



GWENT COVID-19 TESTING TEAM

12 MONTHS OF COVID-19 TESTING | ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21



COVID-19 TÎM PROFI
Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol Aneurin Bevan

Aneurin Bevan University Health Board
COVID-19 TESTING TEAM

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WHAT WE STAND FOR

Mission

To deliver efficient and effective COVID-19 testing for everyone in Gwent, in a timeframe that supports their reason for a test.

Strategic Principles

Our work is delivered in line with the values of the organisation. The values of Aneurin Bevan University Health Board are:

- People first
- Personal responsibility
- Passion for improvement
- Pride in what we do

We operate within Prudent and Value-Based principles that are now firmly embedded in the planning and delivery of healthcare in NHS Wales. This strategy commits to:

- Public and professionals are equal partners through co-production
- Care for those with the greatest need first
- Do only what is needed and do no harm
- Reduce inappropriate variation through evidence-based approaches



COVID-19 TÎM PROFI
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Aneurin Bevan University Health Board

COVID-19 TESTING TEAM



FOREWORD

The health and care system in Wales is facing a huge challenge as it works to tackle Coronavirus within its communities. Aneurin Bevan University Health Board's Coronavirus Testing Programme has been operational since March 2020 and has grown exponentially in the last year. The programme aims to deliver timely, efficient and effective testing for anyone that needs a test in Gwent.

At 12 months old, we are reporting that the service has facilitated over 650,000 tests – whilst a big number sounds impressive, the actions that are taken as a consequence of having quick, reliable results is more important to us. The results that we issue could mean that patients are able to receive vital treatment safely, that our communities know to isolate to protect others and that our staff are safe to work with some of the most vulnerable people that need our help.



Our testing programme manages sixteen community testing facilities, a fleet of mobile home visit teams, staff to test in each of our hospitals, a regular testing programme for public-facing Health Board staff and a dedicated team to respond quickly to outbreaks, clusters and incidents. It started life as a unit to test critical staff that were needed to maintain services throughout our local resilience partners – we now offer responsive and regular testing to thousands of people every week.

We believe that our programme works because each of these teams are made up by people who care. Our far-reaching recruitment drive has brought people into the Health Board who now find themselves to be vocational public health servants. We are proud to have supported people in unearthing new careers and relish in the thought that we are nurturing our future nurses, doctors, therapists and leaders.

Making sure that we can offer testing to anyone that needs one is important to us. We stood up a group to consider what additional measures it could take to address health inequalities and inequity in access to testing for residents in areas of higher economic deprivation, for residents who are at greater risk of Coronavirus and those who are socially vulnerable. The group determined that there were several areas in Gwent where there is a high risk of communities not accessing testing when showing symptoms. The Health Board worked in partnership with Newport City Council, Department of Health and Social Care, NHS Wales, Gwent Police and local community leaders to build a local testing site in the heart of these areas. These local testing sites are semi-permanent facilities and are staffed by people who live within the community, who would have otherwise remained unemployed. These sites have subsequently provided easy, open testing to residents that would have otherwise not accessed testing and have been welcomed by the community which they serve.

As society comes to terms with a new reality, we will continue to go over and above to ensure that testing plays its part in whatever comes next in Gwent.

Peter Carr

Executive Director of Therapies and Health Science

Executive Lead for COVID-19 Testing

INTRODUCTION

PROGRAMME SCOPE

Our programme is now defined by several workstreams:

1. **Community testing** for symptomatic members of our communities;
2. **Hospital testing** to support the delivery of safe and effective healthcare;
3. **Pre-elective testing** to provide safe care to patients;
4. Testing in response to **outbreaks and incidents**;
5. Regular testing of Health Board **staff**;

The Testing Service started life as small testing unit to provide testing to critical staff of the Health Board. Our programme is now defined by several workstreams:

OUR APPROACH

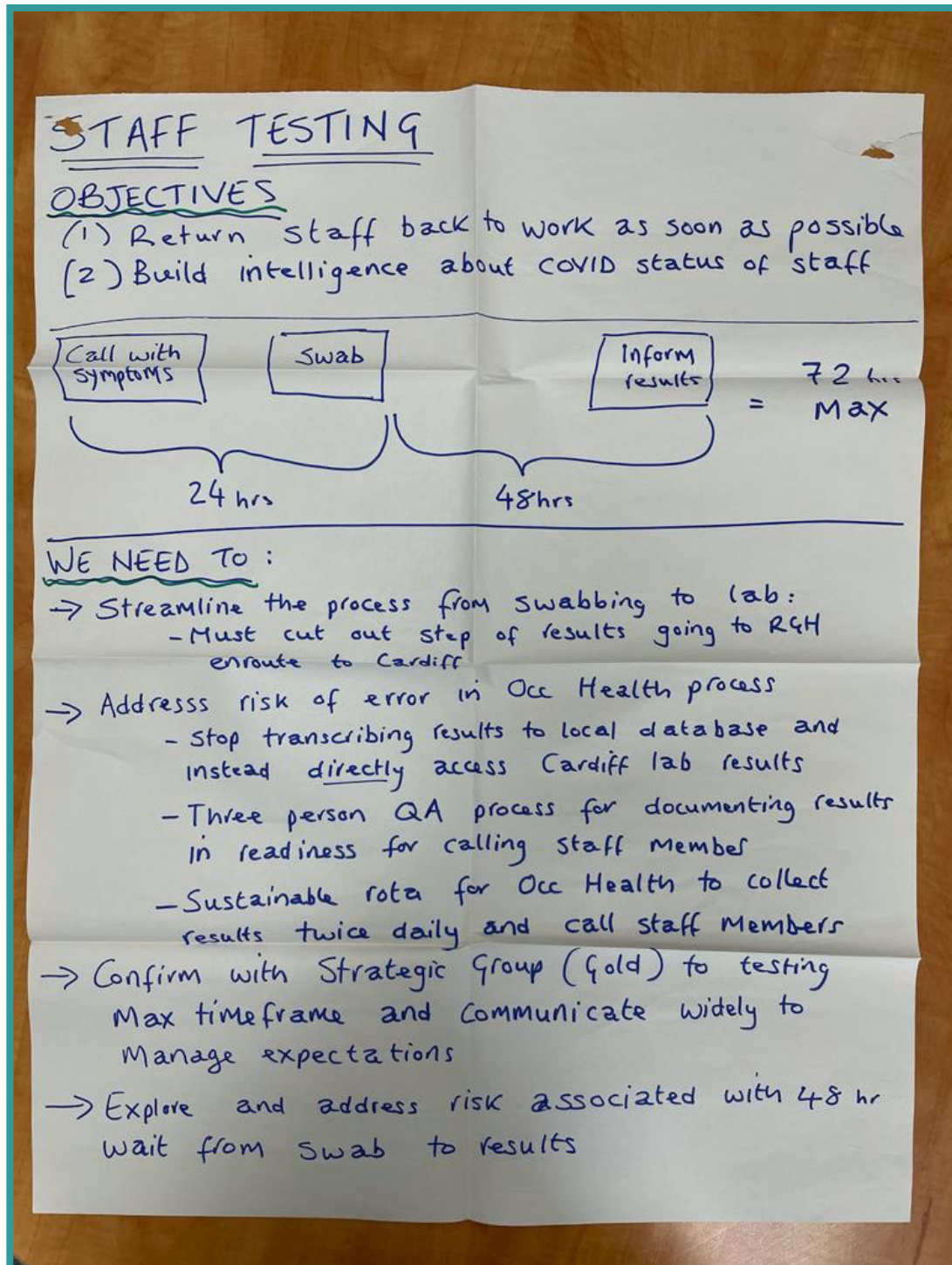
A concrete plan is difficult to pen when we are never sure what is around the corner. To help us keep going, we are guided by a set of principles that drive us to do well:

