

To: All NI General Ophthalmic Service Practitioners

28 April 2020

Dear Colleague

Re: Interim Protocol for Testing for COVID-19 for Optometry Professionals

I am writing to advise you of the availability of COVID-19 testing for optometry practitioners currently assisting with the response against the COVID-19 pandemic, whether they are working in their own practices or assisting in a redeployed capacity.

The criteria for testing are as follows:

- ✓ you have coronavirus symptoms – a new continuous cough or high temperature and are following government guidelines on self-isolating; or
- ✓ a member of your household has coronavirus symptoms meaning you are self-isolating in line with government guidelines

Anyone who believes they are eligible should use the online booking portal for the National Testing Programme which can be accessed via [NI Direct](#) or [PHA website](#). They should discuss the result with their employer and should continue to follow the self-isolation advice until test results are received.

Three drive-through centres to support testing of Healthcare Workers (HCWs) have opened in:

1. Belfast - SSE Arena/Odyssey Car Park, BT3 9QQ
2. Derry/Londonderry - City of Derry Rugby Club Judges Rd, BT47 6LN
3. Craigavon - Craigavon MOT Centre, BT63 5RY.

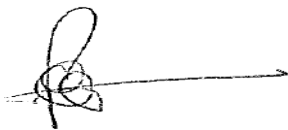
All centres are open 10.00 am – 4.00 pm, seven days a week.

Test results are normally available within 72 hours and are sent by email. The priority for urgent test results remains those who are admitted to hospital awaiting a clinical diagnosis.

I have included a very useful diagram from Public Health England (PHE) overleaf, which clarifies the management of test results and return to work arrangements.

Thank you for the continued support from you and your colleagues at this difficult time.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'R' followed by a horizontal line that ends in an arrowhead.

Raymond Curran
Head of Ophthalmic Services
Enc

Public Health England (PHE) Flowchart on Management of Outcome of HCW SARS CoV-2 Test



Flowchart describing return to work following a SARS-CoV-2 test

