

 **Review Sheet**



Last Reviewed
16 Aug '21



Last Amended
16 Aug '21



Next Planned Review in 12 months, or
sooner as required.

Business impact



Changes are important, but urgent implementation is not required, incorporate into your existing workflow.

Reason for this review

Scheduled review

Were changes made?

Yes

Summary:

This policy details the COVID-19 testing process to follow. It has been updated to reflect the changes coming into force on 16th August 2021 in relation to self-isolation rules in England. Section 5.14 has been updated and references have been checked to ensure they remain current.

Relevant legislation:

- The Health Protection (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020
- Civil Contingencies Act 2004
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002
- Equality Act 2010
- The Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014
- Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Registration and Regulated Activities) (Amendment) Regulations 2015
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Coronavirus Act 2020

Underpinning knowledge - What have we used to ensure that the policy is current:

- Author: UK Government, (2021), *Organisation testing registration: record of users*. [Online] Available from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/organisation-testing-registration-record-of-users> [Accessed: 16/8/2021]
- Author: Public Health England, (2021), *Information Sheet E: Temperature checks and thermal scanning*. [Online] Available from: https://www.england.nhs.uk/south/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2020/09/2B-Info_sheet_Temperature_COVID19_v1.0.pdf [Accessed: 16/8/2021]
- Author: Public Health England, (2021), *COVID-19: management of staff and exposed patients or residents in health and social care settings*. [Online] Available from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-management-of-exposed-healthcare-workers-and-patients-in-hospital-settings/covid-19-management-of-exposed-healthcare-workers-and-patients-in-hospital-settings> [Accessed: 16/8/2021]
- Author: NHS England, (2020), *If you're told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace or the NHS COVID-19 app*. [Online] Available from: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/if-youre-told-to-self-isolate-by-nhs-test-and-trace-or-the-covid-19-app/> [Accessed: 16/8/2021]
- Author: UK Government, (2021), *Essential workers prioritised for COVID-19 testing*. [Online] Available from: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/essential-workers-prioritised-for-covid-19-testing> [Accessed: 16/8/2021]
- Author: Department of Health and Social Care, (2021), *Coronavirus (COVID-19) testing for homecare workers*. [Online] Available from: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-testing-for-homecare-workers/a-testing-service-for-homecare-workers-in-england?utm_campaign=11991235_Testing%2020%2011%2020&utm_medium=email&utm_source=UKHCA&dm_i=1DVI,750HV,VOYMR2,SW09H,1 [Accessed: 16/8/2021]
- Author: GOV.UK, (2021), *NHS Test and Trace in the workplace*. [Online] Available from: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-workplace-guidance> [Accessed: 16/8/2021]
- Author: UK Government, (2021), *Coronavirus (COVID-19): provision of home care*. [Online] Available from: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-providing-home-care/coronavirus-covid-19-provision-of-home-care?utm_campaign=11563480_Government%20guidance%20digest%20220520&utm_medium=email&utm_source=UKHCA&dm_i=1DVI,6VUFS,VOYMR2,RN4AP,1 [Accessed: 16/8/2021]
- Author: Department of Health and Social Care, (2021), *Coronavirus (COVID-19): getting tested*. [Online] Available from: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested> [Accessed: 16/8/2021]
- Author: UK Government/Public Health England, (2020), *How to use the self-swabbing kit for a combined throat and nose swab (video)*. [Online] Available from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-taking-swab-samples/how-to-use-the-self-swabbing-kit-for-a-combined-throat-and-nose-swab-video> [Accessed: 16/8/2021]
- Author: UK Government, (2021), *Get a free PCR test to check if you have coronavirus (COVID-19)*. [Online] Available from: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-coronavirus-test> [Accessed: 16/8/2021]
- Author: Department of Health and Social Care, (2021), *COVID-19 home test: step-by-step guide (adults and children)*. [Online] Available from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/testing-for-coronavirus-at-home/covid-19-home-test-step-by-step-guide-adults-and-children> [Accessed: 16/8/2021]

Suggested action:

- Encourage sharing the policy through the use of the QCS App
- Ensure relevant staff are aware of the content of the whole policy

The Right Home Care Team Ltd

Station Business Centre, 2 Station Road, Clowne, Chesterfield, S43 4RW

**Equality Impact
Assessment:**

QCS have undertaken an equality analysis during the review of this policy. This statement is a written record that demonstrates that we have shown due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations with respect to the characteristics protected by equality law.



