

# Chairman's Announcement

<b>Subject:</b>	Update on targeted COVID-19 community testing for asymptomatic people
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We will shortly be introducing the Government's COVID-19 rapid community testing initiative for specific groups of asymptomatic people in Wiltshire.

Our programme is primarily aimed at the following groups of people:

- Smaller businesses (50 employees or less) where staff are unable to work from home
- Early years staff based at private (non-maintained nurseries)
- Childminders

Our test sites will be at the following locations:

- Trowbridge – County Hall
- Devizes – Leisure Centre
- Salisbury – Five Rivers Health and Wellbeing Centre
- Chippenham – Monkton Park

Devizes will be the first to open on 18 February and the rest will soon follow. Until the other sites are open, the Devizes site will initially be the only one that people can book a place for.

Those in smaller businesses who cannot work from home, staff at private (non-maintained) early years settings, and childminders have been chosen because they are not currently involved in any other national mass-testing programme.

People will have to book to arrange an appointment and will not be tested if they have not done this.

The tests are self-administered and will take less than 15 minutes and results should be known within half an hour.

This is not to be confused with surge testing. Surge testing is increased testing (including door-to-door testing) and enhanced contact tracing in specific locations in England and is not currently taking place in Wiltshire.

Free testing continues to be available to everyone in Wiltshire who has COVID-19 symptoms – high temperature, continuous cough or loss of / change in taste or smell. People should visit [www.nhs.uk/coronavirus](http://www.nhs.uk/coronavirus) or call 119 to book a test in that instance.

With regards to early years staff, we're very aware that due to the need to have the correct ratios at settings, that logistically it might be difficult for them to release staff to attend one of the testing sites. We completely sympathise with this, but at the moment this is the only way we are able to provide this testing service. We are speaking to representatives at national Government to see if more can be done and will update everyone should the situation change.

When used alongside other measures, this type of community testing has the potential to help reduce the spread of COVID-19 within communities.

However, should people choose to participate in the testing programme, it must be stressed that getting a negative test result is only a snapshot indication that the person tested didn't

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have COVID-19 at that time. It is therefore not a passport to freedom and all other COVID secure measures must continue to be followed.

Anyone who receives a positive Lateral Flow Test result automatically activate legal obligations to self-isolate and may also claim for a Test and Trace payment if they are eligible. If we all continue play our part, then we can control the spread of the virus and help ease the pressure that our health and care services are under.

NHS Test and Trace is working with government departments, institutions and employers across both public and private sectors to support delivery of asymptomatic testing to large organisations, including those providing critical services. More information on this can be found at Register to order coronavirus tests for your employees - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)) More information, including comprehensive FAQs can be found at:

[www.wiltshire.gov.uk/publichealth-](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/publichealth-) coronavirus-testing

If you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to contact Hayley Mortimer, Public Health Consultant on [hayley.mortimer@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:hayley.mortimer@wiltshire.gov.uk) or Jessica Ryan, Public Health Specialist, [jessica.ryan@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:jessica.ryan@wiltshire.gov.uk)

We will keep you updated on this work.