

	<b>Asymptomatic COVID Testing policy</b>		Reviewed	Sept 21
			Revised	Yes
	Adopted	Feb 21	Next review	Feb 2022

## Asymptomatic COVID Testing policy

### Background

Asymptomatic COVID testing of NHS staff was introduced by NHSE in January 2021. At the time, Lateral Flow test kits were provided directly to NHS providers by NHSE and this approach was revised in April 2021 when free lateral flow tests were made available by the government to all UK citizens.

KGPC has introduced this policy in order to ensure that all staff and students are clear about the testing requirement and the action they need to take in order to be compliant.

NHSE guidance on asymptomatic COVID testing for NHS staff is available [here](#).

### Testing requirement

All patient-facing staff (both clinical and non-clinical) and students are required to follow the requirements of the NHSE guidance. This includes:

- **Taking a lateral flow test twice weekly.** For full-time staff it is recommended that testing is carried-out on the same days each week. For part time staff and those who do not have a regular working pattern, it is recommended that consideration is given to the working pattern due to be worked for the upcoming week and that testing days are selected accordingly (e.g. testing on the evening before a shift).
- **Reporting the result of the test.** Reporting the result of a lateral flow test is a statutory requirement. Tests should be reported via the government portal ([here](#)). Staff should retain a copy of the confirmation email received following the reporting of a test, as they may be required to produce this as evidence of compliance with the testing requirement.
- **Positive results.** If a staff member or student records a positive lateral flow test, they must arrange to take a PCR test in order to have the result confirmed and must self-isolate whilst awaiting the result. If the staff member is well and in a role which allows for home-working, arrangements may be made for them to work from home whilst awaiting the test result or whilst completing the required self-isolation period (in the case of a positive PCR result). Please refer to our COVID-19 policy supplement and Home Working Policy for further details.

Where the staff member or student receives a positive result to the PCR test, they must follow any instructions provided by the NHS with regards to notifying close contacts of the result.

- **Social distancing and PPE wearing.** Staff and students should note that participation in the asymptomatic testing scheme does not preclude them from the requirement to maintain social distancing and wear PPE.

## **Obtaining Lateral Flow Tests**

Lateral flow test kits are available free of charge from pharmacies and some public buildings (e.g. libraries) and online via the government's portal ([here](#)). Staff and students are expected to obtain their own stock of lateral flow tests.

Update (September 2021): From 1 October, a code will be required to collect test kits from a pharmacy. This code can be obtained from the government portal. Tests can be ordered online as before.

## **Training and information on testing**

### Staff

All staff who are required to participate in the testing programme will be informed by their manager or clinical lead.

All packs of lateral flow tests have instructions included, explaining how to take and interpret the test. There is also information from Health Education England online ([here](#)).

Any staff member who is unsure about the testing process or is experiencing difficulty with complying with the programme should speak to their manager in the first instance.

### Students

All students will be introduced to the requirement for twice weekly testing as part of their placement induction. As part of the induction, all students will take a test to ensure that they are clear about the process.

Any student who is unsure about the testing process or is experiencing difficulty with complying with the programme should speak to the Education Centre Co-ordinator (Nick Cornish) in the first instance.

## **Monitoring compliance**

Both staff and students will be expected to comply with the requirements of the NHSE guidance on asymptomatic testing, or to notify their manager if they are unable/unwilling to participate.

KGPC will carry-out spot checks of staff to ensure compliance, whereby staff will be selected at random and asked to provide evidence (usually a copy of the

confirmation email from the government reporting portal) of having taken a test and reported the result.

Persistent failure to comply by staff may result in disciplinary action and in the case of students, may result in their placement being terminated.