1. Purpose

1.1 To reduce the risk of COVID-19 spreading within The Right Home Care Team Ltd by confirming whether staff or Service Users are COVID-19 positive.

1.2 To ensure that The Right Home Care Team Ltd remains up to date with the swabbing process for COVID-19 and can support staff and Service Users to complete this where necessary.

1.3 This policy forms part of the COVID-19 hub and must be read alongside other policies and procedures, including:

- | HS11 - Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Policy and Procedure
- | HS16 - Coronavirus Policy and Procedure
- | CC34 - Infection Control Policy and Procedure

1.4 To support The Right Home Care Team Ltd in meeting the following Key Lines of Enquiry:

| Key Question | Key Lines of Enquiry |
|--------------|--|
| EFFECTIVE | E5: How are people supported to live healthier lives, have access to healthcare services and receive ongoing healthcare support? |
| SAFE | S2: How are risks to people assessed and their safety monitored and managed so they are supported to stay safe and their freedom is respected? |
| SAFE | S3: How does the service make sure that there are sufficient numbers of suitable staff to support people to stay safe and meet their needs? |
| SAFE | S5: How well are people protected by the prevention and control of infection? |
| WELL-LED | W5: How does the service work in partnership with other agencies? |

1.5 To meet the legal requirements of the regulated activities that {The Right Home Care Team Ltd} is registered to provide:

- | The Health Protection (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020
- | Civil Contingencies Act 2004
- | Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002
- | Equality Act 2010
- | The Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014
- | Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Registration and Regulated Activities) (Amendment) Regulations 2015
- | Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- | Coronavirus Act 2020



2. Scope

- 2.1** The following roles may be affected by this policy:
- | All staff
- 2.2** The following Service Users may be affected by this policy:
- | Service Users
- 2.3** The following stakeholders may be affected by this policy:
- | Family
 - | Advocates
 - | Representatives
 - | Commissioners
 - | External health professionals
 - | Local Authority
 - | NHS



3. Objectives

- 3.1** As the spread of the coronavirus is resulting in response requirements continually evolving, The Right Home Care Team Ltd will ensure that it stays up to date with reliable sources of information and has the flexibility to respond when required.
- 3.2** The Right Home Care Team Ltd will ensure that safe, effective COVID-19 testing procedures are in place with staff and Service Users having information in an accessible format.



4. Policy

- 4.1** The Right Home Care Team Ltd recognises that testing for COVID-19 continues to be an evolving situation and that it is an important factor in planning care delivery at The Right Home Care Team Ltd. Swabbing is a process to test for whether a person is currently infected with COVID-19 and the tests are currently available for anyone who has symptoms.
- 4.2** The Right Home Care Team Ltd will ensure that staff and Service Users are aware of the testing process and are supported to complete it, where required.
- 4.3** The Right Home Care Team Ltd also recognises that staff at The Right Home Care Team Ltd are now eligible for weekly COVID-19 testing as per [government guidance](#) and will ensure that this is followed.



5. Procedure

5.1 Antigen Test

This test identifies if the person is currently infected with COVID-19. These are the tests that are widely available and are used within The Right Home Care Team Ltd to monitor and clarify the health status of staff and Service Users.

5.2 Antibody Test

This test identifies if a person has ever had COVID-19. It is not widely available yet but is being offered to NHS and care staff as well as people taking part in research. More information can be found [here](#).

