

Guidance for primary and secondary care on essential groups for testing

2 October 2020

For the period 5 October – 18 October 2020.

New and clarified advice for clinicians on community testing for COVID-19.

Key messages

1. It is critical **to encourage all patients presenting with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 to be tested**, irrespective of region – this advice remains unchanged.
2. **There is no new advice on the 'Essential Groups for Testing' (see Table 1).**
3. **The advice around the testing of asymptomatic individuals has not changed. Please see Table 2.**
4. DHBs may operate 'pop-up' testing facilities in your community, for additional testing of asymptomatic people.
5. The assessment and swabbing for those covered by this guidance is at no charge to the individuals.

Encourage all patients presenting with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 to be tested.

Table 1: Essential groups for testing and isolation advice

Who	Action
<p>Has symptoms of COVID-19 and meets the higher index of suspicion (HIS) criteria, as follows:</p> <p>In the 14 days prior to illness onset, person has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • had contact with a confirmed or probable case • had international travel • had direct contact with a person who has travelled overseas (e.g. Customs and Immigration staff, staff at quarantine/isolation facilities) • worked on an international aircraft or shipping vessel • cleaned at an international airport or maritime port in areas/conveniences visited by international arrivals, or • any other criteria requested by the local Medical Officer of Health 	<p>Test and notify the Medical Officer of Health. The individual must self-isolate while test is pending, irrespective of Alert Level.</p>
<p>Meets the HIS criteria, and has one or more of the following less typical symptoms: fever, diarrhoea, headache, myalgia, nausea/vomiting, or confusion/irritability, and there is not another likely diagnosis.</p>	<p>Test and notify the Medical Officer of Health. The individual must self-isolate while test is pending, irrespective of Alert Level.</p>
<p>Has symptoms of COVID-19. Does not meet the HIS criteria.</p>	<p>Test. Stay home if unwell, isolate while test is pending at Alert levels</p>

>2, no need to self-isolate at Alert level 1 or 2.

Table 2: Testing in asymptomatic people

Who	Action
<p>Does not have symptoms of COVID-19. Does not meet HIS criteria but are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health workers, including Aged Residential Care workers • Hospitality workers, including hotel, restaurant staff • Public-facing tourism workers • Public-facing transport workers (eg, bus, taxi, uber) • Close contact of border worker groups 	<p>Offer testing if they present to your service.</p> <p>No need to self-isolate while awaiting test result.</p>
<p>In the Auckland region: Does not have symptoms of COVID-19. Does not meet HIS criteria but is at greater risk of poor health outcomes if they were to contract COVID-19:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Māori • Pasifika • Seniors • Pre-existing conditions (for example: chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes.) 	<p>Offer testing if they present to your service.</p> <p>No need to self-isolate while awaiting test result.</p>
<p>Asymptomatic border worker groups; including those who work at Managed Isolation and Quarantine Facilities</p>	<p>Test as per Border Order.</p> <p>No need to self-isolate while awaiting test result.</p>
<p>Asymptomatic close contacts of a confirmed or probable case</p>	<p>Test as per advice from public health unit.</p>
<p>Asymptomatic New Zealand-based air crew*</p>	<p>Test</p>

*More information on requirements for international airline crew is available here <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-information-specific-audiences/covid-19-resources-border-sector/covid-19-aviation-sector>