for a test at the link provided within the invitation.)

To find out more about this or to register as an employer visit <https://bit.ly/2YB3T4w> To obtain a log-in employers should email portalservicedesk@dhsc.gov.uk with two email addresses that will primarily be used to load essential worker contact details. Once employer details have been verified two log-in credentials will be issued for the employer referral portal. Attached is the Employer Referral Portal User Guide that talks through the steps to Register and to log into the Portal.

Option 2 – Self Referral

You or your Personal Assistant/s can also self-register by submitting details to <https://self-referral.test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/> where you/they will be able to add more people from your/their household.

Further information on this process is provided within the accompanying PowerPoint.

Currently the testing sites are the Regional testing Centres (RTC) which include Manchester Airport and Haydock. We are also continuing to work with our Ministry of Defence colleagues to support the establishment of mobile military testing centres such as the one at Southport that has now visited the area on two occasions. We are also exploring potential options for establishing local satellite testing centres in the borough which we will hope will improve access to testing. However, these are not currently available in Sefton.

Please be assured that we will keep you informed of progress.

If you have any queries on this process, please contact the Department of Health and Social Care on opshub@dhsc.gov.uk.

Yours sincerely



Alisa Nile
Interim Head of Service