

Surge testing to be deployed in Bolton

Press release

Additional surge testing and genomic sequencing deployed in Bolton where a small number of confirmed cases of variants of concern have been identified.



Working in partnership with Bolton Council, NHS Test and Trace is providing additional testing and genomic sequencing in targeted areas within the BL3 postcodes in Bolton. It comes as a small number of cases of the variant first identified in South Africa (B.1.351) and a cluster of cases of the variant first identified in India (B.1.617.2) have been identified.

This follows the classification of the variant first identified in India as a variant of concern by Public Health England, and a public health assessment showing a rise in transmission in parts of Bolton. Confirmed cases have been asked to self-isolate and their contacts have been identified.

Everybody who resides or works in these postcodes is strongly encouraged to take a COVID-19 PCR test, whether they are showing symptoms or not.

Enhanced contact tracing will be used for individuals testing positive with a variant of concern. In these instances, contact tracers will look back over an extended period in order to determine the route of transmission.

By using PCR testing, positive results can be sent for genomic sequencing at specialist laboratories, helping us to identify variant of concern cases and their spread.

People with symptoms should book a free test online or by phone so they can get tested at a testing site or have a testing kit sent to them at home. Those without symptoms should visit the [local authority website](#) for more information.

People in this area should also continue using [twice-weekly rapid testing](#) alongside the PCR test as part of surge testing.

PHE health protection teams are working with local authorities, Directors of Public Health (DsPH) and NHS Test and Trace to detect cases and limit onward

spread.

[More information about the reclassification of the B.1.617.2 variant](#)

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