1. **We are good at what we do** - even though have only been doing this for 12 months, we know the entire testing pathway inside out; from booking a test to delivering results.
2. **Play to our strengths** – the strength of the team is each individual member. The strength of each member is the team.
3. **Obsessively patient focussed** - everything we do is for and about people. In short, we care enormously. We are here to help.
4. **Self-starters** - we are fire-and-forget and always trying to figure out new and better ways to do our job smarter, faster, more efficiently, and more effectively.
5. **Talented multitaskers** - we are not only able at spinning many plates at once, but we enjoy when more challenges are added on top.
6. **Endless optimists** - we approach both good times and bad with a cheerful attitude and a sense of humour. We always see the light at the end of the tunnel, even whilst writing an SOP at 2 o'clock in the morning.
7. **People people** - we understand the importance of good relationships, and we treat people the way we wish to be treated - within our team, within our organisation, with our patients and with all of our partners.
8. **Chameleons** - we can adapt in a fast-paced work environment, accommodate various work styles, and manage priorities and trade-offs in a continually changing environment.
9. **Effective communicators** - we can communicate succinctly and professionally. It is important to us that everyone understands what we mean.

INTRODUCTION

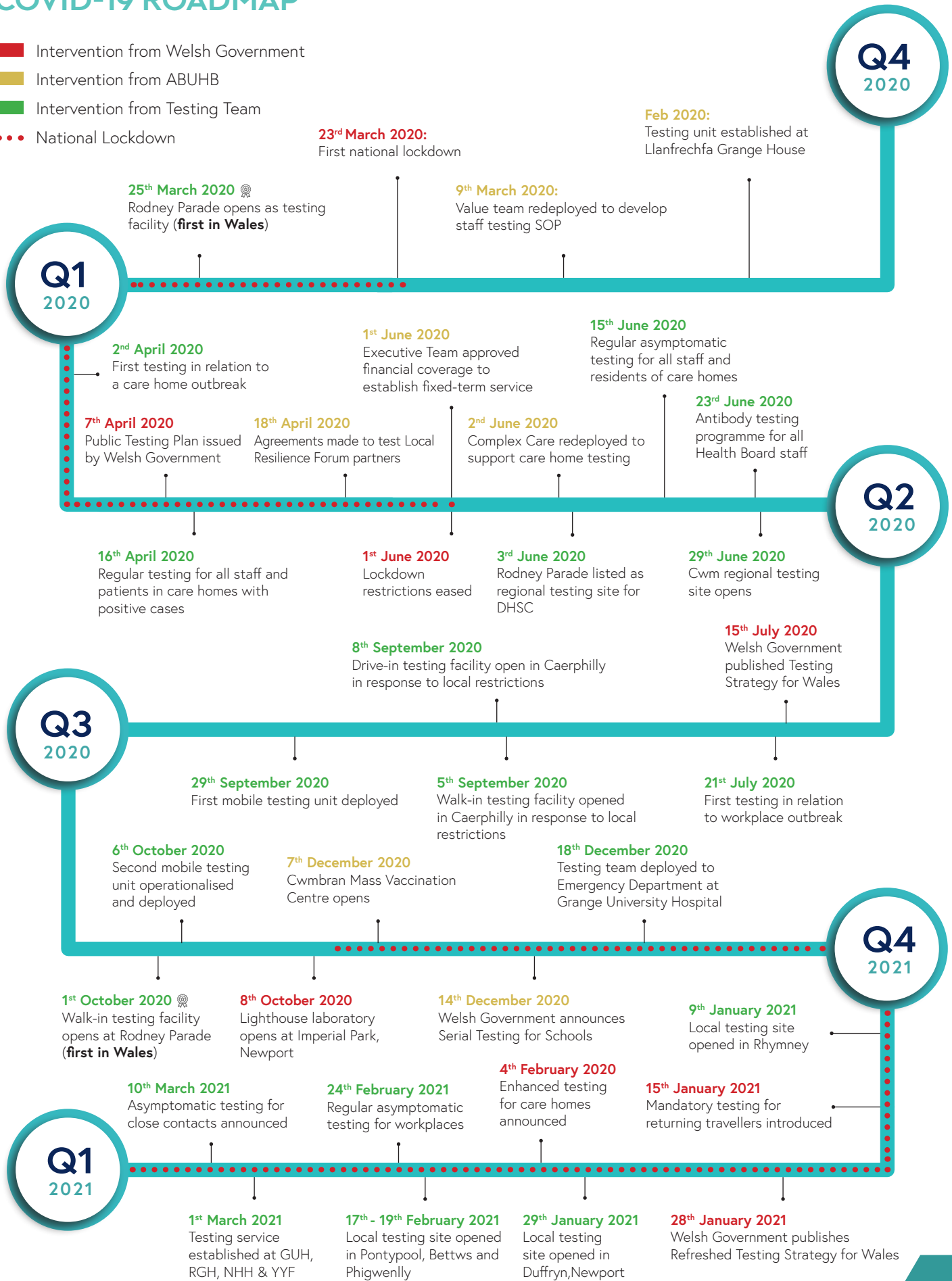
The Testing programme started life as a unit to test critical staff that was needed to maintain services throughout our local resilience partners. We now offer responsive and regular testing to thousands of people every week.