5.3 Independently Applying for a COVID-19 Antigen Test

Any person with symptoms, however mild, can apply for a COVID-19 antigen test to ascertain if they currently have COVID-19.

This can be applied for via the [online](#) government test service.

[Instructions in alternative formats](#) can also be applied for; with the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) able to send braille, audio or large print instructions.

5.4 Staff Antigen Testing

Care Workers at The Right Home Care Team Ltd are entitled to have weekly tests. All tests are to be arranged and provided by The Right Home Care Team Ltd following the latest process and guidance that can be accessed [here](#).

[Anyone working in adult social care](#) who is not part of regular testing at work, such as unpaid carers, can access twice-weekly COVID-19 testing.

For full details on the end-to-end testing process, join the Government's weekly webinars [here](#).

It is also important to note that many people with COVID-19 do not have a fever, while some people can have a fever that is not caused by an infection. Thermal scanners just pick up body surface temperature, and not true fever. Therefore, temperature checks using no-contact thermometers, e.g. forehead scanners, are not accurate for testing asymptomatic staff.

5.5 Rapid Lateral Flow Tests

Everyone in England is now eligible for free rapid lateral flow tests to be sent to their home. More information and how to order the tests can be found [here](#).

5.6 Application for COVID-19 Tests for Staff

An application can be made by TBC [here](#). To apply, you will need:

- | The Unique Organisation Number (UON) received from NHS Test and Trace for The Right Home Care Team Ltd
- | The total number of Care Workers for testing

TBC will receive an email confirming when the tests will arrive and they must be completed as directed. Tests kits must be ordered ahead of each 28 day testing cycle and distributed out to all Care Workers.

5.7 Consent to Tests

Consent must be gained from staff prior to the test being undertaken and also when registering the test kits after completion.

Where staff refuse to take a test, TBC will review the COVID-19 risks for The Right Home Care Team Ltd in relation to testing and also try to understand the reasons why the member of staff is refusing to take a test. TBC will also refer to the suite of HR policies and procedures at The Right Home Care Team Ltd for further information.

5.8 Preparation for Testing

Prior to receiving the test kits, staff should:

- | Read the testing guidance for home care workers
- | Watch the [instruction video for self-swabbing](#) relevant to the testing kit you have (i.e. nose only or throat and nose swab kit)
- | Read the guidance included with the testing kit

5.9 After Testing

Once the test has been completed, staff should:

- | Register the test after completion [here](#)
- | Apply the pink pre-paid label to the delivery packaging and post the test in a Royal Mail priority box, at least an hour before designated collection times. Details of priority boxes near you can be found [here](#)

Where multiple tests have been completed the [record-keeping spreadsheet](#) should be completed. Staff will receive test results back via email or text message within 3 to 5 days and TBC should be informed of any positive results.

Where a positive result is received, the member of staff is not required to retest for 90 days and must follow self-isolation requirements.

Further testing for those who are negative should take place once every 7 days. Testing should be on the same day each week between a Thursday and Sunday.

5.10 Employee Referrals

The employer referral portal is now closed. Where staff are self-isolating, employers should refer them to the [self-referral portal](#) to register for a prioritised test. All essential workers will be prioritised for testing. A full list of essential workers can be found [here](#).

5.11 Service Users and Testing

Those Service Users who meet the government criteria and have applied to be tested, will only be supported by Care Workers with testing when instructed to do so by TBC. Care Workers must follow the process and ensure that the correct PPE is worn before the procedure is followed. Government guidance on the home test can be found [here](#).

HS11 - Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Policy and Procedure at The Right Home Care Team Ltd provides further information on the current PPE guidelines for staff.

Service Users must inform The Right Home Care Team Ltd of the test results and the Care Plan will be updated accordingly by The Right Home Care Team Ltd.

