



HM Prison &
Probation Service



29 April 2022

To: HMPPS Executive Directors, Heads of Group, Prison Group Directors, Prison Governors and Directors (England)
NHS England and Improvement Health & Justice Commissioners

COVID-19 RECEPTION TESTING

Dear colleagues,

We are writing to update you on plans for Covid-19 reception testing, and to thank you for your hard work to date to deliver this in challenging circumstances despite staff absences and many competing priorities.

Based on public health advice from UKHSA, we have kept new arrivals separate from the wider prison population and offered them tests as part of the reception process and 5/6 days later. For most of the pandemic, this has consisted of both PCR and LFD testing; with the end to most PCR testing in England at the end of March this is now solely using LFDs.

We appreciate that this has been an additional pressure on top of pre-pandemic workload, and want to recognise the excellent partnership working at all levels to make it happen. It has been a crucial part of our efforts to limit outbreaks in prisons during periods of high community prevalence.

Please keep the current arrangements (i.e. offering 2x LFD tests) operating until the week of 23rd May. We are working urgently to finalise arrangements beyond that point, and will issue further guidance in the week of 16th May.

Based on the latest public health advice, we expect to need to continue some form of reception testing, but intend to do so in a proportionate and sustainable way that reflects the wider clinical priorities healthcare teams are being asked to deliver. UKHSA have confirmed they will fund and provide the test kits, so we are currently reviewing the balance of responsibilities around delivery and administration of the testing.

We are hugely grateful for your ongoing commitment and efforts to keep everyone living and working in prisons safe.

Yours faithfully,

Michelle Jarman-Howe
Chief Operating Officer
Her Majesty's Prison and
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Kate Davies
Director of Health & Justice, Armed Forces
and Sexual Assault Services Commissioning
NHS England and NHS Improvement