Remembering what we have done and where we have come from is important to us. The image below was shows the notes from our first ever design session. the delivery of safe and effective healthcare;



COVID-19 ROADMAP

- Intervention from Welsh Government
- Intervention from ABUHB
- Intervention from Testing Team
- ... National Lockdown



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Aneurin Bevan University Health Board

COVID-19 TESTING: March 2020 to March 2021



ANEURIN BEVAN UNIVERSITY HEALTH BOARD HAS TESTED

609,380

PEOPLE IN GWENT



161,153

People tested through our Regional Testing Site at Rodney Parade, Newport



43

Approved testing locations across Gwent



4,002

Visits to test our most vulnerable residents at their home



3,186

Tests to support patients have vital surgery and treatments



Our driving team has covered

125,753

 Miles

Enough to drive around the world five times



46,841

Tests for our staff to maintain treatment and care services



411

Staff have worked for the Health Board Covid-19 testing team



113,406

Tests to protect staff and residents in Care Homes



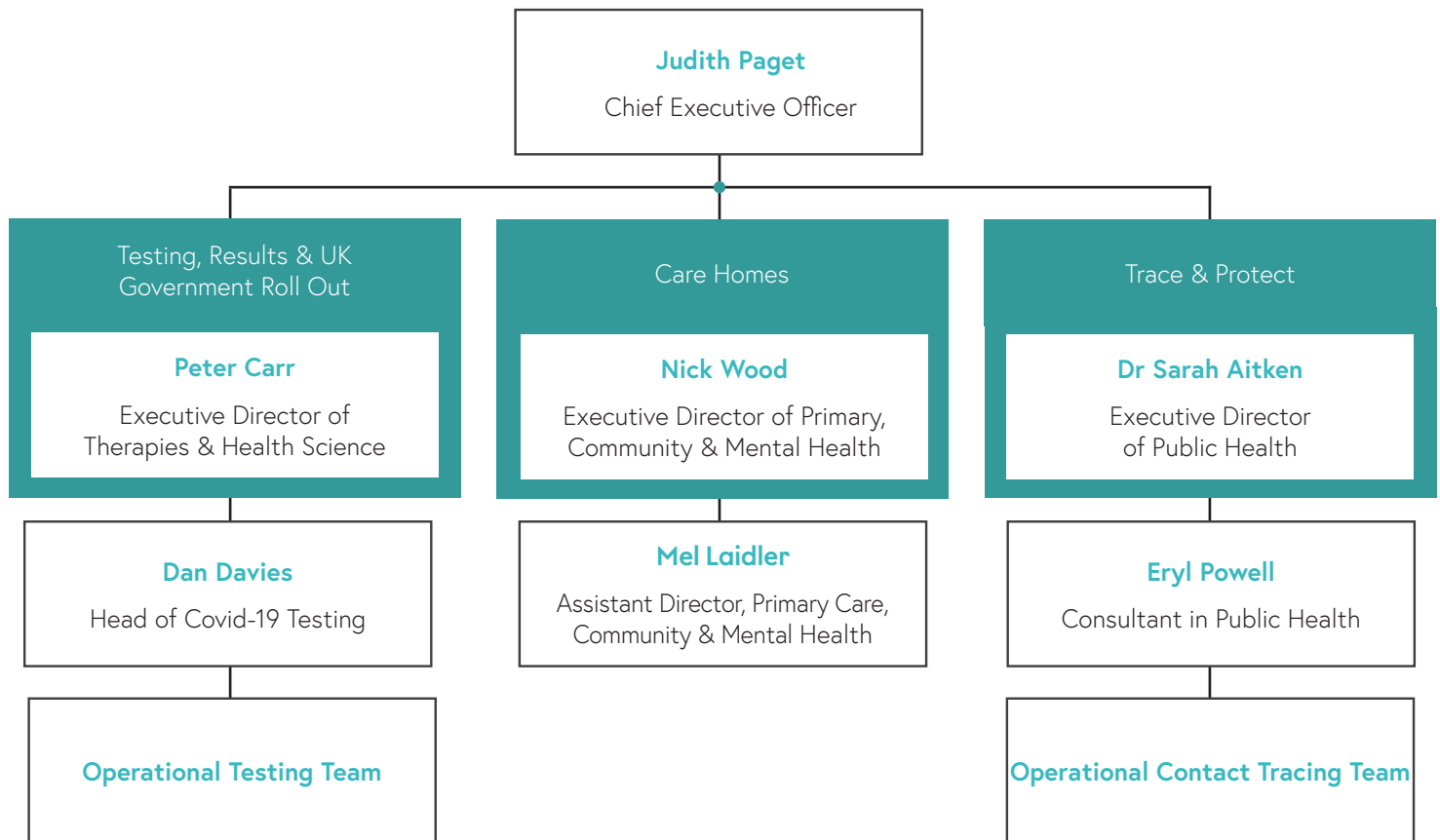
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COVID-19 TESTING TEAM

GOVERNANCE

The Health Board is responsible for symptomatic Covid-19 testing in Gwent and is well embedded within our internal test, trace and protect structure.



Testing is an integral component of Gwent region's ability to discharge its responsibilities set out in the Coronavirus Control Plan for Wales. The Testing Service works as an integrated function with local authorities and Public Health Wales through Gwent and local incident management teams to consider community transmission.

