

UK. This new service has just launched and is ramping up rapidly. We are also working with other testing companies to expand Pillar 2 so that over time we have many different commercial companies delivering mass swab testing.

The third pillar is antibody tests, which are designed to detect if people have had the virus and are now immune. These could potentially be done at home with a finger prick and deliver results in as little as twenty minutes. We are currently working with several companies who are offering these tests and are evaluating their effectiveness. Antibody tests offer the hope that people who think they have had the disease will know they are immune and get back to life as normal. But crucially, they have to be proven to work.

The fourth pillar is surveillance. We are conducting some of the biggest surveys in the world to find out what proportion of the population have already had the virus. This is done using a high accuracy antibody test operated by Public Health England at their Porton Down science campus. We will use these tests to help strengthen our scientific understanding and inform us all on the big choices we have to make about social distancing measures and how we exit from this crisis.

The fifth pillar is the most ambitious. We want to build in a short space of time, the large diagnostics industry that this country currently lacks. Just as our top end manufacturers have joined the national effort to build ventilators, so our life sciences companies will do the same for testing. UK pharmaceutical giants which don't have a tradition of diagnostics, are now working with our world leading but smaller diagnostics companies, to build a British diagnostics industry at scale. This new national effort for testing will ensure we can get tests for everyone who needs them.

Taken together, I'm setting the challenge across all five pillars, of 100,000 tests per day, by the end of April. To drive this forward, I'm delighted that Professor John Newton will be taking on a new role to co-ordinate this national effort for testing.

These five pillars represent a comprehensive strategy to put in place the testing that is mission critical as we fight this battle against COVID-19.

There will be problems, like those that we have already overcome. There will be bumps in the road and criticisms made – some justified. But we have some of the best minds and science in the world at our disposal and, having recovered from the illness myself, I am more determined than ever to take the fight to this disease.



**Matt Hancock**

**Secretary of State for Health and Social Care**

## **Pillar 5: Spearheading a Diagnostics National Effort to build a mass-testing capacity at a completely new scale**

- 1.29 Britain has an innovative, but relatively small diagnostics industry. We now need to grow it, substantially and quickly. We are calling on all British life science companies to turn their resources to creating and rolling out mass testing at scale. In the short-term, this will help meet the supply outlined in the other strands in this strategy, and then help us develop resilient, diagnostic capability in the UK capable of meeting the testing demands over the coming months and years.
- 1.30 We are therefore asking industry to work with us on how this can best be achieved. We want proposals for new national industrial capability that meets a set of clear principles.
- (a) It must be flexible, able to quickly adapt both the tests themselves and the delivery of those tests as the virus and our response evolves over time. We want to explore increasingly decentralised models of testing, moving away from central labs to testing in local hospitals, at work or in the home.
  - (b) The solutions must enable testing at huge scale, but with extremely high levels of accuracy and sensitivity. An unreliable test is worse than no test.
  - (c) It needs to be resilient - the end to end supply chain for the test should be domestically based as far as practically possible, with a clear and deliverable plan for the capacity and capability to deliver the scale of testing we need.
  - (d) It must be as open source as possible with the ability for components, consumables, chemicals and digital components to be produced by a range of manufacturers - quickly and easily. And it should be clear how new companies can join and contribute to the approach.
- 1.31 We have [already asked industry](#) to tell us if they can manufacture testing equipment or consumables; or if they have new or existing complete tests. We are particularly focused on local manufacturers who can offer reagents and other consumables - and these offers will be prioritised. We will continue to issue calls over the coming days and weeks - these will be asks on specific areas where we need current capability to be ramped up. We will also issue more detail on how we are working with industry to grow our national diagnostic industry.
- 1.32 We are already working with our multinational companies; small, innovative manufacturers; and industry bodies. Over the coming days, we will ramp up this engagement further, working with many others to develop this national effort.