**Test and Trace information supplied by Consultant in Public Health, Essex County Council:**

**Test and Trace**

**Guidance for Optometry**

**What is Test and Trace?**

A symptomatic person will request a COVID 19 test (PCR test). Optometry staff members can access a test at <https://www.gov.uk/apply-coronavirus-test-essential-workers>. People will be contacted by NHS Test and Trace with the results of their test and everyone testing positive will be supported to identify their contacts. Those named as contacts will be followed up and advised to self-isolate for 14 days.

**What happens if a member of my Optometry team tests positive?**

Some complex or sensitive situations get escalated and picked up locally; healthcare is one of those situations because of the importance of public sector resilience. So, you will be contacted not by the national test and trace team but a local team which will be either Public Health England local Health Protection Team or your Local Authority Contact Tracing Team. They will ask for your help to identify staff and patients who meet the definition of a contact; you will be asked to provide the names and contact details. The local team will notify and advise those contacts on what to do next. You will not be asked to identify personal or household contacts of the person who is the case; nor will you be asked to identify contacts of contacts.

**Who is defined as a contact?**

Close contact means:

* having face-to-face contact with someone (less than 1 metre away)
* spending more than 15 minutes within 2 metres of someone
* travelling in a car or other small vehicle with someone (even on a short journey) or close to them on a plane

The contact period will cover the 48 hours preceding symptoms and 7 days afterwards.

**Interactions with patients where the member of staff was correctly wearing PPE in accordance with the latest recommended advice will not meet the contact definition**.

**Interaction with staff colleagues where social distancing is observed will not meet the contact definition; please consider the whole working day e.g. commuting, break times,**

**Data security**

Details will be held in strict confidence and will be kept and used only in line with data protection laws.

**What happens if a recently seen patient tests positive?**

If one of your patients has tested positive and identifies a member(s) of the optometry team as a personal contact then they will be notified directly and told to self-isolate for 14 days. If the patient saw them at the opticians and can’t remember who they saw or doesn’t have their contact details then the opticians will be notified to help identify the right staff members; if they meet the above contact definition then they will be advised to self-isolate.

**How can I minimise the impact on my optometry team?**

Any contact (defined above) will be advised to self-isolate for 14 days, so more people identified as contacts (as above) within your optomtery team, the bigger impact it will have. Risk assess your working practices and apply all possible infection prevention and control measures advised for COVID 19.

Further support can be sought from your LPC or NHSE.

**What measures could avoid staff having to self-isolate if identified as a contact while at work?**

If the member of staff was wearing PPE correctly at the time of the contact with the positive case isolation will not be required. The up to date guidance on Infection Prevention and Control including PPE can be found at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-infection-prevention-and-control>

with guidance specifically for Primary Care at

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/primary-care/>

**What will contacts be told to do?**

Contacts will be advised to self-isolate for 14 days. If they show symptoms, then they should request a test. Further information for contacts can be found here <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/nhs-test-and-trace-if-youve-been-in-contact-with-a-person-who-has-coronavirus/>

Staff who do not have symptoms will need to isolate for the full 14 days. This includes staff who have had a positive COVID-19 antibody test

**When does this start?**

Test and Trace has already started nationally, however the local processes are still in development and are expected to launch end of June / early July.  In the meantime, should your [insert practice/pharmacy/opticians/dentist] have a reported positive case you will still be offered help and support.



Mike Gogarty, Director of Public Health

Essex County Council