The Testing Service has two distinct roles, enabling and operational. As an enabling service we act in partnership and on instruction to provide testing to individuals or entire cohorts. COVID-19 testing can be split into three distinct entry points:

- Testing on behalf of individuals (symptomatic self-referral)
- Testing on behalf of clinicians (to enable treatment, diagnosis, safe movement and discharge)
- Testing to manage outbreaks / incidents (asymptomatic testing of potentially infected individuals)

Operationally, we carry out several key services. To effectively manage our enabling services we carry out the following roles:

- Call centre / Booking team
- Referral team
- Drivers and transport dispatch function
- Community based walk-in / drive-through testing
- Monitoring DHSC funded testing centres
- Hospital based, patient testing (routine and reactive support)
- Results communication team

GOVERNANCE

We have created a referral system that fits within the governance structure shown above. Early in the pandemic imperfections in the decision making structure resulted in too many individuals working in isolation. Now, a clear command and decision making structure guarantees we act in the public's best interest. Clear direction at the decision making stage provides clarity on:

- Who to test and why
- Where to test
- How to ensure all individuals are captured in testing
- The appropriate isolation guidance to be provided
- Who needs to be informed of the results
- Allocation of incident numbers (for tracking)
- Subsequent rounds of testing required
- When to review the findings

These fundamental decisions ensure we have a clearly defined scope for testing, reporting and which ultimately enables decision making. It underpins our ability to rapidly test and feedback results, in turn this drives how we successfully manage COVID-19 transmission both in the community and in our hospitals.

Relationship management has been integral to the progress we've made. We are extremely proud of how we've nurtured an environment that promotes multi-agency working. Health board, Public Health Wales and Local Authority stakeholders combine with a single common goal to act in the best interest of Welsh residents.



GOVERNANCE

BUILT-IN QUALITY MANAGEMENT

The COVID testing team has at its core a mixture of different professional backgrounds. We have used these varied experiences to create a self-critical culture. An audit system has been designed to provide reassurance that best practice is followed. With a rapidly developing service it has been essential to build a way of monitoring every change to evaluate its success.

The Testing Service has developed a compliance / reporting function. On a weekly basis we compile compliance reports on twice weekly patient testing and staff lateral flow testing. A monthly audit examining the health boards compliance with Welsh Government guidance to COVID-19 test every patient on admission to hospital is undertaken to provide reassurance to IPAC and NTG. These feed into the health board's Operation COVID Implementation Plan.

KEY RELATIONSHIPS

The Testing Service is embedded within routine services internal and external with the Health Board. We work as an integrated unit with local authority, Public Health Wales and NHS Wales colleagues to ensure that we are all delivering our services towards a common goal.

Our network relies on these good working relationships to achieve the outcomes that we have delivered over the last 12 months:

- Reducing Nosocomial Transmission Group
- Local Incident Management Teams
- Gwent Incident Management Team
- Executive Team of the Health Board
- Gwent Test, Trace, Protect Service
- NHS Wales
- Welsh Government
- Monmouthshire County Council
- Newport City Council
- Torfaen Borough County Council
- Caerphilly Borough County Council
- Blaenau Gwent County County
- Welsh Ambulance Service Trust
- Hospital site leadership teams
- Infection, Prevention and Control Team
- Department of Health and Social Care
- Dragons Rugby and Rodney Parade
- Health Improvement Cymru
- Public Health Wales
- Pathology and Microbiology
- Incident Coordinating Centre
- Local Environmental Health teams
- Local businesses (for use of land)
- Gwent Police
- Vulnerable Person Relocation Service
- Care homes
- Social services departments
- Performance Division



KEY RELATIONSHIPS

RODNEY PARADE

Dragons Rugby and Rodney Parade staff are well and truly at the centre of Gwent's testing response to the pandemic. The Rodney Parade staff have become close colleagues within our service since it began. Rodney Parade provides the Testing Service with the facilities and space it needs to host its booking and referral centre, meeting rooms, an eight-laned drive-through assisted testing centre, endless storage space, 24 hour access, power, Wi-Fi, a walk-up testing facility and a depot for our fleet of vehicles at no cost to the Health Board.

Rodney Parade hosts the central function of our Testing Service. We have developed on-site logistics that:

- Distributes thousands of lateral flow devices across Gwent every week;
- Delivered thousands of assisted tests across care homes every week;
- Dispatches hundreds of home visits for testing using the most efficient routes every week;

The site is flexible and spacious and means that we can accommodate multiple testing referral routes. It takes referrals from the UK Online Portal where public book a test online or by calling 119, it operates its own public referral line, it accepts referrals from pre-admission teams and it deals with outbreaks. Every person that presents to Rodney Parade is routed through the right system depending on how they booked and why they need to be tested.

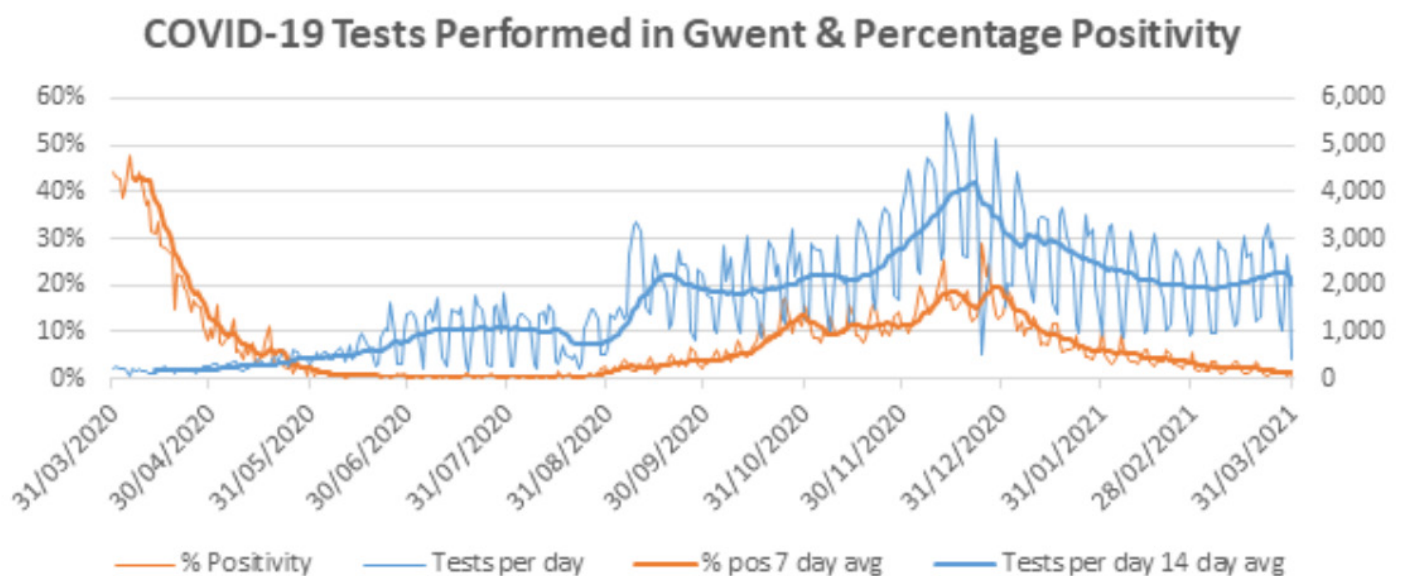
As a result of this hybrid approach, we are able to operate a flexible capacity and switch a moment's notice if we need to. In early October 2020, the lighthouse laboratory network became overwhelmed and the UK Department of Health and Social Care confirmed that results had suffered delays. Consequentially, symptomatic members of the public couldn't get a test appointment on the portal. We negotiated and expanded our Public Health Wales stream to create more capacity than the Lighthouse laboratory capacity gave us and opened up direct booking for people living in Gwent. We also set up our direct referral system for schools meaning that we could help to keep schools open during outbreaks. When the Lighthouse laboratory network started to balance, we were able to revert back to spread our demand as planned.



