

To: Regional Director Public Health and
Primary Care
ICB Chief Pharmacist/ Director of
Medicines and Pharmacy
ICB Medical Director

NHS England
Wellington House
133-155 Waterloo Road
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cc. Regional Chief Pharmacist
Regional Senior Pharmacy
Integration Lead
Community Pharmacy Contractors

26 October 2023

Dear Colleague,

Community Pharmacy NHS Lateral flow device (LFD) tests supply advanced service for patients potentially eligible for COVID-19 treatments

The NHS offers COVID-19 treatment to people with COVID-19 who are at risk of becoming seriously ill. Rapid lateral flow device (LFD) tests are currently available to order by these patients on GOV.UK or by calling 119 for delivery directly to the patient's home.

From 6 November 2023, LFD tests will no longer be available via GOV.UK or via 119. LFD tests still need to be available and easily accessible to people who are potentially eligible for COVID-19 treatments through routine NHS access routes. It is estimated that in the short-term, the number of potentially eligible patients will remain at around 3.9 million.

Although access to LFD tests may be supplemented by other pathways (e.g., through anticipatory or specialist care), community pharmacy is well placed within the local community to provide local and rapid access for patients.

Access to COVID-19 community-based treatment will continue to be based on a confirmed COVID-19 infection, achieved with a diagnostic LFD test, in line with some of the recommended treatment's product licences. Given the short efficacy window for treatment and practical implications of point-of-care testing, tests need to be available for eligible patients to access in advance of developing symptoms.

This is a walk-in service where patients/patients' representatives can collect one box of five LFD tests from a participating community pharmacy, on confirmation that the patient is part of the cohort which is potentially eligible for COVID-19 treatments.

The full list of eligible patients who are at risk of getting seriously ill from COVID-19, and therefore are potentially eligible for COVID-19 treatments, can be found in NICE guidelines [Supporting information on risk factors for progression to severe COVID-19](#).



Testing and test outcomes

Patients will have been advised to take an LFD test as soon as possible if they have any symptoms of COVID-19, even if their symptoms are mild. Patients are advised to only use a test if they have symptoms.

If a patient tests positive, they have been advised to call their general practice, NHS 111 or hospital specialist as soon as possible.

If a patient tests negative, but still has symptoms of COVID-19, they have been advised to take a total of three LFD tests over three consecutive days. If any of the tests are positive, they should stop testing and contact their general practice, NHS111 or hospital specialist as soon as possible. Full information can be found here: [NHS England » Letter to patients: Important information about treatments for Covid.](#)

Funding

Pharmacy contractors providing this service will be paid according to arrangements set out within the Drug Tariff. This will include a fee of £4.00 (plus VAT) for each supply to an eligible patient or patient representative. The cost of tests supplied will be paid according to arrangements set out in the November 2023 Drug Tariff. Further details can be found here: [New Service Launch: Lateral Flow Device Tests Supply Advanced Service | NHSBSA.](#)

Registration and record management

This is an advanced service where community pharmacy contractors will need to register via NHSBSA's MYS portal in order to provide the service. The service will be available to register on the MYS portal on 6 November 2023.

The pharmacy contractor must maintain appropriate records of the supply of an LFD test kit. Full details of the service and reporting requirements can be found in the service specification here: [NHS lateral flow device tests supply service for patients potentially eligible for COVID-19 treatments \(england.nhs.uk\)](#). If you have any further queries, please contact the NHS England community pharmacy inbox: england.communitypharmacy@nhs.net

Yours sincerely



Ali Sparke
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David Webb
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