Antibody testing for GP practice staff

Tests which determine if someone has had COVID-19 (coronavirus) are starting to be rolled out across Coventry and Warwickshire, for all practice staff including locums.

The antibody test tells the person if they have had the virus or not, but not about any level of protection or immunity from getting the virus again. It is important to remember that anyone having this test should still adhere to the guidance regarding social distancing, hand hygiene and wearing of PPE as recommended by public health experts.

Please note: Antibody test is best done after 40 days post Covid to get maximum sensitivity and current advice states that it should not be conducted less than 14 days after an acute infection.

Why are tests being carried out now?

The test is an important factor in helping to understand how the virus has spread through our population including the primary care workforce. The test will help us learn more about the virus epidemiology and will be used in further research.

There is currently NO clinical benefit in having the test however, antibody testing will also confirm with those who may think they have had COVID-19 or if they have been infected but were asymptomatic.

What information do I need before getting a test?

Before you can start to arrange a test, you will need the following:

- Your NHS number
  (learn more about how to get your NHS number if you cannot remember it).
- Your mobile phone number (the results will be sent by text within 72 hours of your test).
- Details of the GP Practice where you are registered as a patient.

What is the process for getting a test?

1) Access the booking system through the specific antibody testing web link: 
   https://www.swiftqueue.co.uk/uhcw_antibody.php

   This link MUST be used to access antibody tests – logging into Swift Queue the normal way will not work.

2) Staff will be asked to select whether they are having their blood test taken by their GP Practice team or whether they need to book a normal phlebotomy appointment, if the practice has no phlebotomy capacity.
3) GP staff will then be asked to **log on/register** with SwiftQueue and complete all the required information including NHS number, mobile phone number and the screening group they belong to, eg Primary Care Staff SWCCG for staff at practices within South Warwickshire CCG.

4) Staff will then be asked to **print their antibody test request form** – this will have been created specifically for the staff member and will not be able to be used by anyone else.

5) A **consent form** will also be available online to print off. This needs to be signed and given to the employing GP practice to be kept in the staff member’s HR record. (see further detail in table below)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff Group</th>
<th>Consent form to be kept by:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff and GPs employed by Practice</td>
<td>GP Practice employee HR record</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWGP Fed and GP Alliance Locums</td>
<td>Employing organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self employed GP Locums</td>
<td>Retain own copy and leave copy with practice where Ab test ordered</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6) Once the blood sample is taken it will be sent to the lab on normal pathology transport with the blood request form. Please ensure samples taken at the practice are sent to the lab on the day they are taken.
7) The **result will be sent by text directly to the staff member within 72 hours** of the test being taken. Results will also be sent to the GP practice where staff member is registered as a patient. Staff should NOT contact the GP practice to get their result.

**Where can I get more information?**

Further information on testing if you are symptomatic is available from [www.cwcovid.support](http://www.cwcovid.support) and any updates will be supplied in future primary care bulletin updates.

**Who can I contact if I am having problems booking an antibody blood test?**

If you have queries about the booking process, please email [covidstafftesting@uhcw.nhs.uk](mailto:covidstafftesting@uhcw.nhs.uk) stating your enquiry is regarding ‘primary care staff antibody testing’.

**Our GP practice does not normally take bloods – how can they get the blood taking consumables required?**

The GP pathology consumables order form lists items needed for blood taking. Practices can order what they require via the form and their usual pathology consumable ordering process. The tube required is 1 x Yellow top serum tube for each test. The Pathology Service asks that practices do not bulk order the yellow top tubes, but order weekly, when they are required, to spread demand.