TESTING NUMBERS

SUMMARY OF COVID-19 TESTS UNDERTAKEN ON GWENT RESIDENTS IN 20/21 (PCR TESTS)	
Total Tests	609,380
Tests performed by PHW	160,711
Total care home tests	207,482
Care home tests performed by PHW	113,406
Total pre-operative requests	12,749
Pre-operative requests (performed by the community COVID-19 Testing Service)	3,186
In-patient tests	74,978
COVID-19 tests undertaken in the patient's own home (Since July 2020)	3,692

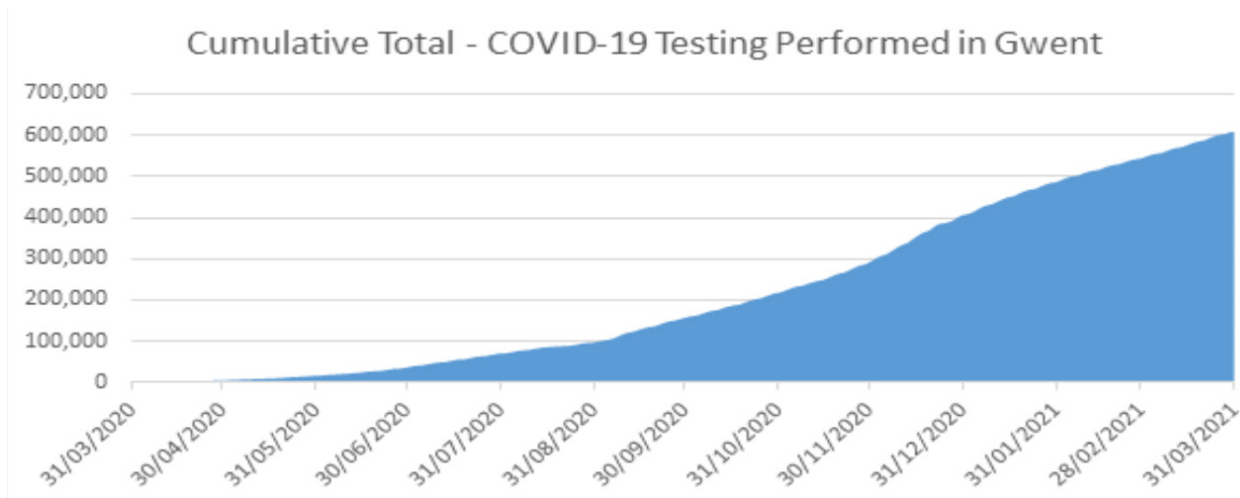
COVID-19 Tests Completed on Gwent residents



The graph above shows the quantity of COVID-19 tests undertaken on ABUHB residents over the past year, alongside the percentage positivity. When COVID-19 testing first began there was limited laboratory capacity and testing was targeted to ensure health board and partner organisations staff could safely return to work. This limited, targeted testing resulted in a high positivity rate (peaking at 48% on April 5th 2020).

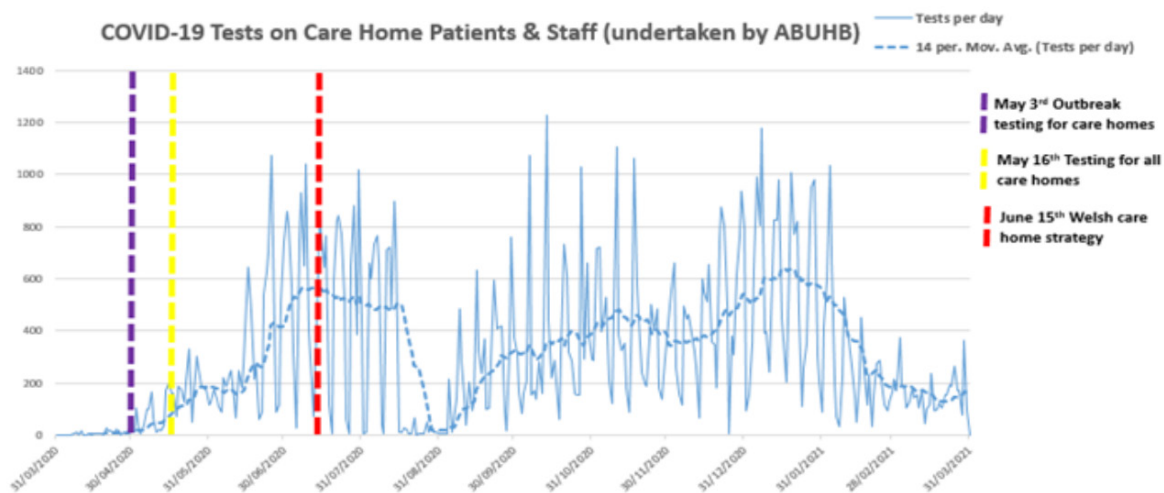
TESTING NUMBERS

As laboratory capacity increased, the criteria for testing was relaxed, and you can see a steady rise in the number of tests performed each day (peaking at 5,697 tests on December 14th 2020).



