

8th February 2021

Re: COVID TESTING EXPANSION FOR PERSONAL ASSISTANTS

As you will be aware, COVID-19 is extremely infectious and its’ effects have been and continue to be serious in our population. The infection is passed very easily from person to person especially indoors and close contact increases that risk. There is evidence that people who do not have any symptoms may test positive when they are ‘pre-symptomatic’. This means these people may be passing the virus on without knowing.

With this in mind, the Scottish Government has put in place a programme to expand Lateral Flow testing for COVID 19 to a wider range of care settings, including the use of Personal Assistants. Associated guidance in relation to testing is available via this link:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-adult-care-at-home-testing-guidance/>

While Personal Assistants are not required to participate in the testing process, it is recommended that they are encouraged to do so to assist in the protection of the people they support, themselves and their loved ones.

The test involves a less invasive swab than the current PCR test and the use of a pregnancy test type device to obtain results within 30 minutes.

Test kits can be provided to you for your Personal Assistant/s through the West Lothian Health and Social Care PPE Hub. Kits can be ordered using the attached form which can either be completed electronically or on the paper form, these should be returned to either:

* PPE-WLHSCP@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk
* Unit 10, Heron Square Deans Industrial estate, Livingston , EH54 8QY.

Kits can either be delivered to your home or they can be collected on a Tuesday or Wednesday between 9am and 4pm from the PPE Hub at the address noted above, this should be specified at the time that you submit your order.

A web-based test recording system has been developed which your Personal Assistant/s should access to input their twice weekly result – positive, negative and inconclusive. This will enable follow up contact tracing where necessary and important quality assurance regarding the reliability of the testing process. The link to enter results is:

[www.covidtestingportal.scot](http://www.covidtestingportal.scot) via the Rapid Testing button. To make the regular reporting easier, accessing the auto-fill feature on your Personal Assistant’s phone/pc will help speed up the process.

It should be noted that if your Personal Assistant has previously tested positive for COVID-19, they do not need to participate in staff testing for 90 days after their positive result, unless they develop symptoms.

If you have any queries please contact the Adult Social Care Enquiry Team (ASCET) on 01506 284848 or email: adultsocialcare@westlothian.gov.uk.

We hope that you and your Personal Assistant/s will participate in the testing process to improve infection control.

Yours faithfully

For and on behalf of the West Lothian Health and Social Care Partnership