5.12 Testing for Patients and Discharge from Hospital into the Community

All individuals admitted to hospital to receive care will be tested for COVID-19 and their COVID-19 status and care needs will be shared with The Right Home Care Team Ltd upon release.

Some individuals with non-urgent needs, who do not meet the clinical criteria to reside in hospital, will be discharged home for their recovery period. Service Users can be safely cared for at home by The Right Home Care Team Ltd, regardless of their COVID status, if the [guidance on use of PPE](#) is correctly followed. For further information, refer to HS11 - Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Policy and Procedure at The Right Home Care Team Ltd.

Testing will not hold up a timely discharge as detailed in the [COVID-19 hospital discharge service requirements](#). Where a test has been performed in hospital, but the result is still awaited, the Service User will be discharged as planned and, while the result is pending, The Right Home Care Team Ltd will assume that the Service User may be COVID-19 positive for a 10-day period and follow guidance on the correct use of PPE.

Similarly, as set out in the [COVID-19 adult social care action plan](#), any Service User being taken on by The Right Home Care Team Ltd should be cared for within their home as possibly COVID-positive until a 10-day period has passed.

5.13 Service Users with Behaviour that Challenges

A COVID-19 test can be uncomfortable and distressing and it is important to consider the effect this may have on Service Users before it is carried out. Each Service User must be assessed on an individual basis when they are being supported with a test as to the Care they require. Service Users with dementia, behaviour that challenges and learning disabilities may be distressed by having a swab. Where staff are required to support a Service User, they must:

- 1 Ensure that the test is being carried out in the best interest of the Service User
- 1 Ensure the reason for testing is proportionate and is not going to cause undue distress or anxiety
- 1 Not use restrictive intervention to enable the swab to be taken
- 1 Reassure the Service User
- 1 Where possible, use a staff member that is experienced and understands the specific needs of the Service User
- 1 Guide them through the process, explaining each aspect in a way that they understand

Where it is not possible to swab a Service User because swabbing will cause undue distress and there are concerns that they may have symptoms of COVID-19, the Service User must be isolated and cared for on the assumption they are COVID-19 positive.

5.14 Self-isolation Exemptions and Testing

Where staff are fully vaccinated and identified as being a contact of a COVID-19 case, they are no longer required to self-isolate if they meet set criteria as detailed in HS16 - Coronavirus Policy and Procedure and

[government guidance](#).

Testing for COVID-19 forms part of this process and staff must:

- | Only attend work after receiving a negative PCR test
- | Undertake a daily lateral flow antigen test
- | Where the staff member has tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 90 days, they must complete daily lateral flow antigen tests only



6. Definitions

6.1 Swab Testing

- | A swab test allows viruses to be detected. The swab looks similar to a cotton bud and must be rubbed over the required area to allow a sample to be collected for analysis

6.2 Coronavirus (COVID-19)

- | Novel coronavirus is a new strain of coronavirus first identified in Wuhan City, China. The virus was named 'severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2' (SARS-CoV-2). The disease it causes is called COVID-19



Key Facts - Professionals

Professionals providing this service should be aware of the following:

- | All staff conducting tests need to have appropriate training on the correct procedure to follow
- | Testing has been introduced to support with confirming cases of COVID-19 and helping with the planning of the required support for Service Users and staff
- | Consent has to be sought from Service Users and staff for the tests to be conducted



Key Facts - People affected by the service

People affected by this service should be aware of the following:

- | If you require support to complete a swab test, you must speak to TBC
- | COVID-19 is a highly contagious virus and testing is important to identify if you are infected so that appropriate care and support can be provided
- | Once you have received your test results, you must inform TBC



Further Reading

As well as the information in the 'underpinning knowledge' section of the review sheet we recommend that you add to your understanding in this policy area by considering the following materials:

UK Government - Coronavirus (COVID-19) testing for anyone working in adult social care who is not part of regular testing at work and unpaid carers:

https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-testing-for-personal-assistants?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_source=224d03ec-ae4e-44e6-abc8-0f37843e346f&utm_content=immediately