The cumulative total graph shows that in the first 6 months of the pandemic a total of 100,000 COVID-19 tests were undertaken on Gwent residents. In the subsequent 7 months (September 2020 – March 2021) 500,000 additional tests were performed.

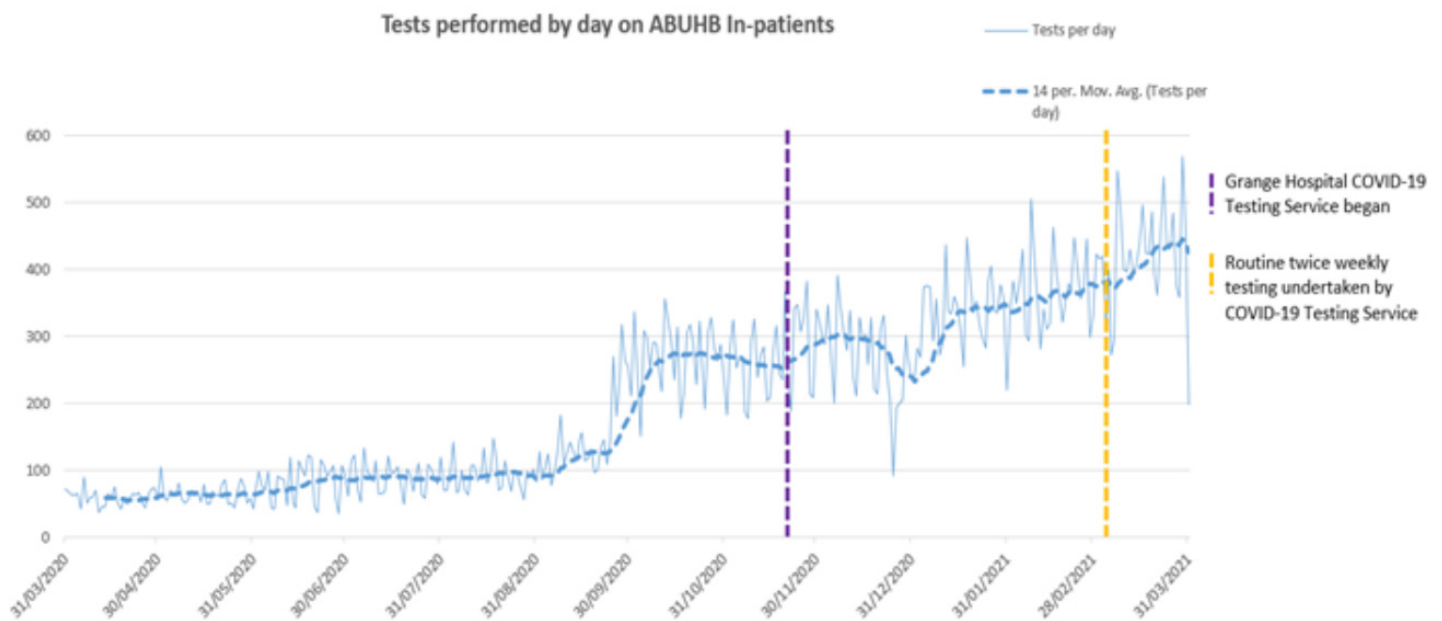
COVID-19 Tests Completed on Care Home Staff & Residents



Responding to the Welsh Government guidelines on care home testing released in May 2020 we began outbreak testing in enclosed settings. A peak of 1,231 tests was undertaken by the COVID-19 Testing Service on October 13th 2020. In total 207,482 COVID-19 tests have been carried out on care home staff and residents in 20/21.

TESTING NUMBERS

COVID-19 Tests Completed on ABUHB In-patients on all sites



Understanding the COVID-19 status of hospital patients has become essential to delivering services in a safe and effect manner. The Framework for COVID-19 testing for hospital in patients in Wales outlines the purposes for testing:

1. To prevent COVID-19 in elective pathways
2. To prevent COVID-19 in elective pathways in those with previous COVID-19 infection
3. To identify COVID-19 in emergency care pathways
4. To reduce risk to patients at higher risk
5. To show non-infectivity prior to discharge of patients with a history of COVID-19

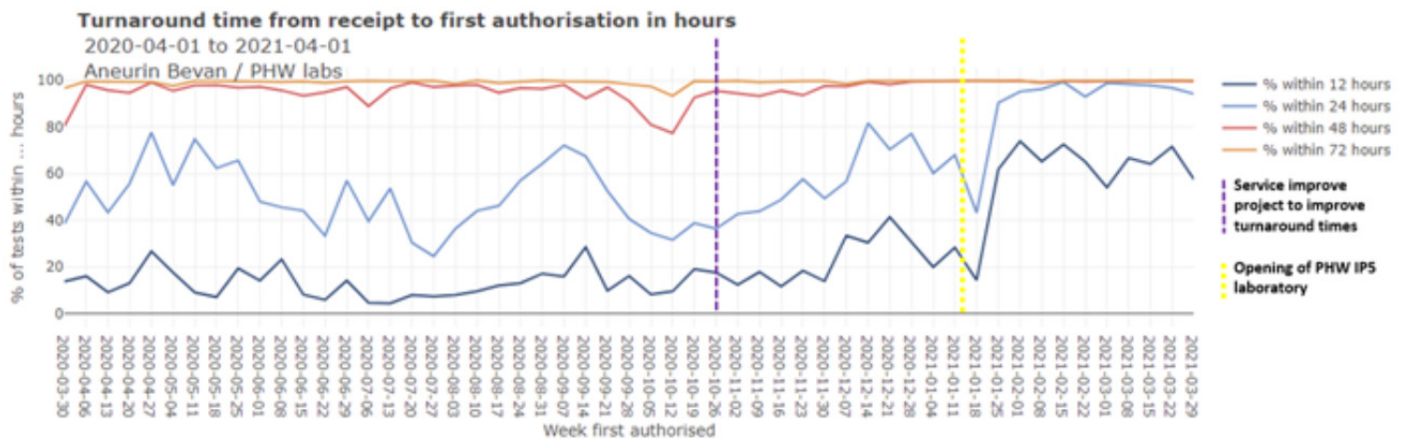
This service has subsequently expanded and as the graph illustrates, we continue to test patients more than ever. We provide support for admission, asymptomatic twice weekly and discharge testing across all eLGHs.



