

Report To: Policy & Resources Executive Sub-Committee **Date:** 19 May 2020

Report By: Louise Long, Chief Officer HSCP **Report No:** HR/02/20/LL/SMcN

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Subject: COVID 19 TESTING & ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS FOR KEYWORKERS & COMMUNITY

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update committee on current arrangements for testing symptomatic Inverclyde Council staff and household members. This information was requested by the Policy & Resources Executive Sub-Committee at its meeting on 5 May 2020.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 There are two systems in operation which enable key workers to return to work where their symptoms or those of a symptomatic household member mean they would otherwise have to self-isolate:

1. Inverclyde HSCP staff and commissioned providers (including care home staff) who are routed through the NHS testing at local NHS facilities.
2. Key workers within Inverclyde Council covering a variety of staff including but not limited to those in child care hubs and employees providing services such as refuse collection, who are routed through regional hubs.

- 2.2 These testing arrangements operate independently and are organised and administered by NHS GG&C and by the Government and are subject to constant review as the national COVID19 picture develops.

- 2.3 There are also mobile testing units which are located across Scotland for short periods of time.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Committee are asked to note the current arrangements in place for key worker testing.

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Policy & Resources Executive Sub-Committee at its meeting on 5 May 2020 requested that a report be submitted to the next meeting of the Sub-Committee on all aspects of COVID-19 testing, including information on access arrangements for key workers and the community as a whole and any available comparative information on the position within other local authorities in Scotland.
- 4.2 There are two systems in operation which enable key workers to return to work where their symptoms or those of a symptomatic household member mean they would otherwise have to self-isolate:
1. Inverclyde HSCP staff and commissioned providers (including care home staff) who are routed through the NHS testing at local NHS facilities.
 2. Key workers within Inverclyde Council covering a variety of staff including but not limited to those in child care hubs and employees providing services such as refuse collection, who are routed through regional hubs.
- 4.3 These testing arrangements operate independently and are organised and administered by NHSGG&C and by the Government and are subject to constant review as the national COVID19 picture develops.
- 4.4 There are also mobile testing units which are located across Scotland for short periods of time.

5.0 INVERCLYDE HSCP STAFF & COMMISSIONED PROVIDERS (including care home staff)

- 5.1 All staff have access to an e-referral form and can either self-refer or be referred by their line manager for testing at Port Glasgow Health Centre 9.15 – 3.30pm Monday – Friday. Transport is provided for those staff who do not drive enabling them to access the drive thru facility. At weekends, appointments will be offered at one of the Glasgow sites. Testing must take place during the first 2 -5 days of symptoms and is available to:
- Symptomatic health and social care staff
 - Symptomatic household contacts of asymptomatic health and social care staff

There are forty four appointments available each day however not all days operate at capacity and we are now able to offer those unfilled appointments to care home staff who are being tested as part of the Public Health outbreak test process.

Results are received within 24-48 hours enabling staff to either return to work or continue with self-isolation according to result.

- 5.2 From the initial start date of the 13 April 2020, a total of 522 tests have been undertaken at the HSCP COVID19 testing centre at Port Glasgow Health Centre. It has not been possible to obtain comparative data from other Local Authority Test Centres. However, the Scottish Government website confirms that the National testing figure is approximately 75,000 across the whole population.

6.0 TESTING FOR OTHER KEYWORKERS (GLASGOW AIRPORT TESTING CENTRE)

- 6.1 The UK government widened the availability of testing to include all key workers (and others who cannot work from home), and those over 65 and members of their household who have symptoms. This is additional capacity to supplement NHS testing runs alongside the existing program of testing in the NHS for clinical purposes and testing of key workers in health and social care sector. As of the 5 May the Council have had access to this facility through the online portal.

Testing is available for the following:

- Members of staff absent from work because a household member has symptoms,
- Members of staff who have symptoms (but feel sufficiently well and would normally continue to work).

6.2 Testing Process

A management referral form is submitted for either the staff member or the household member, the personal details are then entered onto a national portal by the council's health and safety section. Information on employees requiring testing is submitted before 3pm daily. Testing is only available in the first five days from the onset of symptoms.

Individuals will receive a text or email the same day inviting them to either book an appointment, or offering a home self-testing kit (if available) for those who do not have transport. Results are received in 24 - 48 hours enabling staff to either return to work or continue with self-isolation.

