

All Primary Care Dentists

12 May 2021

Dear Colleague,

LATERAL FLOW TESTING FOR ASYMPTOMATIC PATIENT-FACING PRIMARY CARE STAFF

Under the direction of Public Health Agency (PHA), HSC is pleased to make available an ongoing supply of COVID-19 Lateral Flow Tests (LFT) for primary care staff, including health service, mixed, and fully private dental practice staff.

The DoH, PHA and the HSCB have endorsed the use of LFTs as a useful tool which health care workers find reassuring and one which offers a beneficial adjunct to protect your teams in the fight against COVID-19 and will be used as agreed with MHRA.

This type of testing aims to find asymptomatic cases of COVID-19 by testing patient facing staff twice a week with staff self-testing at home before work and uploading results to a digital platform (<https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result>) in the same way as staff and pupils in educational settings.

LFTs have not been approved by MHRA for the testing of patients prior to attending for treatment and as such should not be used to place patients in the low risk pathway as outlined in the GDS Operational Guidance.

Further information and Frequently Asked Questions for primary care staff are available at <http://www.pha.site/LFDtestFAQs> and <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/instructions-for-covid-19-self-test>

Your practice information has been forwarded to the SALESFORCE ordering system who will contact you directly and provide you with your Unique Organisation Number (UON) to complete your registration and to allow you to order tests for your staff. It is expected that tests will arrive within seven days of

ordering with practices able to place subsequent orders every 21 days should they require to do so.

SALESFORCE will contact you via your lead dentists HSCNI email account or via your RQIA registered email account if you are a fully private practice. If you have difficulty accessing your HSCNI email account then please contact ebusiness@hscni.net

Whilst not mandatory, it is hoped you will value the use of these tests as a tool in reducing community transmission of the virus and in reducing the possible impact of the virus on your staff and on the working of your own practice. This is particularly important in light of the risk of a further surge as restrictions are eased and that we now know that up to a third of those infected with COVID-19 display no symptoms but are infectious.

As such, it is hoped that you will encourage uptake within your staff teams.

Thank you again for all your ongoing work in these challenging times.

Yours sincerely,



Donncha O'Carolan
Interim Head of Dental Services, HSCB