

Message

From: Harries, Jenny [/O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=CB41E14F2B234DBEB666D05EF2623BC1-JHARRIES]
Sent: 28/11/2020 11:26:57
To: Susan Hopkins [Susan.Hopkins@phe.gov.uk]; Harding, Dido [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=fe3a777526444fc18667fdeb47c3aaef-DHarding]; Cooper, Alex [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=1c281e1a270746e6bcf3ba46c2f81716-ACooper5]; Tom Alan Fowler [tom.fowler@genomicsengland.co.uk]
CC: Cummings, Jane [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=fa12a5fb32f64d2eb873c8b137bde17-JCummings]; Eamonn O'Moore [Eamonn.O'moore@phe.gov.uk]
Subject: RE: OFFICIAL: RE: Urgent - Lateral Flow Tests Care Homes

Thanks for this Susan

I realise the email is primarily not requesting support from myself but fyi the content looks entirely aligned to conversations we have had in the last 48 hours.

I have been working with Eamonn and Jane to urgently revise draft visiting guidance to get the right balance in the wording and advice between legal rights/responsibilities, detriment from isolation and then the introduction of visiting with LFDs which we are all aware is an **increased** risk to care homes rather than a reduction. I am reasonably confident this is now the case.

The only outstanding issue I can immediately see arising from the proposed approach in Liverpool is the distinction on physical contact – ie Liverpool approach does not include hugging. The national guidance is now toned down to still ensure there is no perceived u-turn on the PM's position earlier but that it is set out appropriately in the context of appropriate risk control.

The only time when I think we could really *recommend* hugging will be in the very, very few individual cases (for example dementia) where direct personal contact with a specific recognised individual could potentially be life saving and prevent physical and mental deterioration.

I would suggest:

1. If not already shared the planned ASC visiting guidance is provided to T&T so everyone can see parallel scripts and in particular the wording on close contact
2. Any future use plans of LFDs in any circumstances (not just ASC) have the appropriate public health and clinical advice at programme conception so that we prevent similar events with each roll out.

I know we have an entirely consistent and shared view on both the benefits and risks of LFD utilisation

Best wishes
Jenny

From: Susan Hopkins <Susan.Hopkins@phe.gov.uk>
Sent: 28 November 2020 11:13
To: Harding, Dido <Dido.Harding@dhsc.gov.uk>; Cooper, Alex <Alex.Cooper@dhsc.gov.uk>; Tom Alan Fowler <tom.fowler@genomicsengland.co.uk>
Cc: Cummings, Jane <Jane.Cummings@dhsc.gov.uk>; Harries, Jenny <Jenny.Harries@dhsc.gov.uk>; Eamonn O'Moore <Eamonn.O'moore@phe.gov.uk>
Subject: OFFICIAL: RE: Urgent - Lateral Flow Tests Care Homes

OFFICIAL

I have to say that there needs to be much better engagement of the rollout with my office, the CMOs Office, the Director for ASC in DHSC and the PHE lead for ASC than has happened this week – we have had to pick up the pieces at short notice on a number of these areas this week.

Please edit below by 12.30 so that I can return a response to PO.

Susan

RESPONSE TO Minister Whateley – please review and edit...

The letter from Sheffield LA to care homes in their area arose from their lack of information on the rollout of LFDs to care homes and asked for care homes to pause their rollout until they had further clarifications.

I have spoken to the Director of Public Health, Dr Greg Fell, who concurs with the view that LFDs in addition to PPE and IPC, where visiting is occurring can reduce risk further. However, he wishes to be assured that the training and education of care home staff and the operational delivery of these pilots is of high standard.

Liverpool will introduce LFD testing for care home visitors next week with an initial evaluation of two tests, in association with IPC and PPE. These tests will facilitate touching but not hugging of care home residents.

The NHS Test and Trace teams will share details related to the operational roll-out of LFDs for care home visiting to 400 care homes with DsPH on Monday and these will only proceed in each Local Authority where the DsPH agree.

