Coronavirus testing

As we have moved from 'contain' and into the 'delay' phase of novel coronavirus (COVID-19), PHE, together with NHS England and DHSC, has agreed we will need to prioritise testing for those most at risk of severe illness from the virus. Our aim is to save lives, protect the most vulnerable, and relieve pressure on our NHS.

Those in hospital care for pneumonia or acute respiratory illness will be priority. This will mean those most at risk will be identified as early as possible, speeding up access to the right care and treatment.

People who are in the community with a fever or cough do not usually need testing. Instead, tests will primarily be given to:

- all patients in critical care for pneumonia, acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS) or flu like illness
- all other patients requiring admission to hospital for pneumonia, ARDS or flu like illness
- where an outbreak has occurred in a residential or care setting, for example long-term care facility, prisons

All other individuals with a high temperature or new, continuous cough should stay at home for 7 days. People do not need to call NHS111 to go into self-isolation. If your symptoms worsen during home isolation or are no better after 7 days contact NHS 111 online. If you have no internet access, you should call NHS 111. For a medical emergency dial 999.