

## 97.5% of in-person coronavirus (COVID-19) tests returned next day

- The [statistics on the 5th week of NHS Test and Trace](#) have been published today, demonstrating that anyone getting a test at a regional test site or mobile testing unit can expect their result by the next day
- 91% of in-person tests taken at regional test sites and mobile testing units were returned in less than 24 hours over the week of 25 June to 1 July, with 97.5% returned the day after the test was taken
- A new pilot to evaluate the effectiveness of asymptomatic testing for people in high-contact professions has launched today in England

The 5th set of data demonstrates a huge improvement in turnaround times of test results. Anyone getting a test at a regional test site or mobile testing unit can expect their results by the next day at the latest, with 91% of tests returned in less than 24 hours, and 97.5% of tests returned the day after the test was taken over the week of 25 June to 1 July. At the end of May, 16.6% of tests at regional test sites and 2.5% of tests at mobile testing units were returned in under 24 hours.

More than 144,000 people who may have been at risk of unknowingly spreading the virus have been reached by the service and asked to self-isolate.

The success of test turnaround times comes as work continues to improve our understanding of the prevalence of the virus within different groups. A new pilot to evaluate the effectiveness of testing for people without symptoms of the virus who work in high-contact professions will begin today. This will include a select group of staff such as taxi drivers, cleaners and retail assistants, to see if there is demand for testing amongst these kinds of workers, and how they are affected by the virus.

This targeted, asymptomatic swab testing will take place as part of a close partnership with government, local authorities and a number of employers, with tens of thousands of tests offered to selected groups.

Partners involved in the trial include Addison Lee, BT, Mitie and Boots UK, as well as testing of groups identified by local authorities in Bradford, Newham, Brent and Oldham as being more vulnerable to the virus. Each business will receive thousands of tests for staff via home test delivery or a mobile testing unit, while local authorities will use capacity by booking in specific times for asymptomatic testing at their walk-through local test sites.

Those who test positive through targeted asymptomatic testing will need to self-isolate as normal and follow [national guidance](#). Positive results will be shared with NHS Test and Trace, in order to identify recent contacts, advise them to self-isolate and prevent further transmission of the virus.

Executive Chair of NHS Test and Trace, Dido Harding, said:

We are committed to continually improving NHS Test and Trace, to reach more people at risk of passing the virus on as quickly as possible. This week we have seen test turnaround times improve further, with the majority of positive cases reached by contact tracers in under 24 hours. Anyone with symptoms can easily book a test, expect rapid results, and will hear promptly from NHS Test and Trace if they are tested positive.

I continue to applaud all those who have played their part, got a test after experiencing symptoms, and responded to the service. I urge anyone contacted by NHS Test and Trace to follow the advice they receive to protect their families and communities.

Overall the data from the 5th week of operation (25 June to 1 July) of NHS Test and Trace shows that:

- 77.4% (3,366) of the people who had tested positive for coronavirus and were transferred to NHS Test and Trace were reached by our contact tracers and asked to share details of their close contacts. This compares to 77.9% in the previous week
- 70.8% (10,547) of close contacts were reached and advised to self-isolate. This compares to 74.2% in the previous week

In total, since 28 May 2020:

- 30,797 people have tested positive for coronavirus in England during this period, with 31,421 transferred for contact tracing to include those that tested positive before contact tracing began
- 75.7% (23,769) of the people who tested positive for coronavirus and were transferred to NHS Test and Trace were reached by our contact tracers and asked to share details of their close contacts
- 85.1% (144,501) of close contacts were reached and advised to self-isolate

In the new network of diagnostic testing infrastructure between 25 June and 1 July:

- 98.1% of tests results from the 70 regional test sites were returned the day after the test was taken, with 91.8% in under 24 hours
- 96.7% of test results from the 182 mobile testing units were returned the day after the test was taken, with 89.6% in under 24 hours
- 83.9% of satellite test results were returned the day after the test was taken, with 65.2% in under 24 hours
- home tests take time to be posted to a person and be couriered back to the lab. Because of this a low proportion of test results will be available within 24 hours of the test being taken. 68.9% of home test results were received within 48 hours of the test being taken

This week's statistics have also informed understanding of how the virus is potentially being transmitted across England, as despite an increase in tests processed, fewer people have tested positive, and there have been fewer

outbreaks or complex cases. Overall, this has meant that fewer people have had to be escalated through the 3-tiered contact-tracing system. But contact tracers dealing with non-complex cases have found that as social distancing has been eased, people who test positive are then identifying a higher number of close contacts.

Further improvements to the NHS Test and Trace service have been effective, demonstrated by consistent reductions in the time it takes for test results to be delivered. Test turnaround times have been increased for home testing kits, satellite test delivery, regional testing sites and mobile testing units. The majority of people testing positive transferred into the contact-tracing system have been contacted within 24 hours.

These extensive efforts to stop the spread of coronavirus will continue over the coming months, to further improve the service and the speed at which positive cases and contacts are informed.

NHS Test and Trace is working closely with local authorities across the country to help them respond to cases in their area, sharing postcode-level data from the service to inform action to stop the spread of the virus in local communities.

The data published includes test turnaround times, as well as further information on positive test results, those who have shared contacts, and the contacts reached and asked to self-isolate.

The trial of asymptomatic testing for high-contact professions and high-risk groups will begin from 10 July, in partnership with 4 local authorities in Bradford, Brent, Newham and Oldham, as well as businesses representing high-contact professions (Addison Lee, Boots UK, Mitie and BT. Co-op Funeralcare added on 13 July 2020).

The approach to the publication of NHS Test and Trace data is supported by the Office for National Statistics and UK Statistics Authority who are working closely with NHS Test and Trace on the development of this weekly release and the wider granular approach to data in the programme.

This is the 5th set of data on NHS Test and Trace to be published. Over the coming weeks, this data will be integrated with those from other parts of NHS Test and Trace to provide an end-to-end view of the service that follows the journey taken by people accessing NHS Test and Trace. This includes both the numbers of people engaged and the speed of the journey through the service, including data on test turnaround times.

Please note that previous figures released on NHS Test and Trace have been revised. The figures presented are based on a data cut a number of days after the end of the reporting period, to give time for cases reported at the end of the 7-day period to have an outcome. Some cases may continue to be in progress after this period, and therefore data may need to be revised over time.

We are working towards aligning the NHS and Public Health England reporting

methodologies in order to add testing turnaround times for pillar 1 into the publication. Pillar 1 methodologies differ from pillar 2 methodology as the majority of tests are provided to hospital patients. Pillar 1 is calculated as the number of test results available within and after 24 hours of the test being received by the laboratory. The NHS website publishes [data on turnaround times for NHS labs](#).