

COVID-19 Management of Staff in a Healthcare setting

22nd December 2021

Purpose of guidance:

- ✓ guidance relating to healthcare staff if they develop coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, receive a positive test result or are identified as a contact of a COVID-19 case
- ✓ guidance on isolation requirements for healthcare staff after contact with COVID-19 cases
- ✓ guidance on repeat testing for COVID-19 for staff, patients and residents in health and social care settings

All staff who come into contact with COVID-19 cases – whether or not they are protected by the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) or by other factors – should remain vigilant to the possibility of contracting infection, and should follow the guidance in this document if they develop symptoms.

Where guidance cannot be followed, this should be raised as a reportable risk and where appropriate, inclusion on the organisation's Infection Prevention and Control Board Assurance Framework.

***PCR positive Staff (both asymptomatic and symptomatic):**

If a staff member receives a positive SARS-CoV-2 PCR test result, they must complete a period of self-isolation. The isolation period includes the day the symptoms started or the day their PCR test was taken if they do not have symptoms, and the next 10 full days.

Staff may be able to end their self-isolation period before the end of the 10 full days by undertaking an LFD test on the sixth day and seventh day of their isolation period (24 hours apart). If both these LFD test results are negative, they may return to work on day 8 under the following conditions:

- ✓ the staff member should not have any COVID-19 symptoms
- ✓ the staff member should continue to undertake daily LFD tests on day 8, 9 and 10 of their isolation period. If any of these LFD test results are positive the staff member should isolate and should wait 24 hours before taking the next LFD test
- ✓ if the LFD test is positive on the 10th day, daily LFD testing should continue and the staff member should not return to work until a negative LFD test result is received
- ✓ on days the staff member is working, the LFD test should be taken prior to beginning their shift, as close as possible to the start time
- ✓ the staff member must continue to comply with all relevant infection control precautions and PPE must be worn properly throughout the day
- ✓ if the staff member works with patients or residents who are especially vulnerable to COVID-19 (as determined by the organisation), a risk assessment should be undertaken, and consideration given to redeployment for the remainder of the 10-day isolation period.

If any of the above cannot be met, the staff member should not come to work and should follow the stay at home guidance for the full 10-day period.

Staff who are identified as contacts

Staff members notified that they are a contact of a COVID-19 case are not required to self-isolate if they are **fully vaccinated**¹. They should inform their line manager if they are required to work in the 10 days following

¹ **Fully vaccinated** is defined as 2 doses of a 2 dose approved vaccine (e.g. Pfizer, AstraZeneca, Moderna) or one dose of a single dose approved vaccine (e.g. Janssen) and it has been at least 14 days since the course was complete.

their last contact with a COVID-19 case. Partial or unvaccinated staff are required to isolate for 10 days. A flowchart is shown in Diagram 1 for clarification.

Household contacts - Staff who have had prolonged exposure to a COVID-19 positive person in their home must have a PCR taken; if the result is negative they can return to work, carrying out an LFD antigen test daily for 10 consecutive days. Partial or unvaccinated staff are required to isolate for 10 days. A flowchart is shown in Diagram 1 for clarification.