Results under the UK testing programme are communicated to individuals by text message and are intended to be fed back into public health records in due course.

Testing is conducted in the drive-through site operating at Glasgow Airport and the employee will be sent full details of how to access the facility when they receive their appointment.

Advice on the definition of key worker within the Council is given in the testing guidance note made available to all staff (Appendix 1). The Council aims to take a flexible approach to this to ensure that testing is made as widely available as possible.

6.3 When employees should get tested

Employees should get tested in the first three days of covid-19 symptoms appearing, although testing is considered effective up until day five.

No testing should be undertaken after day five, unless it is for a specific reason which will be agreed on a case by case basis by local microbiologists.

If the employee is self-isolating because a person they live with has symptoms, that household member can be referred for testing.

By testing the household member(s), the Council can be much more certain that they should either be self-isolating or can return to work.

6.4 Home Testing

A limited number of home test kits are also available and can be used by employees who cannot arrange transport to Glasgow Airport.

After a home-test kit is ordered, the test would then be delivered the next day, and the key worker or household member would self-administer the swab, packing it up as per the included instructions.

A Royal Mail courier will arrive the day after to collect it and take it to the lab. The aim is that results will then be received by text within 48 hours. Evidence suggests that those with no clinical background or training should be completely able to secure an effective sample.

International peer-reviewed evidence suggests that self-swabbing is just as effective at securing a valid sample as clinician-administered testing.

Each kit comes with comprehensive instructions to guide users through how to administer the swab themselves. Test kits come with further instructions and a short video to take users through the process.

6.5 Protection of personal data

Amazon and Royal Mail are the commercial partners who are using their logistics systems to deliver home testing nationwide. They do not have access to the results or any health data.

6.6 Testing for key workers has been advertised to council employees and line managers via:

- Icon
- Council Internet site
- Council daily briefing
- Email correspondence with line managers
- Chief executive briefing note
- Trade Union Representatives

As of the 12 of May two employees have applied for and been referred for testing, both from within the childcare hubs.

7.0 **MOBILE TESTING UNITS**

7.1 On the 28 April the Council received notification via the Regional Resilience Co-ordinator of the deployment of mobile testing units to supplement the regional testing sites, these are staffed and operated by military personnel. The initial proposal was for allocation of these units to Argyll & Bute, Lanarkshire (North & South), Ayrshire (South, East and North) and Dumfries and Galloway first, given their location and distance from the Glasgow Regional Testing site.

Given the transient nature of these testing facilities it is important that use is co-ordinated to ensure that they are correctly utilised. For Inverclyde it would be best utilised in response to testing in specific areas where there may be batch testing required, however it would not provide a sustained increase in testing capacity or the ability to access a test within a short time scale if the unit was not already deployed in the area.

7.2 Given the higher rate of COVID-19 deaths in this area concern was expressed by this committee about access to testing for both the wider community and employees who may have difficulties accessing the regional hub. To this end a letter was sent on the 11 May 2020 by the Chief Executive on behalf of the Committee to Jeane Freeman MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport, advising of the Council's concerns about access to testing facilities of key workers and the community and asking for consideration of additional local testing facilities for Inverclyde (Appendix 2).

7.3 Inverclyde Civil Contingency Unit has discussed with the West of Scotland Regional Resilience Partnership (WoSRRP) the availability of the mobile testing unit, which appears maybe available, where it was agreed that the NHS Board was best positioned to advise further on this matter based on extent of demand and where it should be located. We are not aware of any progress in this regard. However, in order to expedite the matter the Chief Officer, Inverclyde HSCP has written to the Director of Public Health and suggested the following areas could be considered with regard to the introduction of a mobile testing unit.

- Would allow full testing for staff in other residential services where positive COVID results such as Learning Disability Supported Living Complex, Supported Living complexes and Homelessness Centre
- Support follow up testing for older peoples residential services when Greater Glasgow Clyde move re-testing regime in phase 3 within Care Homes
- Introduce and support full testing regime for all home care staff to capture asymptomatic staff
- Open out testing capacity to the community in line with COVID19 - Test, Trace, Isolate, Support guidance

In addition Inverclyde HSCP has proposed working with the NHS board to expand local testing unit at Port Glasgow to all key workers and their families to reduce the need to travel to Glasgow Airport.

