

**OFFICIAL SENSITIVE - DRAFT
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identifying around 50% of positive cases. To optimise the overall impact of Test and Trace, it is essential to increase that proportion by encouraging more people – both symptomatic and in asymptomatic groups– to be tested. This is particularly important particularly in groups where there is the greatest risk of onward transmission by virtue of people's living conditions, working circumstances and other factors.

6. The most recent Cabinet Office polling indicates that only 36%⁴ of people with symptoms are coming forward for testing and that wanting to avoid self-isolation is now the single biggest reported barrier to requesting a test. The DHSC/BMG survey of people with symptoms who haven't had a test shows only around 26% reported compliance with self-isolation, with 15% reporting going to work. Local authority investigations of local outbreaks have often identified people with symptoms who carried on working. Local authorities also cite concerns about self-isolation as one of the most significant factors likely to affect uptake of community testing and other asymptomatic testing programmes. Action that successfully allays people's concerns about the impact of self-isolation can therefore be expected to improve both take-up of testing and subsequent adherence to self-isolation for those who test positive.
7. Evidence suggests that the main barriers to self-isolation relate to:
 - a. **Awareness:** a lack of accurate understanding about self-isolation requirements and the public health risks associated with not complying.
 - b. **Ability to self-isolate and wellbeing:** a need to leave home for essential supplies or to perform caring responsibilities or other practical tasks (e.g. dog walking); or concern that self-isolation will have a detrimental impact on mental health or wellbeing, including the effects of loneliness and boredom.
 - c. **Financial concerns:** while reported willingness of those on low incomes to comply with self-isolation rules is the same as other income groups, their reported ability to comply is lower, and lower socio-economic status is associated with lower compliance.⁵
 - d. **Scepticism:** a lack of belief in the scientific evidence or general resistance towards coronavirus rules and restrictions.

⁴ YouGov thrice weekly polling for the Cabinet Office, 4-6 January. From 14 September to the 30 December, the rate was even lower, ranging from 16% to 26%.

⁵ Smith LE, Potts HWW, Amlôt R, Fear NT, Michie S, Rubin GJ. Adherence to the test, trace and isolate system: results from a time series of 21 nationally representative surveys in the UK (the COVID-19 Rapid Survey of Adherence to Interventions and Responses [CORSAIR] study). BMJ (submitted)

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8. To address those barriers, countries have adopted very different approaches to encourage self-isolation. **Annex A** sets out specific international approaches, but the majority of countries that are considered to have performed well have adopted a multi-faceted approach with targeted communications, financial compensation schemes, non-financial support and effective enforcement.
9. The proposals in this paper build on the existing four-fold strategy to improve compliance with self-isolation in England:
 - a. **Communications** to improve awareness of when people need to self-isolate, what this involves, its importance in stopping the spread of the virus, the support available and the consequences of breaking the rules.
 - b. **Practical interventions** to provide social and emotional support for those who need it, organised by local authorities and community groups.
 - c. **Financial support** for people who need it to support successful self-isolation.
 - d. **Enforcement** action against both individuals and employers for the most serious breaches of the legal self-isolation requirements introduced on 28 September 2020.

Ramping up communications

10. The Cabinet Office Communications Hub has been running a self-isolation campaign on social and digital channels, which it is preparing to improve and ramp up. The campaign reinforces the need for people to self-isolate immediately if they are symptomatic or have tested positive, makes clear this means not leaving the house throughout the 10-day period, and explains how people can access support. NHS Test and Trace is improving information about self-isolation on its website, expanding the remit of the NHS Test and Trace 119 service to respond to queries about self-isolation and strengthening messaging on self-isolation requirements at key points throughout the user journey, including through the NHS COVID-19 app. This is in addition to existing regular communication from NHS Test and Trace via text, email and phone for those instructed to self-isolate.
11. Test and Trace and MHCLG will also work with councils to go further in reaching vulnerable and hard to reach groups. MHCLG's £25m Community Champions scheme is funding 60 local authorities with high proportions of ethnic minority and disabled communities to run a new wave of communications and engagement, led by community members. Several regions have already started to develop bespoke

Annex A

International comparisons

Communications

Japan's 'Avoid the Three C's' campaign¹⁰, New Zealand's App awareness campaign¹¹ and Singapore's 'A Safe Singapore' campaign all make use of online and in-print information sheets to raise public awareness. New Zealand have created short videos depicting key parts of their test and trace user journey to raise awareness of the process. Similarly, South Korea have created a public information video to promote their '3 Principles' response to the pandemic¹². Other methods range from COVID-19 information websites to TV broadcast and print media.

Financial and non-financial support

Nearly all countries that have been successful in containing or eliminating the virus provide generous financial packages to their citizens who must self-isolate, whether through income guarantees, sick pay or targeted payments. For instance, the state of Victoria in Australia offers £800 one-off payments to eligible individuals who are forced to quarantine and in Taiwan, all those in self-isolation receive a non means-tested stipend of around £27 a day, in addition to any pay that their employer continues to pay them. In Germany, anyone required to self-isolate is paid 67% of their normal salary, up to a cap of £1,800 a month.

Internationally, several different approaches have been adopted. For instance, in Denmark food packages of three meals a day are offered free of charge, having previously cost 150kr (£13.46) a day for the three meals. Denmark have reported an estimated high compliance in self-isolation. Germany, Spain, South Korea and France also provide food packages. In Italy there is an arrangement with the Red Cross locally.

¹⁰ <https://www.mhlw.go.jp/content/3CS.pdf>

¹¹ https://covid19.govt.nz/assets/resources/posters/how-contact-tracing-keeps-us-safe_cartoon.pdf

¹² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?reload=9&v=sFSr6tosDkE&feature=youtu.be>