PERFORMANCE

Having the ability and capacity to test thousands of individuals a day is one essential component to COVID-19 testing, logistics and laboratory analysis are equally as important. Taking a whole system approach to COVID-19 testing we have built extremely strong relationships with both Public Health Wales and ABUHB Microbiology. Maximising the performance of the whole system we now routinely expect a large proportion of our COVID-19 tests to be completed in under 12 hours.

Turnaround times for ABUHB samples processed by Public Health Wales



ABUHB COVID-19 SAMPLES PROCESSED WITHIN PHW LABORATORIES

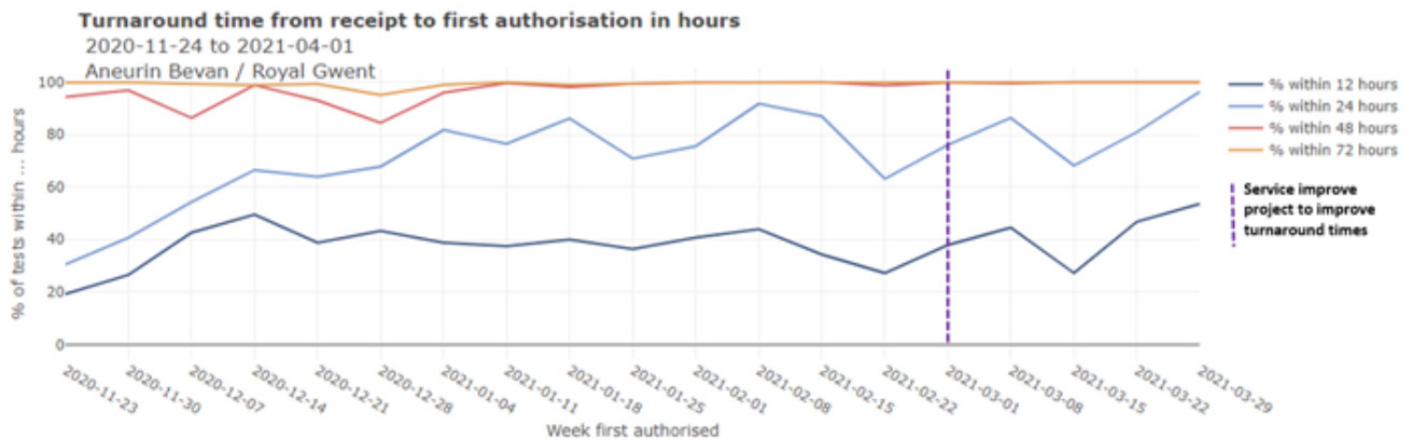
From received to authorised	30/03/2020	30/03/2021	Difference
Tested within 12 hours	16%	57%	+ 41%
Tested within 24 hours	39%	92%	+ 53%
Tested within 48 hours	81%	100%	+ 19%

The graph above illustrates the time taken for COVID-19 samples to be processed, from arriving at the laboratory to having a result. People tested in Gwent will now routinely have the result the same day as their test. This underpins our ability to rapidly react to clusters and safely manage community transmission especially in reference to variants of concern.

Working alongside Public Health Wales colleagues we have adapted our practice to take advantage of numerous marginal efficiency gains within the laboratory. We have utilised electronic requesting more than any other Health Board to try and ensure our samples can be processed as quickly and easily as possible. Alongside an effective and reactive transport service we can ensure samples are processed faster now than at any point during the pandemic.

PERFORMANCE

Turnaround times for COVID-19 samples processed within ABUHB



ABUHB COVID-19 SAMPLES PROCESSED WITHIN ABUHB LABORATORIES

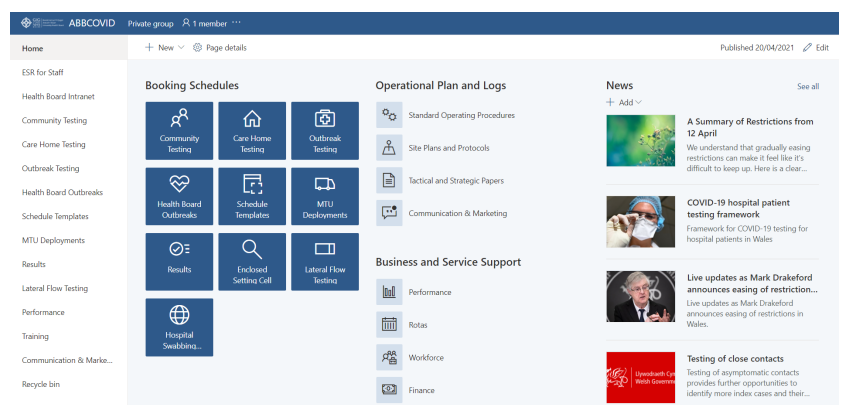
From received to authorised	23/11/2020	30/03/2021	Difference
Tested within 12 hours	20%	51%	+ 31%
Tested within 24 hours	32%	95%	+ 63%
Tested within 48 hours	92%	100%	+ 8%

ABUHB Microbiology took receipt of a routine COVID-19 testing analyser (Seegene) in mid-November 2020. To support the routine testing by lessons learnt from community testing a service improvement project was undertaken. The report produced was endorsed by microbiology and we continue to work alongside the laboratory to support wherever possible.

With the majority of COVID-19 samples across the health board now collected by the testing service we can control the flow of samples to both ABUHB and PHW laboratories.

OUR SYSTEMS

As a newly created team the COVID-19 Testing Service has had to develop its own IT solutions. Being based off site from traditional hospital sites we have had to create new ways working. To operate flexibly we need to share information in real time across multiple sites and with various departments.



