

COVID-19 Test and Trace Protocol

1. Introduction

1.1 Public Health England has launched its national test and trace programme¹ where people who test positive for COVID-19 are contracted either by the national system or the GM regional system to identify people who do not live in the same household as the positive case but may have had close contact with them, which puts them at risk of contracting and transmitting COVID-19.

1.2 As part of the test and trace programme, details of staff working within a healthcare setting or patients tested prior to admission who are found to be COVID-19 positive, will be passed to the single point of contact in the Trust. Specific national guidance has been published for the management of staff and exposed patients or residents in health and social care settings². This guidance requires the Trust to identify contacts of the positive case, conduct risk assessments in conjunction with local infection prevention and control (IPC) policies and make decisions regarding whether the individual is a significant contact and needs to self-isolate for 14 days.

2. Testing and notification routes

2.1 There are a number of routes through which staff and patients may be tested for COVID-19 or be advised that they are a contact of a COVID-19 case. Testing and notification routes include:

- Community testing
- Testing of symptomatic staff and patients within MFT
- Testing of asymptomatic staff and patients within MFT
- Notification of being a contact with a COVID-19 case by the Test and Trace Service
- Notification of being a contact with a COVID-19 case by the Trust

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The Hospital/MCS/LCO Chief Executive or Corporate Director is responsible for identifying a Single Point of Contact (**SPOC**), which will usually be the Director of Workforce, and ensuring that this protocol is implemented in the services for which they are responsible.

3.2 The Group SPOC (Head of Specialist HR Services) is responsible for receiving information from the Test and Trace Service and cross checking staff details against the MFT Staff Results Report held by the Attendance Team and Employee Health and Wellbeing.

3.3 The Hospital/MCS/LCO/Corporate SPOC is responsible for liaising with the relevant management team to identify the appropriate manager to conduct contact tracing and risk assessments.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-how-it-works>

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-management-of-exposed-healthcare-workers-and-patients-in-hospital-settings/covid-19-management-of-exposed-healthcare-workers-and-patients-in-hospital-settings>

- 3.4 The relevant MFT Director responsible for contractors who work on MFT sites is responsible for ensuring that this protocol is implemented in relation to Test and Trace notifications regarding contracted staff.
- 3.5 The Attendance Team is responsible for calling employees back after they report their absence via Absence Manager/local reporting processes to establish the requirement for a COVID-19 antigen test, or to establish whether test has been conducted at another site. If the test has been conducted by an external Test Centre the Attendance Team is responsible for contacting the staff member to follow up the result.
- 3.6 When a staff member reports a COVID positive result or is notified of a COVID positive result, the Attendance Team/Employee Health and Wellbeing Team are responsible for informing the staff member that the positive COVID-19 result will be shared with the Hospital/MCS/LCO/Corporate/Sodexo SPOC to enable contact tracing.
- 3.7 The Attendance Team/Employee Health and Wellbeing Team are responsible for recording the details of staff with positive COVID tests on the Staff Results Report.
- 3.8 All managers are responsible for conducting contact tracing in their area, using the contact tracing history tool set out in Appendix 1, and undertaking risk assessments as indicated by the contact history using the template set out as Appendix 2.
- 3.9 The Infection Prevention and Control Team is responsible for providing advice to managers to support the contact tracing and risk assessment process.
- 3.10 A staff member who is required to self-isolate because they have been notified that they are a contact of a COVID-19 case will be required to report their absence via Absence Manager or their local reporting process. Through first day call backs the Attendance Team will arrange for a COVID-19 swab test to be undertaken or confirm if the member of staff has secured a swab already through a community testing Centre.
- 3.11 All staff are required to comply with PPE and social distancing requirements. NHS guidance³ also sets out a requirement that staff comply with all requests for testing. This is because COVID-19 is a notifiable disease, which must be reported for purposes of health protection.
- 3.12 Regulated professionals have a duty to preserve safety; this includes appropriate use of PPE and taking action in accordance with national and local policy to minimise transmission of Coronavirus.

