

Covid Update 10/1/22

Please take the advice below seriously and be alert for developing guidance.

1. All positive cases, can exit self-isolation on day 7 regardless of vaccination status, if they have a negative LFD on day 6 and day 7 (taken 24 hours apart) and do not have a fever (48 hours)
2. Fully vaccinated (two doses and booster dose 14 days prior) contacts (both household and non-household) will be asked to undertake daily LFD tests for seven days and if the LFD tests are negative will not have to isolate
3. Unvaccinated contacts (0-2 doses) will be asked to take a PCR test and regardless of result will be asked to isolate for 10 days. As health and social care workers continue to provide health, care and support to individuals whom are often more vulnerable and of higher risk of COVID-19 infection, there will continue to be additional safeguards in place for these settings. This letter details the changes to self-isolation policy for health and social care workers and the safe guards in place to enable them to return to work. All health and social care providers/ employers and their staff should follow the updated policy as detailed in Annex A for COVID-19 self-isolation. We would like to continue to remind the sector that it is critical that staff receive their vaccines and booster due to the following with Omicron:
4. Having your 1st and 2nd dose of the vaccine offers limited protection against symptomatic disease from this variant.
5. Receiving a booster dose of the vaccine is known to increase protection from Omicron substantially.
6. Early identification of cases is even more important with the Omicron variant and as you are aware. **Aspire expects all staff to take an LFD test each working day.**

All Staff COVID-19 Guidance –10 January 2022

1. Staff who have tested positive for COVID-19 regardless of vaccination status either through work place LFD/ PCR testing or PCR testing due to symptoms.
 - a. If a member of staff tests positive through LFD they no longer need to take a PCR test to confirm their positive status. The LFD positive test should be treated as a confirmed positive case of COVID-19.
 - b. All staff, should take a PCR test if they have symptoms of COVID-19, and have not received a positive LFD test. If a member of staff has symptoms (fatigue, muscle aches, "scratchy throat", dry cough and high pulse) and has tested positive on LFD they should be treated as COVID-19 positive and do not require a confirmatory PCR.
 - c. In line with guidance for the general population staff can return to work from day 7 of their self-isolation, if they have two negative LFD tests taken 24 hours apart (day 6 and day 7), and do not have a fever for 48 hours (a temperature of 38 degrees or above). For clarity if a staff member tests positive on day 6 but negative on day 7 and 8 they can return to work from day 8.
 - d. In addition to two negative LFD tests prior to returning to work, staff should continue with their standard work place testing regime, which is to undertake daily LFD tests prior to work on working days. Staff are reminded to record results (positive, negative and void) on the portal Welcome - COVID Testing Portal (servicenow.com)
 - e. If a member of staff tests LFD positive after day 10 they should stay off work and continue to take daily LFD tests until they have one negative test. If this situation of testing LFD positive prolongs then a risk assessment by the Local Health Protection Team can be undertaken.
 - f. Staff who can return should not work with individuals on the highest clinical risk list for the remainder of the 10 day period. The highest clinical risk groups include individuals on chemotherapy, whom are immune-suppressants such as pre/immediately post-transplant, those who have profound immune-deficiency and other high clinical risk patients who are not vaccinated. This list is not exhaustive and local line managers may determine other groups as fitting within the high clinical risk category. Staff can however be asked to return to work in roles to care for and support people who are not deemed at high clinical risk.
 - g. Staff should not return to work in the following circumstances:
 - a) They have not had two negative LFD tests taken 24 hours apart
 - b) They have or have had a fever (a temperature of 38 degrees or above) within the previous 48 hours.