7.4 Processes are also in place to test all care home staff as part of Public Health outbreak testing where this is required and this commenced on Thursday 7 May. This will be subject to a separate report on care homes to this committee.

8.0 PROPOSALS

8.1 The HSCP and Inverclyde Council will continue to respond to changes in testing requirements and ensure that staff have access to the appropriate information to enable them to access testing as required.

8.2 The HSCP and Inverclyde Council will continue to liaise with the appropriate agencies to ensure that any requirement for increased access or availability of testing is highlighted.

9.0 IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Finance

Financial Implications:

One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments
N/A					

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments
N/A					

9.2 Legal

No legal implications arising from the report.

9.3 Human Resources

Testing of employees and their household contacts is essential to ensure that employee attendance for key workers who cannot work from home or are delivering essential services is maximised and that risks to employees through workforce contact are minimised.

9.4 Equalities

Equalities

(a) Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out?

YES	
X	NO – This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore, no Equality Impact Assessment is required

(b) Fairer Scotland Duty

If this report affects or proposes any major strategic decision:-

Has there been active consideration of how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome?

<input type="checkbox"/>	YES – A written statement showing how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage has been completed.
<input type="checkbox"/>	NO

(c) Data Protection

Has a Data Protection Impact Assessment been carried out?

<input type="checkbox"/>	YES – This report involves data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO

9.5 **Repopulation**

No repopulation issues arising from this report.

10.0 CONSULTATIONS

10.1 Consultation has taken place with relevant stake holders include Corporate Management Team and Trade Unions.

11.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1 Appendix 1 Inverclyde Council guidance and referral form for testing
Appendix 2 Letter on testing

Inverclyde Council – testing for key workers, employee families and household members

The following is for all line managers of key and essential workers within Inverclyde Council.

The UK government has established a new network of covid-19 testing facilities for key workers. This programme runs alongside the existing programme of testing in the NHS for clinical purposes and testing of key workers in health and social care sector.

Access to testing for other key workers is determined using a prioritisation matrix for key workers. See Appendix 1

Testing will allow symptomatic key workers and their household members to know whether or not they have the virus. This will in turn keep essential services running.

1. Testing

Testing will be available for the following:

- If you have a member of staff absent from work because a household member has symptoms,
- If you have a member of staff who has symptoms (but feels sufficiently well and would normally continue to work).

2. Make a referral

- When the member of staff contacts you please complete and submit a management referral form for either the staff member or the household member available here:



Testing referral
form V3 Web.docx

- The completed form should be sent to occupational.health@Inverclyde.gov.uk. Before 1:30pm. This should be followed up with a phone call to the Health and Safety Section.
- The employee (or their family member) details will then be entered onto a national portal by the council's health and safety service and submitted before 3:00pm.
- Individuals should receive a text or email the same day with a link to the employee booking system to book a slot at the regional testing centre.
- Testing is only available in the first five days from the onset of symptoms so it is important to make a referral as soon as possible.



- Employees or the family member (or their parent/guardian if they are aged under 16 years) will then be informed of the appointment slot and instructions for attending by telephone or email. Results are received in 24 - 48 hours.
- The staff member must be a key worker and have a role not able to be carried out at home.
- If a staff member has symptoms then no other household member is eligible for testing. If the member of staff is off work because a household member has symptoms, it is the household member who will be tested and the member of staff will not require a test.

Please remember this is solely a testing service and does not include clinical assessment. If anyone is concerned about worsening symptoms, they should call NHS24 on 111.

Until test results are known households should continue to follow guidance on self-isolation from NHS Inform - <https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19#>

Staff with a household member who tests positive for covid-19 **MUST** stay at home for 14 days from the start of their symptoms, even if they do not have symptoms.

3. When to get employees tested

- Employees should get tested in the first three days of covid-19 symptoms appearing, although testing is considered effective up until day five.
- No testing should be undertaken after day five, unless it is for a specific reason which will be agreed on a case by case basis by local microbiologists.
- If the employee is self-isolating because a person they live with has symptoms, you can refer that household member for testing.
- By testing the household member(s), we can be much more certain that they should either be self-isolating or can return to work.

