

Test, trace, Protect

Q&A for External Stakeholders - to help answer any queries on
Test, Trace, Protect

Updated: 03 June 2020

Test, Trace, Protect (TTP)

TTP General

Test, Trace, Protect will work by:

- Testing symptomatic people, asking them to self-isolate whilst taking a test and waiting for a result.
- If symptoms are not due to coronavirus, individuals and their contacts can return to their normal routines as soon as possible.
- Tracing people who have been in close contact with positive cases, requiring them to take precautions through self-isolation.
- Providing advice and guidance, particularly if the person who has symptoms or their contacts are in the shielding group or the at risk group, vulnerable or at greater risk.
- Ensuring that if the symptoms are not due to coronavirus, individuals and their contacts can get back to their normal routines as soon as possible.

TTP Q&A

How will the strategy be delivered?

- Public Health Wales, health boards and local authorities will all help deliver this strategy through close working and coordination across the public sector
- The public are our most important partners. It is only through their willingness to report symptoms, identify contacts and follow self-isolation advice that we will be able to identify new cases and hotspots, and prevent a new peak in cases occurring.

What happens if people don't comply?

- Everyone has a role to play in our national effort to respond to coronavirus and confident the public will want to do so.
- If they don't, they put themselves, their families and other people, particularly those most vulnerable, at risk of contracting coronavirus.
- They would also be helping to spread the disease and contributing prolonging the pandemic.

- Appreciate there has been high compliance with social distancing measures of the majority of the people of Wales and expect people will want to play their part in contact tracing.

Does the Test, Trace, Protect strategy differ from other UK approaches?

- Our aim is to maintain a UK-wide approach only differing when our specific context requires it.
- Research is ongoing in Wales to explore new treatments and the first vaccine trials have started in the UK.
- We have, and we will continue, to base our approach on the best available scientific evidence, health surveillance and international learning.

What are the roles of all the different elements of TTP?

- Individuals – following public health advice, hand washing, social distancing, reporting symptoms and self-isolating when necessary.
- Welsh Government – provide strategic direction, oversight, determine priorities and provide resources to enable test, trace, protect.
- Public Health Wales (PHW) – our expert National Public Health body providing leadership and specialist advice on public health approaches.
- Local health boards and local authorities – working in collaboration to deliver regionally coordinated local contact tracing teams. Also to provide testing facilities and environmental and public health responses to local outbreaks and clusters or preventative action in areas regarded as high risk.

Testing

What role does testing play in the Test, Trace, Protect strategy?

- Testing it is vital for:
 - Diagnosis, treatment and care.
 - Health surveillance to understand spread, identify clusters and hot spots.
 - Contact tracing - control the spread of the coronavirus.
 - Business continuity, enabling critical workers to return to work more quickly and safely.
 - Knowing who has had coronavirus, when antibody testing is available.
- Testing of symptomatic people has been expanded to include the general public.

How will we scale up the approach to testing?

- We have an extensive network of testing facilities across Wales.
- Public and critical workers are now able to order a home testing kit or book a slot at their nearest mass drive-through testing centre using the UK gov website.
- Critical workers can also access tests at CTUs through local arrangements.
- Availability of home testing kits are managed at a UK level, whereas slots at the mass drive-through testing centres are managed through the Local Health Boards and Public Health Wales.

How will we ensure there is sufficient capacity for testing in Wales?

- Scale of testing capacity need is unprecedented, but it will depend on the spread of coronavirus, the prevalence of symptoms and the emerging evidence on how testing can best be used to prevent infection.
- Testing centres now open around Wales and expanded laboratory capacity now means we are processing more than 9,277 tests a day (figure dated 29 May).
- Continue to increase this capacity over the coming weeks and months.
- Drawing on the supply of UK home testing kits and the UK-wide website booking system and delivery service.

How do you test for coronavirus?

- The only way to confirm someone has coronavirus is to test them.
- The antigen (swab) test is currently the only type of test in regular use.

What about the antibody test?

- Another type of test is possible – this is the antibody test – which can tell if you have had Covid-19. On 21 May UKG announced a new antibody blood test that will be processed in laboratories.
- Approval and production of the new test is an important step forward in our efforts to stop the spread of the virus, protect the public and ease lockdown restrictions.
- Wales will be provided with an allocation of these tests sourced at a UK level, and a policy outlining how these tests will be used in Wales will follow.