- c) They decline to take daily LFD tests for the remainder of the 10 day period. In this circumstance they should not return to work in a physical setting and instead if feasible work from home until day 10

2. Fully vaccinated contacts

- a) This applies to all staff who are identified as a contact (both household and non-household) of a positive COVID-19 case and are fully vaccinated (double vaccinated and have received booster doses 14 days prior to last exposure of case).
- b) If a staff member is a contact of a case, they should undertake a PCR test, as soon as possible, upon finding out they are a contact. They should not attend social care settings for work while awaiting the results of the PCR test.
- a) If the PCR test is negative they will not have to self-isolate and will be able to return to work within these settings. However as an additional safeguard, they will need to take daily LFD tests for the remainder of the 10 day period.
- b) If an LFD test is positive, or the individual develops symptoms within the 10 day period, they must follow the self-isolation guidance for positive cases as detailed earlier. Staff are reminded to record results (positive and negative) on the portal Welcome - COVID Testing Portal (service-now.com)
- c) After the 10 day period staff have to take an LFD test prior to each working day.

People who are participating / have participated in a formally approved COVID-19 vaccine clinical trial are treated as equivalent to those vaccinated through the NHS vaccination programme.

To summarise, staff can return to work where the following conditions are met:

- They have been double-vaccinated and have received a COVID-19 booster vaccination at least 14 days prior to the last exposure to the case;
- They have had a negative PCR test where the test is taken as soon as possible after exposure;
- They have negative LFD tests on a daily basis;
- They are not currently self-isolating as a COVID-19 case or under international travel regulations;
- They do not have COVID-19 symptoms (Coronavirus (COVID-19): General advice | NHS inform);
- If a staff member has previously tested positive by PCR for COVID-19 they should continue to LFD test. The previous requirement of not having to LFD test within 90 days of a positive test no longer applies. If a staff member tests positive on LFD or develops symptoms they should follow guidance for a positive case

2. Unvaccinated Contacts - This applies to all staff who are identified as a contact (both household and non-household) of a positive COVID-19 case and are not fully vaccinated (meaning they have not received all three vaccination doses).
 - a. If a staff member is a contact of a case, they should undertake a PCR test, as soon as possible, upon finding out they are a contact. If they are not fully vaccinated they should not attend work and should complete their 10 day self-isolation period. There is currently no option for staff who are not fully vaccinated and are identified as a contact to exit self-isolation early.
 - b. If a member of staff develops symptoms or tests LFD positive during their 10 day isolation period they should follow guidance for positive cases as detailed in this guidance.
 - c. After the self-isolation period staff should take an LFD each working day prior to attending work.
3. Mitigations for staff returning to work in health and social care settings
 - a. If a member of staff meets the conditions to exit self-isolation early, they are expected to return to work. In addition to the conditions for returning to work as detailed above, which includes daily LFD testing and not working with individuals on the highest risk list
 - b. record the results of the daily LFD <http://www.covidtestingportal.scot/> and inform their manager of the result.
 - c. Adhere to infection prevention and control appropriate to the setting.
 - d. Correctly wear personal protective equipment (PPE) in accordance with the National Infection Prevention and Control Manual. This includes wearing face masks in accordance with the face mask guidance for

hospitals and primary care and the use of face mask guidance for social care settings including adult care homes.

- e. In an outbreak situation the local Health Protection Team can override exemptions from contact isolation as per the Scottish Government guidance on Management of Public Health Incidents.

In Scotland, household contacts of any confirmed coronavirus cases now need to isolate for a period of 7 days - regardless of their vaccine status.

Key workers without symptoms may be eligible for exemption from self-isolation.

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Self-isolation exemption for health and social care workers | NHS inform](#)

It remains the responsibility of each of us to do the right thing with the most current advice available. The most recent guidelines from the Scottish Government can be accessed at [Coronavirus in Scotland - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#) and includes:

To help protect yourself and others:

- [get the vaccine](#) or [the vaccine booster](#)
- if you don't have symptoms take regular lateral flow tests – especially before mixing with other people - [order LFD tests](#)
- think carefully about unnecessary contact with other people, especially in crowded places – it would be sensible to postpone work Christmas parties
- [wear a face covering where required](#)
- if you have symptoms - [self isolate and book a PCR test](#)
- wash your hands regularly, and cover your nose and mouth if coughing or sneezing
- open windows when meeting indoors
- if you can, keep your distance from people not in your group
- work from home if possible
- use the apps: [COVID status](#), [Protect Scotland](#) and [Check-in Scotland](#)
- Minimise unnecessary contact with people outwith work

Staff are responsible for remaining aware of changing guidance, minimising risk to themselves, their families, and the people we support.