Lateral flow positive staff

Isolate and seek a PCR immediately

If PCR negative and well - can return to work

If PCR positive- follow PCR positive Staff guidance above

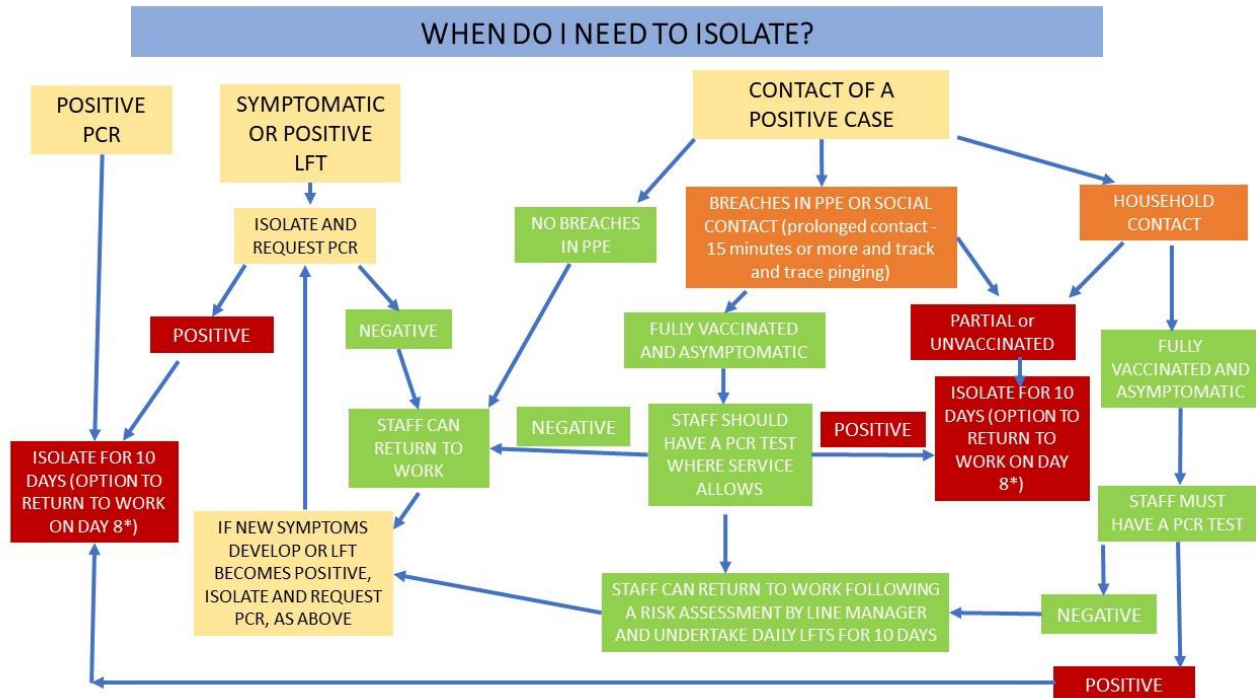
If PCR inconclusive- request a repeat PCR

Definitions

Confirmed COVID-19 case – actions for case and contacts

	Case with confirmed COVID-19	Contacts WITHOUT PPE	Contacts WITH PPE
Definition	Confirmed cases are defined as those that have received a positive test result for severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2).	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Direct contact</u>: Face to face contact with a case for any length of time, within 1m, including being coughed on, a face to face conversation, unprotected physical contact (skin to skin). <u>Proximity contact</u>: person has been within 1m for 1 minute or longer with a case OR 2m for collectively more than 15 minutes. 	Any contact with a case in a healthcare setting where either a case that is a clinical member of staff or contact that is a clinical member of staff were wearing PPE with no breaches.
Actions	Isolate for 10 days (See guidance above) NOTE: Hospitalised in-patients need to isolate for 14 days.	See guidance above: Staff who are identified as contacts.	No actions. Continue wearing appropriate PPE.

Diagram 1 (v2)



Limited availability of lateral flow device (LFD) tests

Every staff member identified as a COVID-19 contact who has met the criteria to return to work needs evidence of a negative COVID-19 test prior to their shift. LFD tests are recommended to give these assurances. LFD tests are obtained via central government supplies or local pharmacies.

If LFD tests are in limited supply, then the following are recommended:

- ✓ LFD tests are held by NWL Trusts and will be prioritised for staff contacts - please contact your line manager to arrange this.

Staff Travel Testing and Isolation:

- Staff who have travelled to England from another country are required to adhere to national entry and self-isolation requirements. There are specific instructions for those entering from countries on the [Red list](#).
- Healthcare staff entering from any country not on the red list are required to take a PCR test on or before day 2 after their return. They must self-isolate until they receive a negative PCR test result.
 - If the PCR test result is positive, they must start 10 days isolation from the day of their test and follow the PCR positive Staff guidance above and [Stay at home guidance](#).
 - If the PCR test result is negative they can return to work and must follow the PCR positive Staff guidance above.

Reference:
 Accessed 22.12.2021

[COVID-19: management of staff and exposed patients or residents in health and social care settings - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-management-of-staff-and-exposed-patients-or-residents-in-health-and-social-care-settings)