We believe that the introduction of LFDs for care home visitors where the visit is planned in the best interest of the resident will further reduce the risk of COVID transmission, when used appropriately with the other risk mitigation measures including IPC and PPE.

From: pshelenwhately [<mailto:pshelenwhately@dhsc.gov.uk>]

Sent: 28 November 2020 10:26

To: Susan Hopkins <Susan.Hopkins@phe.gov.uk>

Subject: Fwd: Urgent - Lateral Flow Tests

Hi Susan,

On top of communication from Nadra Ahmed - we have also received the below from Vic Rayner re LFTs. Please can we have a similar paragraph (to the one to be shared with Nadra) to share with Vic?

Many thanks,

NR

From: Vic Rayner <vic.rayner@nationalcareforum.org.uk>

Sent: Saturday, November 28, 2020 10:17:47 AM

To: Cummings, Jane <Jane.Cummings@dhsc.gov.uk>; Pearson, David <David.Pearson@dhsc.gov.uk>; [Name Redacted]

[Name Redacted] Surrey, Tom <Tom.Surrey@dhsc.gov.uk>; Dyson, Michelle <Michelle.Dyson@dhsc.gov.uk>; MSC <MSC@dhsc.gov.uk>; pshelenwhately <pshelenwhately@dhsc.gov.uk>; Miller, Stuart <Stuart.Miller@dhsc.gov.uk>; Jay, Tabitha <Tabitha.Jay@dhsc.gov.uk>

Cc: Liz Jones <liz.jones@nationalcareforum.org.uk>; Nathan Jones <nathan.jones@nationalcareforum.org.uk>

Subject: Urgent - Lateral Flow Tests

Morning all – and apologies to e mail you at the weekend. We have just been informed by a member that at least two authorities in the North are advising homes not to use the LFT tests for either staff, relatives or visitors as they are not assured of the accuracy of the tests.

This is the message (below) that has been sent from a member which has come from Sheffield City Council (sent in fact last night at 17:09) – we are also led to believe the same message has been sent by Liverpool but don't have the evidence of this. Clearly this has the potential to be a disastrous undermining of the roll out – so thought you would want to see urgently to see if you are able to address this head on. I am not sure how much communication there had been with the DPH teams, and what the position of ADPH is on this – but it would seem to be very helpful for something to be communicated that will help providers to understand what they are to do in the face of such directly competing advice. They are once again between a rock and a hard place – and your urgent support on getting them back on track with the roll out of the testing will be appreciated. All the best. Vic.

Dear Providers,

We hope that this email finds you well. Thank you for your continued efforts during this difficult time.

We have recently been made aware that the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) are due to begin rolling out Lateral Flow Test (LFT) kits to care homes very soon. LFT kits are sometimes known as Rapid Testing Kits and are being suggested to be used to support additional testing in care homes including visitor testing.

The roll out of LFT kits is being managed by the DHSC itself and this process is independent of the Council and the local health system. Regardless, it is important that in our role as local care system leaders we are assured of the effectiveness and safety of technologies used in the provision of care in Sheffield.

In regards to the LFT kit technology, and based on the technical data available to date, Sheffield City Council **cannot be assured of the accuracy** of the LFT kits in high risk **sensitive** settings such as care homes. When used in practice the performance of the LFT kits appears to show an unacceptably high risk of not correctly detecting infected individuals.

We are urgently seeking clarification on this matter from the DHSC. In the meantime we are advising providers **not to use** LFT kits in care home settings in relating to residents, staff or visitors until we can gain assurances of their effectiveness.

Whilst we understand that this may be disappointing news for some people, the safety of residents, staff and visitors in care homes is of paramount importance to us.

Providers should continue to use existing regular testing arrangements for staff and residents through the Pillar 2 testing programme.

We will provide a further update on this position once we have better understanding of the use of LFT testing technology in care settings.

Kind regards

Sara Storey
Head of Access and Prevention