It is important everyone knows what to do and does it. Individually and collectively, we need to take care of each other and those we support. If people don't follow guidelines, they could put their families, colleagues and supported individuals at risk. We provide support to a lot of frail, vulnerable people who are at higher risk of becoming very unwell or dying. We need to do everything we can to avoid that.

Stay aware of how the virus is spread to protect yourself and others. Coronavirus is spread via secretions from infected people.

It can be inhaled into the lungs from infected people coughing and sneezing into the air and also can be picked up by touching contaminated surfaces or the hands of an infected person and then touching your own mouth, nose, or eyes (e.g. touching doorknob or shaking hands then touching own face).

We all must continue to adhere to all previous infection control guidelines which have been issued.

To prevent becoming infected, frequently wash your hands with soap and warm water for 20 seconds. Use alcohol sanitisers with at least 60% alcohol only if handwashing facilities are not available. Dry your hands completely with a disposable towel. Use the disposable towel to turn off the tap.

Wash your hands frequently and after:

- taking public transport
- before leaving home and arriving home
- on arrival and on leaving each work environment

- after using the toilet
- before food preparation
- before eating any food, including snacks
- after using supermarket trolleys etc. (clean trolleys before use if possible)
- after breaks and personal activities

We must all remain vigilant in ensuring that no action or omission on our part gives the virus a chance to spread.

- Wear face coverings inside shops, restaurants, public transport etc.
- Avoid touching your face, eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in a bin and wash your hands. Catch It, Bin It, Kill It.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces at least x2 daily with domestic/anti-bacterial cleaning products in work or domestic settings.

Staff must use personal protective equipment (PPE) for activities that bring them into close personal contact, such as washing and bathing, personal hygiene and contact with bodily fluids. Aprons, gloves and fluid repellent surgical masks must be used in these situations. If there is a risk of splashing, then eye protection will minimise risk.

New personal protective equipment must be used for each episode of care. It is very important that all staff who use PPE understand what PPE to use and how it should be used safely; the resources provided below will assist you in doing this.

[20210609 COVID-19 PPE community and social care settings Illustrated guide-1.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/91232/20210609_COVID-19_PPE_community_and_social_care_settings_Illustrated_guide-1.pdf)

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

[COVID-19: personal protective equipment use for non-aerosol generating procedures - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-personal-protective-equipment-use-for-non-aerosol-generating-procedures)

The symptoms of the previous Covid Delta variant were a loss of taste or smell, sore throat, runny nose, a high temperature and continuous cough. Symptoms of Omicron include fatigue, muscle aches, "scratchy throat", dry cough and high pulse. A few infected people also had a high temperature. If you feel unwell, contact your line manager or on-call manager, stay at home, arrange a COVID-19 test and follow NHS advice on [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/coronavirus)

Please contact the HR department if you have concerns re income and sickness support. As employee owners, this is your company. We all need to do the right thing. We do not intend to support anyone who may see an opportunity to take advantage this current situation. Some decisions will be determined at the manager's discretion. Any such situations will be equally considered to ensure fairness for all staff.

Social Care Workers have been encouraged to receive the Flu vaccine. More information on eligibility and how to make an appointment in your area is available at <https://www.nhsinform.scot/flu-vaccine> - or call 0800 224488 where an NHS24 call handler will be able to direct you.

Please download and utilise the Health Assured App which has lots of helpful information and programs for you to follow to assist in your physical, mental health and wellbeing: <https://healthassuredeap.co.uk/home>

Username: Aspire

Password: [obtain from your line manager or HR]