Is there a role for Antibody Testing?

- Antibody testing is an important part of our current testing strategy as it will help us know whether people have had the virus.
- It will also tell us about where the virus is in the country and communities.
- But there is no evidence yet on whether having had the virus means you are immune. It is, therefore, vital to continue with social distancing. And also to self-isolate if told to do so through the test and trace process.

How do I book an Anti-gen test?

- If symptomatic, you can apply test on <https://gov.wales/apply-coronavirus-test>
- The test is only effective for those who are experiencing coronavirus symptoms and needs to be taken in the first 5 days of having symptoms. It only checks if you have coronavirus right now and not if you have already had the virus.

What's the minimum and maximum time people can be told to self-isolate for?

- Positive cases of coronavirus will be asked to isolate for 7 days from the onset of symptoms.
- If after 7 days, or longer, they still have symptoms, they must continue to self-isolate until they feel better.

What if symptoms worsen to the point where people can't cope at home?

- Use the 111 online coronavirus service. If there is no internet access, call 111.
- In a medical emergency, dial 999.

How do people get their test results?

- It depends on what process they have chosen.
- Some will receive a text, email or phone call.
- Some will also receive their results via staff if in a closed setting (ie a care home).

What about those without access to smartphones and the internet?

- People can apply for a test by calling the free number 119 between the hours of 7am to 11pm.
- People with hearing or speech difficulties can call 18001 119.

Where can I get the latest data about tests?

- Public Health Wales launched an interactive dashboard with the latest data relating to coronavirus in Wales.
- Weekly updates are also published on the Welsh Government Website (<https://gov.wales/testing-coronavirus-weekly-updates>)

Contact Tracing

General

- We used contact tracing during the initial 'contain' phase of our response to coronavirus. Contact tracing is an essential part of our TTP strategy.
- Tried and tested method of controlling the spread of infectious diseases.
- The purpose is to provide real time intelligence on the coverage of the disease, how quickly it is spreading, and where there are hotspots of infection.

Q&A

Who is delivering contact tracing?

- PHW, health boards and local authorities are delivering contact tracing through partnership working with other public services across the public sector.

What does 'a contact' mean?

- A contact means someone you may or may not live with and with whom you have been in close proximity on any occasion during a period beginning up to two days before you started experiencing symptoms including:
 - someone within 1 metre of you with whom you have had a face-to-face-conversation, had skin-to-skin physical contact, you have coughed on, or been on other forms of contact within 1 metre or 1 minute or longer;
 - someone within 2 metres of you for more than 15 minutes;
 - someone you have travelled in a vehicle with - or seated near you in public transport.

Will it be the same in Wales as in England?

- Yes

How does contact tracing work?

- Contact tracing is reliant on tests being taken quickly, as soon as people start to display symptoms.

- People who test positive are asked to reporting their recent contacts so that they can be contacted and notified to self-isolate (and take a test if they too are displaying symptoms) to help stop the spread of the virus.
- They will also be provided with support, advised to self-isolate for 14 days from their last contact with the person who has tested positive.
- They will only be asked to take a test if they are symptomatic.

How many people will need to be contact traced?

- Numbers of people who will need to be contact traced will be dependent on the habits and behaviours exercised by our citizens and those who have tested positive for COVID-19; for example:
 - the people they've been in close contact with;
 - their working environment; or
 - journeys they have made where they have been in close proximity to others.

How will people be contacted?

- People will receive phone calls from contact tracers and receive a written notice.
- When the app goes live, this alert will also come via text or email.

How will they get details / phone numbers to tell people they have been in contact with someone who has coronavirus?

- Contact tracers will ask people who have tested positive to identify their close recent contacts and provide them with phone number and/or email where possible.
- This information is held in confidence under the WASPI agreement and is not shared with other bodies or organisations.

How long will a conversation with a contact tracer last?

- Calls take on average 30 minutes. This could be longer or shorter depending on how many places they have been and the number of people they have been in contact with.

How many people will have to self-isolate?