4. Contact tracing process

- 4.1 Appendix 3 sets out the process to follow within the Trust for staff who are either identified as COVID-19 positive or who are identified as being significant contacts of a COVID-19 case.
- 4.2 If staff or patients are identified as significant contacts of a COVID-19 case, they will be advised by the Test and Trace Service to self-isolate for 14 days. This period of time is required regardless of a negative COVID-19 swab, as the individual may be incubating the disease. However, Public Health England, has advised that if a contact is found to be COVID positive, the isolation period reduces to 7 days, after which the individual can return to work if they are symptom-free.

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-management-of-exposed-healthcare-workers-and-patients-in-hospital-settings/covid-19-management-of-exposed-healthcare-workers-and-patients-in-hospital-settings> - section 3

5. Prevention of transmission

5.1 It is vital that all staff act to minimise the transmission of COVID-19 in order to stop the spread of the virus and protect the health of patients and staff. Staff must follow the Trust guidance on the correct use of PPE, maintain appropriate social distancing when not wearing PPE, wear the required face masks when on Trust premises and conduct and act upon Safe Working Environment assessments.

6. Monitoring and reporting

6.1 The number of staff recorded as COVID-19 positive and the numbers self-isolating as a result of being identified as a contact of a COVID-19 case will be recorded and reported by the Employee Health and Wellbeing Service,

6.2 Impacts of staff absence due to self-isolation on business continuity will be monitored via the MFT COVID-19 Tactical Group and escalated to the COVID-19 Strategic Group as required.

6.3 Hospital/MCS/LCO/Corporate services will be required to report back to the Attendance Team when contacts have been traced and provide assurance that action has been taken in accordance with this protocol.

6.4 The Trust is required to analyse the information from test and trace activity to monitor:

- Instances of breaches in Infection Prevention Standards or PPE policies
- Areas of high risk of cross contamination
- Areas where social distancing is not maintained

7. Ratification, dissemination

7.1 The MFT Infection Prevention and Control Committee is responsible for ratification of this protocol. Dissemination is via the Trust COVID-19 communication and notification route.

7.2 This protocol will be reviewed by the Director of Infection Prevention and Control (DIPC) in December 2020, or earlier if required.

Appendix 1: Contact tracing case history tool

Completed by Hospital/MCS/LCO/Corporate/Sodexo Manager

Employee Details

Employee's Full Name:		Assignment Number:	
Home Address:		Contact Number:	
Role and Function of Employee:		Exact location(s) of Work:	
Assessment completed by [name and job title]:		Date of assessment:	

Circumstances of workplace contacts

Date Employee's Symptoms began:		Positive Test Result Date:	
Date Employee was last on duty/on site in health care setting:			
Location of employee's last duty and duty:		Location of any duty in the 2 days prior to symptoms commencing (if different to above):	

Appendix 2: Risk assessment template

Department or Service Manager to assess contact with the COVID-19 case that took place up to 48 hours prior to diagnosis.

Name of contact:

Role:

Location of work:

