

**Thursday 19 March 2020 1800 hours**

**Important information for all GP teams – Please share this with everyone in your team**

### **Community-Based Testing Centre (CBTC) Update**

We have received feedback following our communication yesterday and would like to clarify a number of matters for you.

- General practice teams are still able to assess and swab suspected COVID-19 patients.
- Only patients who meet the case definition are to be assessed and swabbed.
- You will be remunerated via the same process as Acute Demand for each suspect patient assessed and swabbed.
- If your general practice team do not wish to undertake either assessing or swabbing suspect COVID-19 patients, you can refer patients to the CBTC. *(Please be aware at this stage the CBTC has limited appointments available over the next few days but we will continue to improve response time and capacity.)*
  - Guidance on testing and the process for referral to CBTC is available on HealthPathways:  
<https://canterbury.communityhealthpathways.org/709101.htm>
  - Please refer to 'CBTC' via ERMS.
- The CBTC is operating from portacom adjacent to Canterbury Health Laboratories at the northern end of Hagley Avenue. Patients must have an appointment to be seen.
- GPs can contact the CBTC on 0800 37 30 37 (**please do not give this number to patients**).

The response to this virus is evolving rapidly and we will continue to provide you with the most accurate information available.

We acknowledge that the response time from the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) to your queries has not been as quick as you would like; we apologise for this and are increasing our capacity to meet increasing demand.

### **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

More PPE supplies will be couriered out to general practices to assess suspect patients who meet the case definition by Monday.

### **Viral Swabs**

We are actively working with Canterbury Health Laboratories to secure a supply of viral swabs. There are limited supplies throughout the country and the lab will endeavour to get more out to practices within the next few days. It is essential these are used only for patients who meet the case definition.

Include all relevant clinical details including travel history and close contacts.

Kind regards,

Dr Akshay Shukla  
(on behalf of Dr Phil Schroeder)  
Canterbury Primary Response Group