



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

From:

Name Redacted

Health Science and Allied Health  
Professions Division  
Irrelevant & Sensitive

Cleared by:

Date:

06 April 2020

## MINISTERIAL ADVICE

For decision by: Minister for Health and Social Services

Copied to: First Minister, Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services, Minister for Finance and Trefnydd

<b>Subject</b>	Welsh National COVID-19 Test Plan – Public Facing Plan
<b>100 word summary</b>	The purpose of this advice is to share with you the public facing Welsh National COVID-19 Test Plan which informs the public on our approach to COVID testing in Wales.
<b>Timing</b>	Immediate to enable the public facing plan to be launched on 7 April 2020 alongside a written statement.
<b>Recommendation</b>	The Minister is asked to agree: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>The National COVID-19 Public Testing Plan at Doc 1</i></li> <li>- <i>The draft Written Statement at Doc 2</i></li> </ul>
<b>Decision report</b>	This decision does require a Decision Report, which may be published after publication of the plan.

## ADVICE

1. Under the direction of the Chief Scientific Adviser for Health, officials have worked with a range of stakeholders and experts to produce a strategic approach to testing – National COVID-19 Test Plan – to tackle the COVID-19 epidemic within Wales.
2. We previously advised you on the National Testing Plan under MA/VG/1136/20 and you have requested a public facing document that sets out our approach to testing in Wales and our objectives.
3. The National COVID-19 Public Testing Plan (at Doc 1) aims to update the public on our Plan and sets out: how we will approach testing for COVID-19 in Wales; what we wish to achieve through testing; and, the steps we are taking to increasing testing capacity.
4. Our focus continues to be on reducing direct and indirect harm from COVID-19, with a clear emphasis on protecting the public, optimising outcomes for patients and keeping essential services running in Wales.
5. Given the increasing public and media attention around testing for COVID-19, we are seeking to launch the Public Plan on 7 April 2020 alongside an accompanying Written Statement (at Doc 2) which sets out how we will tackle COVID-19 in Wales, including action already underway. This includes the ongoing testing of patients and NHS frontline staff.
6. The public facing plan is supported by a more detailed and technical delivery plan which will be delivered over three phases (MA/VG/1136/20 refers).
7. We are continuing to work with our stakeholders and our networks including Public Health Wales to deliver on the plan in the timeframes identified.

## Financial Implications

8. As previously advised (M-VG-1136-20), estimating the full financial impact in the 20-21 financial year is challenging at this present time and will be subject to change from many variables including the continuing development and management of the pandemic.
9. MA-VG-1136-20 estimated a minimum requirement of up to £22.5m of funding will be required initially. Work is ongoing to revise this estimate as procurement takes place and testing volume is increased. There is no further reference to the amount of funding being committed in the public facing document and the Ministerial statement. HSS Officials are liaising with colleagues in SB to keep them up to date on cost estimates. The costs of the Testing Strategy cannot be met from the HSS MEG and there will need to be a call on the central COVID-19 response fund to meet this financial requirement.

**Communication and media handling**

10. There is significant media and public interest in testing for COVID-19. A written statement has been prepared for your agreement (at Doc 2) to be issued alongside publication of the Public Plan.
11. Supporting communication lines have been prepared along with a technical briefing with media on 7 April 2020, and supporting social media content including a video of Rob Orford.
12. You will be provided with briefing notes prior to the press conference, which will include lines on the Public Plan and testing capacity.

**Annex 1: ASSURANCE AND COPY RECIPIENTS****CLEARANCE TRACKING**

Aspect	Tracking	Yes	No	N/A	Clearance no.
<b>Finance</b>	Financial implications over £50,000?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Cleared by Group Finance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	GH2020/7529
	Cleared by Strategic Budgeting?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Cleared by Local Government Finance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Legal</b>	Legal issues?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	Cleared by relevant lawyers?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Governance</b>	Novel and contentious issues?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	Cleared by Corporate Governance Centre of Excellence?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

**DEPUTY DIRECTOR, STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE**

In clearing this MA, I confirm that I, Rob Orford have quality assured this advice, ensuring it is provided on the basis of evidence, accurately presents the options and facts and I am accountable for the recommendations made

I am satisfied that the recommended decision or action, if agreed, would be lawful, affordable and comply with all relevant statutory obligations. Welsh Government policy priorities and cross portfolio implications have been fully considered in line with delivery of the government objectives.

I have fully considered the statement of assurance contained in the MA guidance to ensure all relevant considerations have been taken into account and that the actions and decisions take account of regularity, propriety and value for money.

**COPY LIST**

## Mandatory MA CC

All mandatory copy recipients (as indicated in the guidance). Additional copy recipients specifically interested in this advice:

- Andrew Goodall
- Rob Orford
- Frances Duffy
- Alex Slade
- Alan Brace
- Steve Elliott
- **Name Redacted**
- Chris Jones
- Frank Atherton
- Jean White
- **Name Redacted**
- **Name Redacted**
- Samia Saeed-Edmons
- Andrew Evans
- Fliss Bennee
- **Name Redacted**
- Chrishan Kamalan
- **Name Redacted**
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- **Name Redacted**
- HSS Finance
- HSS Comms