

New government service launched to support quarantine compliance

News story

Those quarantining at home following international travel may now be visited by staff employed on behalf of the NHS Test and Trace service.



The government has launched a service to carry out further visits on people who have a duty to quarantine following international travel.

It is still illegal to holiday overseas and those entering the country following international travel must quarantine for a period of 10 days at a managed quarantine site or the address listed on their passenger locator form. Compliance is critical to reduce the risk of Variants of Concern entering the UK.

Those quarantining at home may be visited by staff employed on behalf of the NHS Test and Trace service. These checks will be in addition to those already carried out by police officers, who make up to 1,000 home visits per day.

NHS Test and Trace staff will not have any enforcement powers, however, a referral will be made to the police if NHS Test and Trace staff have a reason to believe that an individual may be breaching quarantine rules. Officers will consider enforcement action following further investigation.

Individuals who fail to comply could be issued with a fixed penalty notice, starting at £1,000 and increasing up to £10,000 for repeat offences. Mitie was awarded the contract to carry out the NHS Test and Trace visits following a government procurement exercise.

These checks are in addition to the work by the Isolation Assurance and Compliance Service to contact everyone returning from non-red list countries that are staying in England and Northern Ireland.

People are called in order to check their status and to provide advice on the need to self-isolate and what to do if they are experiencing symptoms. They are also given information about taking tests on day 2 and day 8 of their

self-isolation period. These calls are made repeatedly, alongside text messages where necessary. Any concerns can then be escalated to decide whether further checks are needed.

Those returning from “red list” countries must continue to stay in a managed quarantine site.

Last week, the government has set out a framework to chart the safe return of international travel, which could resume from 17 May at the earliest. This will see a traffic light system categorise countries based on risk alongside the restrictions required for travel.

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