

**Title: Changes to arrangements for ordering PCR for staff asymptomatic testing in social care.**

Dear Responsible Individual,

**We are re-issuing this communication that was previously sent on the 16<sup>th</sup> March. Please pass this message to you care homes management/staff as a matter of urgency.**

You will be aware of the First Minister's publication on the 4<sup>th</sup> March 2022 **Together for a safer future**: Wales' long-term Covid-19 transition from pandemic to endemic <https://gov.wales/wales-long-term-covid-19-transition-pandemic-endemic>.

Communications to the social care sector at the time of publication indicated that more detailed specific advice for the sector was due to follow – we expect this to be published imminently.

However it is important we provide you with advance notice that as part of Welsh Government's more proportionate and targeted approach the need for care home, supported living and children's homes staff to take weekly asymptomatic PCR tests will cease at the end of March (twice weekly LFD testing will continue). Therefore the last week staff will need to take PCR tests is the week commencing the 21<sup>st</sup> of March. Should you require PCR tests for this week, the final order date is the **18<sup>th</sup> of March 2022**, where you may order just one weeks' supply. The last courier pick up for tests will be on the 25<sup>th</sup> of March. **There will be no need to take asymptomatic PCR tests after this date so please do not place any unnecessary orders.**

Staff will still have access to lateral flow tests for regular asymptomatic testing (these will be in packs of 25). Testing will also be available to support visitors (you will be able to order packs of 7 for visitors). **Care home managers should ensure their visitors are made aware of how they can access LFD tests via the care home.**

If staff show symptoms they should book a PCR test with the local health board that will be processed in our NHS Wales laboratories.

As stated above the social care specific transition arrangements will be published shortly but in light of the necessity to manage supplies we are providing this advance notice so that you may consider and plan your test ordering arrangements accordingly.

For enquiries please contact [Covid19.SocialCareTesting@gov.wales](mailto:Covid19.SocialCareTesting@gov.wales)