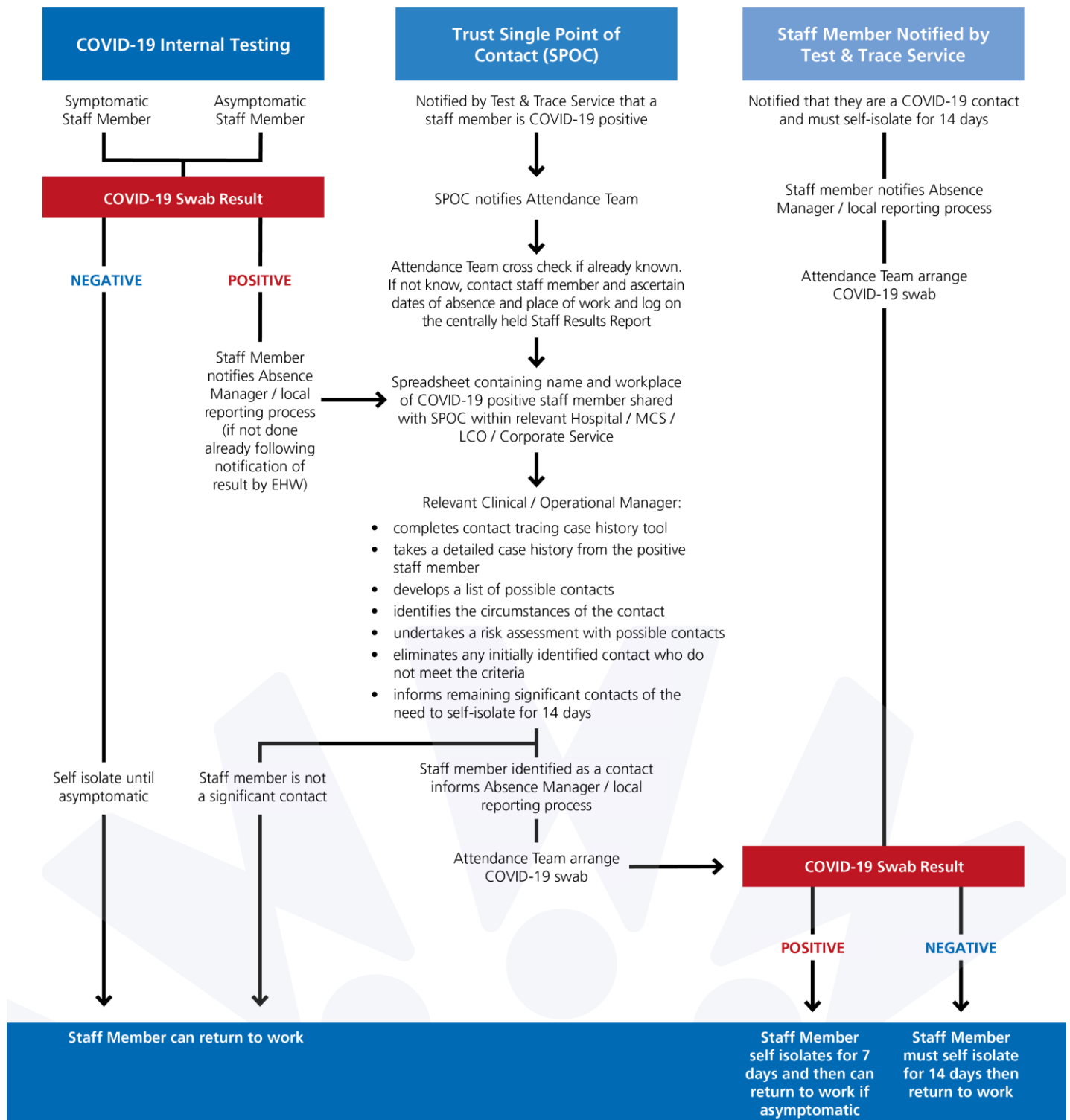
COVID-19 contact risk assessment				
	Criteria	Yes	No	Action
1.	When the contact took place was either person wearing a face mask?			If yes, no further assessment is required and the individual would NOT be classed as a contact requiring 14 day self-isolation.
2.	When the contact took place was there a Perspex or glass screen between the individual and the person who has tested positive to COVID-19?			If yes, no further assessment is required and the individual would NOT be classed as a contact requiring 14 day self-isolation.
If the contact took place when the individuals were not wearing appropriate face masks/coverings assess:				
3.	Was there face to face contact with the case for any length of time, within 1m without a Perspex/glass screen?			If yes, the individual is a significant contact and must be tested and self-isolate for 14 days
4.	Was there any contact within one metre for one minute or longer without face-to-face contact?			If yes, the individual is a significant contact and must be tested and self-isolate for 14 days
5.	Was there extended close contact within 2 metres for more than 15 minutes			If yes, the individual is a significant contact and must be tested and self-isolate for 14 days
6.	Has the individual travelled in a small vehicle (e.g. car) with the person who has tested positive for COVID-19?			If yes, the individual is a significant contact and must be tested and self-isolate for 14 days
7.	Has the individual travelled in a large vehicle (e.g. bus/train) seated beside, in front of or behind the person who has tested positive for COVID-19?			If yes, the individual is a significant contact and must be tested and self-isolate for 14 days

