

Further expansion of access to coronavirus testing helps protect the most vulnerable

- Everyone in England aged 65 and over with coronavirus symptoms can now get tested, along with symptomatic members of their household
- Symptomatic workers who are unable to work from home also eligible for testing
- Testing of all asymptomatic NHS and social care staff and care home residents also being rolled out
- New expansion of testing made possible due to rapidly increasing testing capacity

Anyone in England with symptoms of coronavirus who has to leave home to go to work, and all symptomatic members of the public aged 65 and over, will now be able to get tested, the government has announced today.

This will mean people who cannot work from home and those aged 65 and over can know for sure whether they have coronavirus and need to continue isolating.

Members of their households with symptoms – a new continuous cough or high temperature – will also be eligible for testing.

Anyone eligible can book a test using an [online portal](#).

The government also announced that NHS staff, care home staff and care home residents will be eligible for testing whether or not they have symptoms.

Working with Public Health England, the Care Quality Commission and the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services, the government is piloting sending packages of 'satellite' test kits directly to care homes across England to enable testing of residents.

So far, 4,760 tests have been delivered to more than 4,300 locations. In addition, over 25,000 care staff have already been tested.

Secretary of State for Health and Social Care Matt Hancock said:

Expansion of our testing programme protects our most vulnerable and keeps people safe.

Testing is now available to all over 65s and members of their households, if they have symptoms.

Any worker who needs to leave their home in order to go to work, and their households, if any of them have symptoms can also get a test. This means construction workers to emergency plumbers,

research scientists to those in manufacturing – can now be tested.

All they need to do is go on the internet and apply for a test.

Testing for coronavirus helps the government and scientists understand its current spread and plan how to manage the pandemic.

As capacity has increased, testing has been offered to different groups in a phased approach, prioritising NHS workers. However, the ultimate aim is that anyone who needs a test will be able to have one.

Today's announcement marks a further step towards that goal. It follows the announcement last week that all essential workers with symptoms can now book a coronavirus test, or order a home testing kit, using the new online portal.

There are now more than 40 drive-through testing sites across the country, and, by the end of the week, 25,000 home testing kits will be available for ordering every day.

A network of mobile testing units is also travelling the country to reach care homes, police stations, prisons and other sites where there is demand for testing. The network is expected to reach over 70 units by the weekend.

Since the beginning of April, the government has significantly increased the UK's coronavirus testing capacity, which currently stands at 73,400 tests per day and is on track to reach 100,000 tests daily by the end of the month.

The response to coronavirus is a national effort. Each of the devolved administrations will have their own eligibility criteria and testing priorities, however the government is working closely to align approaches.