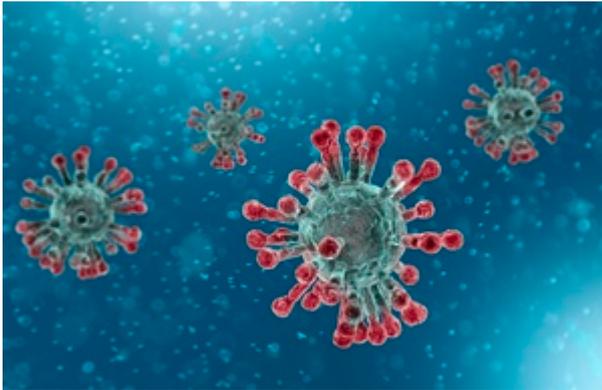


Surge testing to be deployed in targeted areas in Stockton and Brent

Press release

Further targeted areas will have additional testing made available to control and suppress the potential spread of the COVID-19 variant first identified in South Africa.



Working in partnership with the local authorities, additional testing and genomic sequencing is being deployed to targeted areas within Stockton-on-Tees (TS19) and Brent (North Wembley), where the COVID-19 variant first identified in South Africa has been found.

The increased testing is being introduced in addition to existing extensive testing. In combination with the public following current lockdown rules and [‘Hands. Face. Space’](#) advice, it will help to monitor and suppress the spread of the virus. Positive cases will be sequenced for genomic data to help increase our understanding of COVID-19 variants and their spread within these areas.

Enhanced contact tracing will be used for individuals testing positive with a ‘variant of concern’. This is where contact tracers look back over an extended period in order to determine the route of transmission.

People living within the targeted areas are strongly encouraged to take a COVID-19 test when offered, whether they are showing symptoms or not.

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 their local authority website](#) for more information.

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