

PRESS RELEASE:

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Surrey ramping up its coronavirus testing capacity

Surrey is continuing to scale up its coronavirus testing capacity in line with the Government's strategy – to increase testing capacity throughout the coronavirus pandemic.

The Surrey Local Resilience Forum has been offering testing for coronavirus to different groups in a phased approach, initially prioritising NHS workers, then the broader public services, with the aim that all keyworkers who need a test will be able to have one.

Under the new guidance announced by Health Secretary, Matt Hancock yesterday, testing will now be offered to anyone over the age of 65 with symptoms, anyone with symptoms who cannot work from home, and care home staff and residents regardless of whether or not they have symptoms.

The Surrey Local Resilience Forum is rolling out a broad range of testing methods, including home testing kits and mobile testing sites, to ensure we continue to meet national guidance and that all eligible people in need of a test, including the new groups announced yesterday, will be able to access one quickly and easily.

Surrey's community testing capacity is being built up to ensure that all symptomatic care home residents and staff are being tested. Over the next week this will ramp up to include testing of all care home residents and staff, in line with the guidance announced yesterday.

Clare Stone, Director of Quality at Surrey Heartlands Health and Care Partnership and the Strategic Lead for Covid-19 Testing in Surrey, said

"I want to reassure people living and working in Surrey that we are working around the clock to ensure that testing will be available for everyone who is eligible. We have already increased our testing capacity, and we are developing solid plans to make sure we can continue to meet demand."

Access to the local testing centres in Chessington, Gatwick and Twickenham has been available to key workers for the past couple of weeks and a new local testing centre site is opening in Guildford this week. To date, approximately 1500 key workers have been through this process.

How to get tested

All keyworkers in Surrey who have symptoms can book a test by registering on the Surrey testing hub: surrey.trustwide.live/swabbing. A member of the testing team will then be in contact to book the appointment.

Information for how new groups can book will be published very shortly and in the meantime they can book a test on the national self-referral testing site: self-referral.test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/test-type.

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