Dear Executive Directors, Directors and Governors

Please find attached a suite of documents outlining arrangements for the introduction of Lateral Flow Device Testing (LFD) for staff in the prison estate in England and Wales from 25th Jan.

As you may be aware PHE strongly advocate LFD testing in custodial settings to allow the rapid detection of infectious individuals and to facilitate more proactive control. UK Government has recently announced measures to increase key worker access to LFD testing in the workplace and following PHE advice, HMPPS has secured approval to supplement existing weekly PCR testing with twice-weekly LFD testing in all prisons.

Amongst other advantages, LFD tests produce a result within 20 – 30 minutes allowing a positive individual to immediately isolate. LFD tests consist of a throat and nose swab taken by the individual themselves and processed by a trained operative.

The presence of COVID-19 is determined during a simple analysis process that can follow swiftly after each test. This process is explained in further detail within the attached guidance. Please direct any enquiries to the vaccinations team functional mailbox HMPPSCOVID19RegimeRecoveryTesting@justice.gov.uk (Please note that the email address shared within the original briefing was incorrect. Please send any queries to this mailbox.)