4. Negative tests and returning to work

Even if a key worker has had a negative result, it is important to still apply caution.

If everyone with symptoms who was tested in their household receive a negative result, the employee can return to work if their work cannot be done from home, providing they are well enough, and have not had a fever for 48 hours.

If, after returning to work, they develop symptoms they should follow the NHS Inform guidance and self-isolate. Employees should discuss their return to work with their line manager.

5. Test results and staying safe

The test will confirm if an individual who is showing symptoms of the virus actually has it. It will not confirm whether they have had it and have now recovered.

It is vital those who test negative continue to follow Scottish Government guidance including precautions related to social distancing and handwashing.

6. What happens to the test results

Results under the UK testing programme are communicated to individuals by text message and are intended to be fed back into public health records in due course. The Council will not receive a copy of the results just that the employee has been given an appointment slot.

7. Testing – additional information

For this area testing is currently conducted in drive-through sites operating at Glasgow Airport and the employee will be sent full details of how to access the facility when they receive their appointment.

These facilities are run by private sector organisations on behalf of the UK Government. This guidance will be updated as additional testing capacity is deployed on Scotland.

A limited number of home test kits are also available and can be used by employees who cannot arrange transport to Glasgow Airport.

The target for sending results is by text within 48hrs. A call centre is available by phone, to help people with the process and deal with test result queries.

Any questions from employers or key workers about accessing testing, the website, or results should be made through opshub@dhsc.gov.uk.

8. Self-referral portal

It is possible for staff to be able to self-refer, however this should not be used by Inverclyde Council employees unless advised to do so by your line manager.

Go to <https://self-referral.test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/>

9. Home tests

Home test kits are an option where key workers are unable to attend a drive-through centre, subject to availability. This option is covered in the booking process.

How home testing works

After a home-test kit is ordered, the test would then be delivered the next day, and the essential worker or household member would self-administer the swab, packing it up as per the included instructions.

A Royal Mail courier will arrive the day after to collect it and take it to the lab. The aim is that results will then be received by text within 48 hours.

Reliability of home testing

Evidence suggests that those with no clinical background or training should be completely able to secure an effective sample.

International peer-reviewed evidence suggests that self-swabbing is just as effective at securing a valid sample as clinician-administered testing.

Each kit comes with comprehensive instructions to guide you through how to administer the swab yourself. Test kits come with further instructions and a short video to take you through the process.

Protection of personal data

Amazon and Royal Mail are the commercial partners who are using their logistics systems to deliver home testing nationwide. They do not have access to the results or any health data.

APPENDIX 1: Prioritisation matrix

Priority number	Rationale for prioritisation	Relevant keyworkers	IC Council Job Roles (for guidance only*)
Priority Group 1: Health and social care workers; and staff working in residential institutions and essential roles where service resilience is at risk.			
1A	1. Staff delivering NHS services. 2. Staff providing social care to protect and care for the most vulnerable. Currently routed through Health Boards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All NHS staff and independent contractors working for the NHS, including community pharmacy and emergency dental care. • All social care and social work staff working with vulnerable people and the social care system, including care homes, care at home and children's services (including residential and secure care for children), and social care personal assistants (note key workers in these groups who are not employed through an organisation will access testing, where this can support a return to work, through the UK Government schemes) 	All IC HSCP staff will be referred for testing through the NHS/HSCP portals
1B	1. Staff with face-to-face roles in residential institutions with people in the care of the state. 2. Staff are working essential services with niche roles, where service resilience is at risk.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operational staff in prisons • All other carers working with looked after children not already included in 1A • Staff working on critical national infrastructure (e.g. energy supply) with niche skills essential to maintain services safely 	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defence staff living in Scotland who fall within the MOD's very highest priority category for testing. 	
Priority Group 2: Essential workers in critical national infrastructure fundamental for safety and security, and life-line services.			
2A	Staff directly involved in maintaining public safety and security.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Police Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Local authorities staff working public safety, security or law and order 	<p>Environmental health</p> <p>Trading standards</p>
2B	Staff essential to the delivery of critical services to the public including supply chains.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Front-line Home Office Staff, including: a) those running immigration detention centres, b) Maritime Border Force, c) frontline immigration and customs officers Essential defence personnel Essential environmental protection Essential animal health and welfare Funeral industry Staff working for third sector organisations supporting people and children who are vulnerable, including grant aided schools 	<p>Registrars</p> <p>Crematorium and burial grounds employees</p> <p>Education staff, i.e. guidance, educational psychologists</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Essential roles within food supply chain and food processing. Essential roles within medicines and pharmaceutical supply. Essential roles in chemicals supply chains 	Catering staff preparing/supplying food for vulnerable service users



