

Essex County Council
Place & Public Health
E3, County Hall
Chelmsford
Essex CM1 1LX



Our Ref: Carehometest/MG/kn
Date: 15 May 2020

Dear Care Home Manager

Re IMPORTANT INFORMATION Testing staff and Residents

Thank you for fantastic work you and your staff are doing at this difficult time. I appreciate what you are all doing to support those at most need.

You will no doubt be aware of the launch of access to testing in all care homes for staff and residents. The attached information provides detail of the process and approach nationally.

In Essex, care home testing is changing. After you alert Public Health England's Health Protection Team (HPT) of a suspected case of covid-19 in a resident, the HPT ask you to contact Commisceo Primary Care Solutions (Tel: 07943 182022; email: mobile.covid19@nhs.net), to arrange testing. Commisceo Primary Care Solutions will offer testing to all staff and residents.

If there are no suspected cases of covid-19 in your care home but you would like your staff and residents tested please apply through the national portal <https://request-care-home-testing.test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/>. Please also advise the care home hub via EssexCareHomeHubs@EssexCountyCouncil.onmicrosoft.com so we have a record of the request.

In line with National Policy I will be requesting whole care home testing be offered to care homes considered the greatest priority. You will be advised if your care home is put forward. I have been asked to prioritise care homes on the following basis:

- a. Covid free care homes with over 50 beds.
- b. Care homes where local knowledge suggests it will be particularly valuable.

There is work nationally on when and if care homes should be retested and we will update you on this when available.

Test results will go back to homes. The Care Home Hubs will not be made aware of results directly so please send a brief summary of your results (the numbers of positive and negative test in staff and residents) to EssexCareHomeHubs@EssexCountyCouncil.onmicrosoft.com.

Thank you for your help in this. If you have any questions, please email your local hub in the first instance

Yours sincerely,



Dr Mike Gogarty
Director of Public Health
Essex County Council