

Thursday 2 July 2020 1400 hours

Important information for all General Practices – Please share this with everyone in your team

Clarification of Testing and PPE

Testing

Following the change in case definition last week there has been some variability around the country and hence confusion around who to test. Here is a summary which will hopefully help to give some clarity.

People who are being swabbed should not be charged, unless it is a private swab for travel purposes (see below).

Who to test:

- All people who meet the 'high index of suspicion (HIS)' criteria. These people should be notified to the Medical Officer of Health.
- Adults who are seen in primary care with symptoms consistent with COVID-19, but no HIS criteria. (Community surveillance testing.)

Can test:

- Adults with mild symptoms consistent with COVID-19 who would not usually be seen in primary care, but who request testing. (Community surveillance testing.)

Do not test:

- Children under 14, *unless*:
 - They meet the HIS criteria
 - You decide it is clinically indicated
 - After discussion with parents, swabbing is still requested and it is safe to do so without causing significant distress to the child.
- Asymptomatic people, *unless*:
 - Requested by Community and Public Health (e.g., contact tracing, targeted surveillance)
 - Flight crew with a voucher
 - Private testing required for travel overseas (see [HealthPathways > COVID-19 Requests and Local Processes > Testing](#) for information on this process).

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

We have had some questions around PPE for testing patients. Droplet precautions should still be used when swabbing patients with symptoms consistent with COVID-19. This means surgical mask, eye protection, gloves and an apron or gown. You can continue to order this PPE via the [CPRG website](#).

The [latest MoH communication](#) is useful and clearly describes the options for PPE when swabbing. This was updated on 25 June 2020. However, you need to decide for yourself what level of PPE you are comfortable with, based on your situation and clinical judgement. We support following the MoH advice.

Thank you again for your patience and hard work.

Join our Canterbury COVID-19 Response community on [Facebook](#).



Kind regards,

Vince Barry
Primary EOC Controller

Dr Hannah Gordon
Clinical Lead

Robyn Harris
Pharmacy Lead