Fit Testing in Secondary Care – Data Capturing

Recommendation: You **agree** that an amendment will be made to the NHS Electronic Staff Record System which will enable data to be captured on employees in secondary care who have been trained to deliver fit testing, and to which masks secondary care employees have been successfully tested to.

Outline

- The masks recommended for health and care professionals performing procedures with a high-risk of airborne infection transmission, typically FFP3s, are legally required to be fit tested to ensure they provide the intended protection to the wearer, and to those around them.
- There is currently no central record of trained fit testers or fit tested employees in the health and care system. Approximately 3,000 individuals are fit tester trained, and 300,000 have been tested for FFP3 Masks. Data is held locally by each trust but not shared centrally. If there were a need to step-up fit testing in the event of a new variant of concern, the acute fit testing programme may not meet the surge in demand. By expanding the existing NHS Electronic Staff Record (ESR) framework to capture data on fit testing, this would provide a single point of access for essential data reporting on an established system owned and operated by NHSE/I with DHSC official access.
- To build resilience into the fit testing system, **we propose an addition to the NHS ESR national competency framework, which would capture data on trained fit testers and those who have been fit tested in secondary care**. This digital certification of NHS staff in secondary care would be operated by the ESR team.

Requirements/aims of this data capturing exercise

- The first requirement is to capture data on **those trained to deliver fit testing**. By locating fit testers, the database will indicate fit testing capacities at a national, regional and individual trust level and identify fit testing black spots. In the event of a surge in demand, there is potential to use the ESR as an operational database by deploying fit testers to regions in need.
- The second requirement is to capture data on **employees who have been fit tested, and to which FFP3 products**. When the new NHS Digital Staff Passport is launched, this data will link to it; information will be accessible by any trust and staff will be able to check their fit test status if they move location. This accessibility would benefit both the individual and workforce planning as centrally held data would decrease demand for unnecessarily repeated fit tests.
- The database would record the masks that employees are certified to, giving an indication to the pass rates of masks. This information would be useful to drive product innovation to improve fit testing success. We expect that innovative manufacturers, including those based in the UK, would benefit by being able to differentiate their product on the basis of fit success as well as pricing.