- Numbers of contacts will be dependent on the number of people that have been in contact with those that have tested positive for COVID-19.
- However if testing and contact tracing is successful, then the number of new cases may decrease and the proportion of new cases who are already self-isolating should increase.
- There will be varying degrees of effort required to trace different contacts, with household contacts, for example requiring minimal effort.

If people get a notification that they need to self-isolate, are they eligible for a test?

- They will only be advised to take a test if they are displaying symptoms.

What's the minimum and maximum time people can be told to self-isolate for?

- Those who have had close recent contact with someone who tests positive for coronavirus will be asked to self-isolate for the period ending 14 days after they came into contact with the person who has tested positive.

What happens if the contact is asymptomatic – do they still have to isolate for 14 days?

- Yes, even if they don't feel unwell, if they have been infected, they could become infectious to others at any point up to 14 days.
- They will only be advised to take a test if they are displaying symptoms. If they test positive, then the individual tested and members of their household will immediately need to follow the self-isolation guidance.

What about the households of the contact – do they have to self-isolate?

- Members of their family are not required to self-isolate, but they should follow the general stay-at-home guidance and avoid contact with the person isolating at home.

Could people be asked to self-isolate multiple times?

- Yes

Why will contact tracing start on a positive test result and not on symptoms?

- We are taking the approach agreed and endorsed by all CMOs in the four nations which has recommended tracing on positive test result.
- Contact tracing on symptom could produce millions of contacts, which would require a significant proportion of the population self-isolating as a precautionary measure.
- We have always based our approach on the best available scientific evidence and clinical advice, health surveillance and international learning and will continue to do so.

What if someone is wearing PPE – how will it work then?

- The result of this assessment will take into consideration any additional circumstances such as; the correct use of PPE, protective screens in the workplace and adherence to the 2m distancing rule which, if correctly followed, will not be regarded as a contact for these purposes.

Will children who have coronavirus have their contacts traced?

- Contact tracing covers all positive cases.
- Where children under 16 who have coronavirus are contacted, their parental or guardian consent will be required to proceed with gathering information.
- Alternatively for a parent or guardian to provide contact tracers with the information on behalf of their child.

How does this service support homeless people?

- Welsh Government, NHS Wales and Local Authorities are working together to consider how best to ensure contact tracing is suitable for rough sleepers or other vulnerable groups, including how vulnerable people can access testing and self-isolate if needed.
- Within each health board area experts from across the NHS and local government will work together to trace people who are difficult to contact and ensure they are offered the support necessary.

How would contact tracing work when people are difficult to trace (people with no phone, computer etc.)?

- Within each health board area experts from across the NHS and local government will work together to trace people who are difficult to contact and ensure they are offered the support necessary.
- Welsh Government, NHS Wales and Local Authorities are working together to consider how best to ensure contact tracing is suitable for rough sleepers or other vulnerable groups, including how vulnerable people can access testing and self-isolate if needed.
- We recognise that there may be a very small number of incidences where it is not possible to trace people, despite our best efforts. This is likely to be very rare.

How many staff are needed to operate contact tracing in Wales?

- A workforce of some 600 has been trained and is in place, with regional plans in place to rapidly increase it, if and when necessary.
- Contact tracing staff will operate seven days a week, including evenings.

How long will contact tracing be in operation?

- It isn't possible to give a definitive answer.
- Contact tracing will need to be maintained at a significant level, potentially for the next year or until a vaccine is found.
- It is dependent on a number of factors, such as how common the disease is across Wales, how quickly it is spreading and the latest evidence.
- This will also be influenced by how well people respond to the easing of lockdown restrictions and the need to self-isolate if they have symptoms or if they have been in contact with someone who has tested positive for coronavirus.

How will the NHS Covid-19 App support contact tracing?

- It will let people know if they have been near someone who has reported coronavirus symptoms and provide up-to-date guidance.

- It will also allow them to apply for a test if they start showing symptoms and it will give them the option of providing information to the app directly about their contacts if they test positive.
- The manual process will continue to support the digital app with contact tracers following up to offer support and reinforce the need to isolate.

What about people who don't have a smartphone?

- Manual contact tracing processes will also be available for those who prefer not to use the app and/or do not have access to a smartphone.