Outstanding Practice

To be 'outstanding' in this policy area you could provide evidence that:

- | The wide understanding of the policy is enabled by proactive use of the QCS App
- | The Right Home Care Team Ltd has shared its pandemic and business continuity plan and everyone knows what their roles and responsibilities are
- | Staff have accurate and up-to-date information in relation to testing and The Right Home Care Team Ltd is able to respond quickly and safely to a fast-changing situation
- | The Right Home Care Team Ltd has robust infection control policies and procedures in place and staff understand the importance of good hand hygiene, how to use personal protective equipment appropriately and they share their knowledge with Service Users appropriately



Forms

The following forms are included as part of this policy:

| Title of form | When would the form be used? | Created by |
|--------------------------|---|------------|
| Swab Consent Form - CC98 | For employees consenting to have a throat and nose swab test, if requested by their employer. | QCS |

COVID-19 Throat and Nose Testing

Employee Consent Form

As the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic continues, we want to ensure that you are aware of what steps we are taking to protect both you as an employee as well as our service users. To prevent the spread of COVID-19, please ensure that you follow the Government guidance listed below:

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
- Throw all used tissues in the bin right away and wash your hands immediately after handling used tissues
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth
- Avoid close contact with people who have symptoms of COVID-19
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces
- Do not leave your house if you are unwell

We will continue to follow all Government and Regulatory guidance including, but not limited to, Public Health England, NHS, HSE and the CQC, to protect employees and service users during this time. I understand that the symptoms listed below are representative of COVID-19:

- Fever
- New or Continuous Cough
- Loss of Smell or Taste

| Employee Statement | Yes | No | Initials |
|--|-----|----|----------|
| I confirm that if I display any of these symptoms, I will not come into work. | | | |
| I confirm that if I display any of these symptoms whilst at work, I will be sent home. | | | |
| I confirm, to the best of my knowledge, that I have not had close contact with an individual confirmed or suspected of having COVID-19 in the past 14 days. | | | |
| I understand that close contact can occur from being within approximately 2 metres of someone with COVID-19 for a prolonged period, or by having direct contact with infectious secretions from someone with COVID-19. | | | |
| I have previously had Coronavirus (COVID-19). | | | |
| Someone in my household has had Coronavirus. | | | |
| I have been tested for Coronavirus. | | | |

COVID-19 Throat and Nose Testing

Employee Consent Form



COVID-19 Throat and Nose Swabbing

The Government is rolling out testing for anyone who has symptoms of COVID-19. They are also prioritising essential workers and residents in care homes. Staff in Care Homes and Residents can apply for testing whether they have symptoms or not. More information can be found [here](#).

To ensure the safety and wellbeing of our employees and service users, we want to ensure that we reduce the risk of the virus. COVID-19 does not affect everyone in the same way and therefore some people may not always have the symptoms described above. We therefore seek your consent to undertake a nose and throat swab test following Government guidelines and procedures.

We will ensure that we retain any personal sensitive information in relation to your health, including COVID-19 swab testing results in line with our policy on Data Protection. Your result will be sent to you (along with information about next steps), and not to the manager of the service. We request that you share your result with your manager, but you do not have to.

Consent

I, _____ (the employee), consent to having a Coronavirus Throat and Nose Swab test if requested by the Employer.

Employee Name: _____

Employee Signature: _____

Date: _____

COVID-19 Throat and Nose Testing

Employee Consent Form

For Employer's Use:

Employee Signature: _____

Date: _____

| | Yes | No | Date | |
|-------------------------------|----------|----------|------|---|
| Employee given Privacy Notice | | | | |
| Nose and Throat Swab Taken | | | | |
| Results Provided | | | | |
| Outcome of Results (circle) | Positive | Negative | | Unclear Borderline Void Inconclusive |