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essential roles in energy and water supply 	
Priority Group 3: Staff directly involved in delivering other essential services.			
3A	Staff delivering essential services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff providing child care/education in schools for key workers • Public transport workers • Postal services • Financial services • Supermarket workers • Construction and maintenance of essential public services • Court and Crown Office staff • Civil Servants, parliament staff and other critical decision makers in public sector working on the central response to covid-19 • Journalists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff working in childcare hubs • Refuse collection • Roads maintenance • Legal staff working in the area of child protection • Housing benefits/customer contact centre • Staff manning shielding contact centre • extended corporate management team (ECMT)/corporate management team (CMT)
Priority Group 4: Staff involved in volunteering, or in nationally or locally significant industry important to economic sustainability and growth			
4	Staff involved in volunteering to provide support to vulnerable people and communities; and staff involved in national or local industry important to economic sustainability and growth.		CVS Inverclyde staff and community learning and development (CLD)

*If you manage a team you feel should be included in the list please contact health and safety with details of the employee group and the reason for inclusion. As the lockdown eases additional key worker groups are likely to be added to this list.

Covid-19 testing – referral form

This form should be used by managers to refer the following groups for testing:

1. The symptomatic household contacts of well employees who are home-isolating because of that person's illness
2. Employees who have symptoms of Covid-19, but who may be well enough to return to work.

Individuals to be tested should have either, or both of:

- New persistent cough
- Fever $\geq 37.8^{\circ}\text{C}$

Testing in this situation is being used to help make decisions about who can return to work and support the provision of essential and key services. Referrals should therefore only be made for staff who can realistically return to work in the event of a negative test.

This is a test only service and does not involve a clinical assessment. Employees who have concerns about their health, or that of household members should refer to <https://www.nhsinform.scot/> or call NHS24 (111).

The test needs to be taken during the first 5 days after the start of the illness, individuals who have been unwell for longer than this should not be referred. If your staff member/their household contact meets these criteria, then please complete this form and submit to occupational.health@inverclyde.gov.uk.

In addition call health and safety to advise that a form has been submitted.

To complete this referral, you will need to have to hand the following information.

FORMS SUBMITTED WITH INCORRECT OR INCOMPLETE INFORMATION IN THESE ESSENTIAL FIELDS WILL BE RETURNED WITHOUT AN APPOINTMENT BEING MADE.

Group A:

Testing of symptomatic household contacts of well staff

- For staff member:
 - Name,
 - role,
 - Employee number
- For the household contact:
 - Date of birth
 - Date of symptom onset
 - Mobile phone number (or that of parent/guardian if <16 years)
 - Email address they can access whilst at home (or that of parent/guardian if <16 years)
 - Registration number of car in which they will attend for testing

PLEASE NOTE: If there are multiple symptomatic contacts within the household, please make a separate referral for each one.

Group B:

Testing of staff with symptoms of Covid-19

- name,
- role,
- employee number
- Date of birth
- Date of symptom onset
- Mobile phone number
- Email address they can access whilst at home
- Registration number of car in which they will attend for testing

Save form as: Test_Referral_Name_DD_MM_YY

- The form should be saved as above with the name of the person to be tested and their date of birth.
- Email form to: occupational.health@inverclyde.gov.uk