How do I know that the data I provide will be safe?

- Contact tracing is a long-established and proven way of slowing the spread of an infection and is not about enforcement or surveillance.
- Information gathered across Wales as part of the contact tracing process is held in strict confidence, and is subject to the Wales Accord on the Sharing of Personal Information (WASPI) agreement.
- This is a voluntary process and individuals can decline to provide information.

Will people know it was me that exposed them to a risk of infection?

- No, that information is confidential and will not be shared.
- However if someone under 16 is at risk, a parent or guardian will be asked to give permission for the call to continue.

How do people know that it isn't a scam?

- People should be vigilant for any signs of cyber security, spoofing, phishing or fraud.
- Contact tracers will not ask for any financial information, bank details, passwords or any other data other than information detailed above as part of the contact tracing process.
- If there are any doubts, then you should not provide the information.

As the lockdown restrictions are eased, people will come into contact with more people – is it possible to trace everyone they have been in contact with?

- As lockdown restrictions are eased, the number of people who you come into contact with will increase, but social distancing should still be observed in line with the latest guidance.
- By strictly adhering to the social distancing outside the home when you are well, and immediately isolating if you think you have symptoms, you will keep the number of people at risk to a minimum. This is the most effective way of stopping transmission and keeping Wales safe.
- Contact tracing focuses on close contacts, typically those where social distancing has not been adhered to, for whatever reason.
- So we would hope that it should be possible to trace all close contacts.

What about the people that positive cases do not know?

- A contact is defined as people who have had close contact (for instance direct face-to-face contact) with, or spent more than 15 minutes within 2 metres of someone with COVID-19. We would also look to trace people who someone with COVID-19 had travelled with in a small vehicle or sat next to on a plane.
- Everyone should continue to follow the social distancing guidelines by remaining 2m apart from others and wearing a mask on public transport or in settings where social distancing is not possible.
- The NHS Covid-19 app, which will be rolled out shortly, will enable us to anonymously alert app users who have come into close contact with other app users who test positive for coronavirus.

If people have not been self-isolating and/or not obeying social distancing will they, or their contacts, get into trouble if they share these details?

- No, this information is confidential and will solely be used by the NHS Wales Test, Trace, Protect service to contain the virus. It will not be shared with other bodies.
- It is important that you share accurate records of who you have been in contact with to maximise our ability to contain the virus.
- We just want everyone to play their part by self-isolating if you have symptoms, booking a test and telling contact tracers who your close, recent contacts are so we can stop the spread of the virus.

What training programme is in place for contact tracers?

- Based on their expertise and experience of contact tracing, PHW designed a bespoke training package for contact tracers and the response to COVID-19.
- All contact tracers have to undertake a training programme which covers
 - Basic information about COVID-19
 - A guide to contact tracing
 - The different roles within the service
 - Testing for COVID-19
 - How to handle personal information (information governance)
 - Responsibilities to protect the health, wellbeing and rights of individuals to live free from abuse, neglect or harm (safeguarding)
- All staff are provided with scripts and operating procedures to support the provision of a consistent safe service across Wales.
- Training is also available on the contact tracing IT system.

Protect

General

Most people will be able to manage self-isolation as a result of Test, Trace, Protect without additional support or help from friends and family. However, some people may need help with shopping, access to emergency food, collecting medicine and other support and advice.

This support will be provided locally and be coordinated by local authorities, building on the services they have provided to shielded and non-shielded vulnerable people during lockdown.

Referrals are integrated into the TTP service.

Q&A

How do I get food and medicines if I have to self-isolate?

- set up online shopping accounts if possible
- If you require help with buying groceries, other shopping or picking up medication, or walking a dog, you will need to ask friends or relatives. Alternatively, you can order medication by phone or online. You can also order your shopping online. Make sure you tell delivery drivers to leave items outside for collection if you order online. The delivery driver should not come into your home.

What role can individuals play to protect themselves, family, friends and community?

- We will need people to continue to play their part and follow the latest public health guidance to protecting others and preventing the spread of the disease.
- If you develop one of the symptoms listed below, you should immediately self-isolate, follow the [self-isolation guidance](#) and apply for a test.
 - a new continuous cough
 - a high temperature
 - loss of or change to sense of smell or taste

How should people self-isolate if they live with a vulnerable person?

