

Hospital Testing for COVID-19

Summary table providing an overview of COVID-19 hospital testing, covering [1\) patients](#) and [2\) staff](#).

Changes have been made to testing requirements contained within the table below in line with DL 2022(32) issued on 14th September 2022. The majority of routine asymptomatic testing has now been paused. Details of the remaining requirements are described in the table below.

Asymptomatic testing

LFD tests (or other non-PCR based tests) should now be used for all asymptomatic patient testing (i.e. stop using PCR and PCR-based tests for general asymptomatic testing). A list of PCR-based and non-PCR based tests that are in use in Scotland is provided in [Appendix 1](#).

Symptomatic testing

All admissions, including elective day care, **with viral respiratory symptoms** require a laboratory based PCR test on admission. A new laboratory PCR test should be performed at any point during the inpatient stay if **new onset of COVID-19 symptoms** are recognised or there is a clinical indication to do so (PCR). A Rapid Diagnostic Test (PCR or non-PCR based) or LFD may be used in addition to a laboratory-based PCR test to support rapid patient placement decisions. Testing of patients with viral respiratory symptoms should also consider other respiratory pathogens.

When using this table the following applies;

- Reference to hospital '**admissions**' are those which require an overnight stay in hospital.
- Testing undertaken out with the national programmes detailed below should be based on decision of clinical services e.g screening in critical care settings.
- NB: A negative test does not mean that the patient is not incubating the virus. Staff should practice vigilance in monitoring for any symptom onset in the patient and reinforce the importance of COVID-19 measures including hand hygiene, wearing of facemasks and respiratory etiquette.

1) Patient testing

Who is being tested	Type of test	Frequency
<p>Elective surgical patients who are considered to be <u>immunocompromised</u> should be tested prior to surgery</p>	<p>LFD (or other non-PCR based test)- immunocompromised patients</p>	<p>Immunocompromised patients: LFD (or other non-PCR based test) should be utilised prior to surgery to support the pre-surgical clinical risk assessment.</p> <p>Further information on patients who may be considered immunocompromised can be found in: Guidance for immunosuppressed people - Coronavirus (COVID-19): advice for people who were on the Highest Risk List - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)</p> <p>Some people will be permanently immunosuppressed because of a long-term condition or treatment, while others will be immunosuppressed for shorter periods, while being treated for a shorter-term condition. Consequently, individual patient assessment by the clinician in charge of the patient's care may be required. This assessment may result in a request for COVID-19 test prior to surgery depending on the individual's immune response.</p> <p>All other patients: No asymptomatic test required</p> <p>Note: If LFD (or other non-PCR based test) is positive at any point, a follow up PCR test is required and TBPs should be implemented.</p>

Who is being tested	Type of test	Frequency
Transfers into or within hospital	LFD (or other non-PCR based test)	<p>Patients should be tested with LFD (or other non-PCR based test) prior to transferring to another care area/NHS board if deemed necessary based on local risk assessment.</p> <p>Note: If LFD (or other non-PCR based test) is positive at any point, a follow up PCR test is required and TBPs should be implemented.</p>
Discharge to a care home or hospice	LFD (or other non-PCR based test)	Test prior to discharge from a hospital to a care home or hospice
Duration of IPC precautions and discharge of COVID-19 patients	LFD (or other non-PCR based test)	<p>Testing is not routinely required for stepdown of IPC precautions except where there is a requirement to cease transmission based precautions early – See the duration of precautions for COVID-19 in the National Infection Prevention and Control Manual: A-Z Pathogens</p>
Testing prior to an Aerosol Generating Procedure (AGP)	LFD (or other non-PCR based test)	<p>A risk assessment should be undertaken prior to performing an AGP on patients and take account of any presenting respiratory symptoms.</p> <p>LFD tests (or other non-PCR based tests) may be used to support risk assessment undertaken prior to performing an AGP.</p> <p>Note: If LFD (or other non-PCR based test) is positive at any point, a follow up PCR test is required and TBPs should be implemented.</p>

Who is being tested	Type of test	Frequency
Asymptomatic testing as part of a hospital outbreak	LFD (or other non-PCR based test)	<p>Contact tracing and asymptomatic testing in an outbreak should be based on local outbreak management and the advice of the local Infection Control Doctor</p> <p>Note: If LFD (or other non-PCR based test) is positive at any point, a follow up PCR test is required and TBPs should be implemented.</p>

2) Staff testing

Staff testing requirements are detailed on the Scottish Government website and can be found at the following links;

- [Asymptomatic staff testing](#)
- [ANNEX B – MANAGING HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE STAFF WITH SYMPTOMS OF A RESPIRATORY INFECTION, OR A POSITIVE COVID-19 TEST](#)

Appendix 1- List of PCR-based and non-PCR based tests in use in Scotland

Test type	COVID-19 Test Device	Test methods
Non-PCR based test	Lateral Flow Device Test	Antigen
	Abbott ID Now	Isothermal NAAT
	LumiraDx	Antigen
PCR-based test	Laboratory-based PCR	PCR
	Roche Liat	PCR
	Roche ePlex	PCR
	bioMérieux Biofire	PCR
	QIAstat-Dx	PCR
	Samba II	PCR
	Cepheid GeneXpert	PCR