Testing Referral Form

Details of Manager making the referral	
Name	<input type="text" value="Name"/> <input type="text" value="Name"/>
Role	<input type="text" value="Role"/> <input type="text" value="Role"/>
Directorate	<input type="text" value="Directorate"/> <input type="text" value="Directorate"/>
Service	<input type="text" value="Service"/> <input type="text" value="Service"/>
Section/Team	<input type="text" value="Section/Team"/> <input type="text" value="Section/Team"/>
Priority	<input type="text" value="Priority"/> <input type="text" value="Priority"/>
Further relevant information	<input type="text" value="Details"/> <input type="text" value="Details"/>
Details of individual to be tested	
Name of individual to be tested	<input type="text" value="First Name"/>
	<input type="text" value="Last Name"/> <input type="text" value="Last Name"/>
Date of birth of individual to be tested	<input type="text" value="dd/mm/yyyy"/> <input type="text" value="dd/mm/yyyy"/>
Relationship to member of staff	<input type="text" value="Relationship"/> <input type="text" value="Relationship"/>
Date of onset of symptoms	<input type="text" value="Date"/>
Employee Number	<input type="text" value="Employee No"/> <input type="text" value="Employee No"/>
<i>The reliability of coronavirus testing declines after day 5 of symptoms. Referrals made for people who are post day 5 of symptoms will not be appointed for testing.</i>	
Mobile phone number for individual to be tested, or their parent/guardian	<input type="text" value="Mobile Number"/>
<i>Test results will be communicated by text message. For confidentiality reasons, testing results must be sent directly to the individual being tested, except where the person being tested is under 16 years of age. Please ensure the following field is completed with the mobile phone number of the person being tested, unless they are <16 years of age, in which case it should be completed with the mobile phone number of their parent/guardian bringing the patient to the clinic.</i>	
Email address for individual to be tested, or their parent/guardian	<input type="text" value="Email"/>
<i>Where referrals are appointed for testing, appointment details will be sent by email - please ensure this address is currently accessible to the account holder. For confidentiality reasons, appointments for household members being tested must be sent directly to them (rather than the member of staff), except where the person being tested is under 16 years of age. Please ensure this is completed with the email address of the person being tested, unless they are <16 years of age, in which case it should be completed with the email address of their parent/guardian. Please also only supply one email address.</i>	
Attending for testing	
Individuals being tested are asked to attend local testing sites by private car - not by public transport, taxi, or on foot. THIS INFORMATION IS REQUIRED FOR AN APPOINTMENT TO BE MADE. If the individual being tested does not have access to a private vehicle, please enter 'NO CAR' in this box, and a member of the testing team will follow-up with them.	
Registration number for the car in which the individual will arrive for testing	<input type="text" value="Registration"/> <input type="text" value="Registration"/>

Aubrey Fawcett

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Our Ref: AF/JMcL

Date: 11th May 2020

Jeane Freeman MSP
Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport
T3.23
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

Jeane.Freeman.msp@parliament.scot

Dear Ms Freeman,

Inverclyde Council has the highest proportion of Covid 19 deaths in the country with 13 deaths per 10,000 compared with a Scottish average of 5 per 10,000. It has been well established that testing plays a vital role in establishing who has the virus and helping to bring it under control.

Concerns have been raised about access to testing for essential and key workers and the wider community who are not covered under the NHS/Care worker testing programme. The drive through testing hub at Glasgow Airport is a welcome addition to opening up testing facilities to others however access to this will be problematic for those employees in both the Council, and the wider community of essential workers, who do not have convenient access to transport facilities to get there.

Inverclyde has been identified as the authority with the largest local share of deprived areas, with 45% of data zones among the 20% most deprived areas in Scotland. Access to private vehicles and engagement with home testing facilities are likely to be significant issues in enabling testing to be as effective as it could be. In addition there is no facility for general community testing to help identify hotspots in the spread of Covid 19.

The Council would like the following to be considered by the Scottish Government as potential tools to help Inverclyde fight this disease and to bring down the devastating death toll in this area.

- Where local testing units have available capacity this being opened up to local workers with transport issues to help prevent the longer journey to the Glasgow Airport testing unit.
- Increasing local testing capacity to additional sites within Inverclyde, either through deployment of mobile units or new sites created.
- Open out testing capacity to vulnerable groups and communities to help prevent and control community spread.

Effective testing programmes have been proven as a key factor in control of this disease, with countries with such programmes in place showing reduced levels of infection and lower death rates.



**Healthy
Working
Lives**



**POSITIVE ABOUT
DISABLED PEOPLE**

Establishment of such programmes in localised areas which have been disproportionately affected by this disease could prove to be an effective tool in bringing it under control and reducing the death rate for the area. This will be especially important as recovery programmes are put into place and lock down is eased.

Yours sincerely



Aubrey Fawcett
Chief Executive