- They should follow the self-isolation guidance.
- Minimise as much as possible the time any vulnerable family members spend in shared spaces such as kitchens, bathrooms and sitting areas, and keep shared spaces well ventilated.

If people are told to self-isolate, do they get sick pay? What support do they get?

- People should work from home if they remain well and if it is practicable to do so.
- Those companies who already provide their own sick pay schemes are encouraged to use these rather than Statutory Sick Pay (SSP).
- Employees in self-isolation are entitled to SSP for every day they are in isolation
 - as long as they meet the eligibility conditions, including self-isolating for at least 4 days in a row (including non-working days).
- People contact traced and required to self-isolate due to being in contact with someone who has tested positive for coronavirus, are also covered under the regulations UK Government made on 27 May 2020, subject to eligibility criteria.
- If people cannot work from home whilst they are self-isolating, they may also be entitled to an Employment Support Allowance accessed through .gov.uk.

What if they're self-employed?

- Continue working from home if possible
- Follow the guidance on Keeping Wales Safe at Work
- If businesses have been adversely affected by coronavirus, they may be eligible for a grant through the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (on GOV.UK).

Further Q&A on TTP strategy

What happens if there is an outbreak in a Care Home?

- All care home workers and residents can be tested under our Care Homes Testing policy.
- We want to see our all care homes tested as soon as possible and health boards are working to make sure that all care homes are tested by 14 June.
- Guidance has also been developed for contact tracing of care home staff, which is a risk-based approach.
 - If there has been no breach of PPE during the exposure period in the home, asymptomatic staff can continue to work.
- If there are multiple cases of COVID-19 in a care home then experts from across the NHS and local government will work together to prevent ongoing transmission within the care home.
- This will involve identifying those exposed, offering testing to residents and staff where appropriate, and providing tailored infection control advice.
- Advice is also given on admissions into the home from the community and hospital. Advice based on the assessment of each individual situation will be provided to support the home in preventing further spread.

How does the launch of TTP support the wider opening of schools, colleges and early years settings?

- Test, Trace, Protect forms a central part of Welsh Governments COVID-19 recovery strategy.
- This strategy sets out the next phase of the approach to tackling coronavirus; testing people with symptoms in the community, tracing those who have come into close contact with people who have tested positive for coronavirus, and protecting family, friends and our community by self-isolating.

Test, Trace, Protect works by:

- Testing those people who have coronavirus symptoms, asking them and members of their household to isolate while the results are awaited.
- Tracing those people who have been in close contact with people that have tested positive for the virus, requiring them to take precautions through self-isolation.

- Ensuring that if the symptoms are not due to coronavirus, individuals and their contacts can get back to their normal routines as soon as possible.
- By reducing transmission in our communities, and quickly identifying and isolating those at risk of catching COVID-19 from a close contact or family member we will support the wider opening of schools, colleges and early years settings.

What happens if there is an outbreak in a school?

- If there are multiple cases of COVID-19 in a school then experts from across the NHS and local government will work together to prevent ongoing transmission within the school. This will involve identifying those exposed, any child or staff member who is at increased risk and provide tailored infection control advice. Advice based on the assessment of each individual situation will be provided to support the school in preventing further spread.
- The process is handled sensitively and in confidence, for instance schools will not announce who the person with COVID-19 is.

What happens if there is an outbreak in a workplace?

- If multiple cases of coronavirus appear in a workplace, an outbreak control team from either the local authority or Public Health Wales will, if necessary, be assigned to help you as an employer to manage the outbreak. Employers should seek advice from their local authority in the first instance.

Will entire workforces be told to self-isolate if someone tests positive?

- Only those who have had close recent contact with someone who then tests positive for COVID-19 will be asked to self-isolate.

If a staff member is notified, do they have to report to their employer?

- If an employee is notified to self-isolate for 14 days because they have come into close contact with someone who has tested positive for coronavirus, and are unable to work as a result, they should notify you that they are unable to work within the deadline you have set in your sickness absence policies (or normally within 7 days if you have not set one).