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NHS England and NHS Improvement
80 London Road
Skipton House
London SE1 6LH

To:

Regional Directors, NHS England and NHS Improvement
EPRR Regional Leads
CEOs of NHS trusts/foundation trusts

12 April 2020

Dear colleague,

Testing of NHS staff and household members

As we increase our testing capacity, we are able to expand the testing offer to a wider group of staff and household members across the NHS, including individuals working in the NHS outside of acute care, for example, mental health, primary care, community services and other staff as determined locally. Organisations will still continue to give priority to testing patients admitted to hospitals with possible COVID-19 symptoms and to ensuring staff working in critical care, emergency departments and ambulance services are able to work.

For clarity, to meet the testing criteria you must either be:

- An individual (adult or child) with COVID-19 symptoms living in the same household as a member of NHS staff or wider NHS family.

OR

- A member of staff in the NHS family, with COVID-19 symptoms.

In addition, you should be in the first three days of the onset of your COVID-19 symptoms at the time the swab is taken - although testing is considered effective up until day five. No testing should be undertaken after day five, unless it's for a specific reason agreed on a case by case basis by local microbiologists.

If a member of staff tests negative, then they can return to work if they are well enough to do so and should discuss this with their employing organisation. If an individual living in the same household as a member of the NHS family tests negative then the NHS worker can return to work without themselves being tested,



as long as they remain symptom free and the whole household can come out of self-isolation.

Yours sincerely



Pauline Philip DBE
National Director of Emergency and
Elective Care
NHS England and NHS Improvement



Sarah-Jane Marsh
Chief Executive of Birmingham Women's
and Children's NHS Foundation Trust
National CEO lead for NHS Staff Testing