



PRESS RELEASE

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COVID-19 Tests to be Made Available to the Public

Thus far, anyone with symptoms of COVID-19 has been required to call 111 to arrange to be swabbed. That process will continue unchanged for the foreseeable future.

However, with immediate effect, it will be possible for anyone (over the age of 16) with a GHA number to have the test whether or not they have experienced any COVID symptoms.

Anyone without symptoms who wishes to have a test should phone 20041818 to arrange an appointment to be swabbed at the Drive-Thru facility on the Rooke site. There will be no charge for this test. It will not be possible for people to attend without an appointment as the resultant queues might result in an increased risk of infection spread.

Those attending may do so on foot or in their car or on a scooter/motorbike. Once the swab has been taken, the result will usually be reported back to the individual within 12 hours.

In future, we will be able to provide a certificate to assist in any travel requirements. However, there will be a charge for this service.

If anyone thinks they have been exposed to someone with COVID-19, they should be aware that it can take 5 - 9 days to start to produce enough of the virus for a test to give a positive result. Repeated testing will therefore only be allowed if more than ten days has passed since the last one. The service organisers may refuse a request if they believe the service is being abused or there is a shortage of swabs or tests.

People with COVID-19 symptoms should still call 111. The symptoms of COVID-19 appear to vary in occurrence and intensity, but key symptoms to be aware of include:

- Fever (temperature over 37.8°C)
- A new cough (dry or chesty, may or may not produce phlegm)
- Shortness of Breath (unable to complete a sentence without pausing to breathe)
- Loss of appetite, sense of smell, and/or taste
- A sore throat
- Flu-type symptoms (including muscle pains/body aches etc.)
- Profound fatigue
- Loose bowel motions or headache