Contact should not be considered significant if a healthcare worker was:

- **Only in contact with the positive case for a short period of time (less than 15 minutes of contact within 2 metres)**
- **Maintained social distancing throughout the contact (greater than 2 metres)**
- **Where PPE was in use but was breached for a very short time (for example where an apron tore during care but was replaced immediately)**

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Infection Prevention & Control

Test and Trace Protocol



References:

- www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-how-it-works
- www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-management-of-exposed-healthcare-workers-and-patients-in-hospital-settings/covid-19-management-of-exposed-healthcare-workers-and-patients-in-hospital-settings
- www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-contacts-of-people-with-possible-or-confirmed-coronavirus-covid-19-infection-who-do-not-live-with-the-person/guidance-for-contacts-of-people-with-possible-or-confirmed-coronavirus-covid-19-infection-who-do-not-live-with-the-person

Appendix 4: FAQs

Where can I find the definitions of a COVID-19 contact?

The definitions of a contact are set out in Public Health England *Guidance for contacts of people with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection who do not live with the person*. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-contacts-of-people-with-possible-or-confirmed-coronavirus-covid-19-infection-who-do-not-live-with-the-person/guidance-for-contacts-of-people-with-possible-or-confirmed-coronavirus-covid-19-infection-who-do-not-live-with-the-person>

If I was wearing a face mask when contact took place with someone with COVID-19 do I as the contact have to self-isolate?

If you were wearing a face mask throughout the contact and there was no breach of this PPE, you are not defined as a contact and do not need to self-isolate.

If there was a Perspex or glass screen between the infected person at the point of contact, does the contact have to self-isolate for 14 days?

Where an interaction between 2 people has taken place through a Perspex (or equivalent) screen, this would not be considered sufficient contact, provided that there has been no other contact. In this case, you are not defined as a contact and do not need to self-isolate.

If I'm notified that I'm a significant contact of someone who is COVID-19 positive and my swab is negative, why can't I return to work?

It is possible that you could be incubating the virus as you have had significant contact with a person with COVID-19 and therefore need to self-isolate for 14 days.

If I have been tested as part of the Trust's asymptomatic testing and I am negative, why don't I have to self-isolate for 14 days as a negative contact would?

Unlike staff who are notified that they are a significant contact but have a negative test result, you can return to work as you have not been identified as having significant contact with a person with COVID-19.

What can I do to prevent myself from being a COVID-19 contact?

We all have a responsibility to comply with social distancing requirements and wear PPE in accordance with the Trust policy. Please comply with these requirements and constructively challenge any colleagues who are not compliant. Please be vigilant in break rooms, offices and meeting rooms.

Do I have to have a swab taken if I am notified by the Test & Trace Service that I am a COVID-19 contact?

Local and national guidance requires health and social care employees to comply with requests for testing. MFT require staff to be tested for COVID-19 if they have been in contact with a staff member who tests positive for COVID-19 this is because we need to identify anyone who has COVID-19 so that transmission can be prevented.

Who should I speak to if I have any concerns?

Please discuss any concerns with your line manager. The Infection Prevention & Control Team can support you with queries and the Employee Health and Wellbeing Service is also available to provide support and guidance.

What will happen if I refuse to have a COVID-19 test?

As health care professionals we have a responsibility to protect ourselves, our colleagues and our patients from COVID-19. Therefore, if there is a possibility that you have the virus it is important to have the test so that the correct course of action can be taken. National PHE guidance sets out a requirement that staff will comply if the Trust asks you to have a COVID-19 antigen test. If you refuse to have the swab taken the Employee Health and Wellbeing Service will contact you to discuss your individual circumstances and will advise you and your manager accordingly.

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