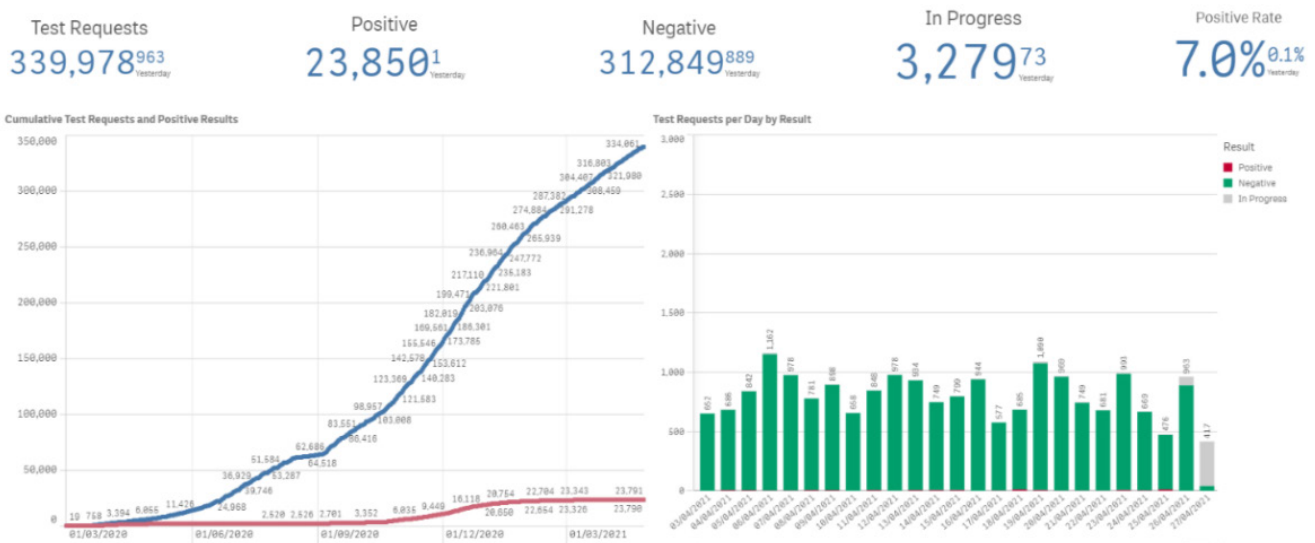
Office 365 is part of the Microsoft Office product line, it encompasses traditional Office applications (such as Word and Excel) and new cloud based software. A **SharePoint site** was developed to provide the testing service a secure way of sharing information. Access to files and folders can be tightly controlled on a user by user basis ensuring confidentiality and data protection. Using Microsoft Forms and Power Automate it has been possible to capture large amounts of data, enabling staff antibody and LFD testing.

OUR SYSTEMS

Welsh Clinical Portal is an NWIS product that has allowed for the electronic requesting of COVID-19 tests. Having an electronic request ensures we are able to carefully code and label each specimen, this has underpinned our ability to monitor specific outbreaks. Furthermore, the efficiency in which these samples can be processed has allowed the rapid expansion of testing across Wales. As a health board we consistently rank first for our use of electronic requesting.

The Performance and Information department have developed tools, in conjunction with NWIS to feed from data warehouses into the Health Board's systems. Lynne Wilde has helped create real time feeds for critical information such as COVID-19 results, patient COVID test status and compliance monitors. Availability of reliable and accurate data is essential for the COVID-19 Testing Service to operate, and we have embedded this technology into how we operate with the aim of working smarter, and not harder.

Anuerin Bevan Overall Testing Summary (Excludes NHS Digital Portal Tests)



Communicating of COVID-19 results back to the individual or requesting clinician has been a challenge since the pandemic began. PHW developed an "auto-text" function to deliver results back to an individual, this allowed for thousands of results a day to be automatically handled by IT systems. However, we delivered a hybrid approach of technology and the personal touch. Not everyone is confident with technology, speaks English as their first language or they might simply not have a mobile phone. We are notified each day of any text messages that could not be sent and a dedicated team work to communicate them using alternative means.

WHOLE SYSTEM APPROACH

The COVID-19 Testing Service strives to work in a collaborative fashion within ABUHB, NHS Wales, local councils and DHSC. This attitude of active engagement has allowed us to forge relationships to try and deliver the best possible patient experience.

WHOLE SYSTEM APPROACH

PUBLIC HEALTH WALES:

PHW laboratories process all community COVID-19 specimens for ABUHB. To drive efficiency and turnaround times we have standardised terminology, prioritisation systems, requesting and swabbing. Our in-house transport service ensures our specimens arrive to capitalise on the traditionally quieter periods of the day. All these minor changes ultimately make our samples as easy as possible to process, building confidence between our organisations and guaranteeing results back as quickly as possible.

POINT OF CARE (POC):

ABUHB PoC team are a small laboratory team who focus on delivering and training devices to allow clinical staff to perform pathology tests at the patient's bedside. The ability to quickly and reliably test a patient for COVID-19 without having to wait for laboratory results had the potential to significantly improve patient flow and clinical decision making. Once these devices came to market it was critical to ensure they could be implemented quickly, safely and in the areas of greatest need. The COVID-19 Testing Service volunteered support and continue to work to deliver the best options for testing across the health board. Being able to utilise high volume testing environments such as Rodney Parade Stadium has allowed us to run hundreds of tests to dramatically speed up delivery of devices. We currently have two PoC devices approved within ABUHB and a third being evaluated.

IN HOSPITAL TESTING:

To address a deficit of an agreed protocol for in hospital COVID-19 testing a policy was written and agreed in January 2021. The policy was designed to simplify an increasing complex testing system which included multiple platforms and interchangeable terminology. A testing matrix was included to define the types of tests (urgent, routine and screening) and the eligible patient groups.

The implementation of the Urgent COVID-19 system in January this year has been extremely successful. This was brought about to:

- Prevent fraudulent requests & protect this precious resource
- Provide an audit of who, when and why an urgent COVID test was required
- Standardise practice
- Reduce the time it takes to get a result

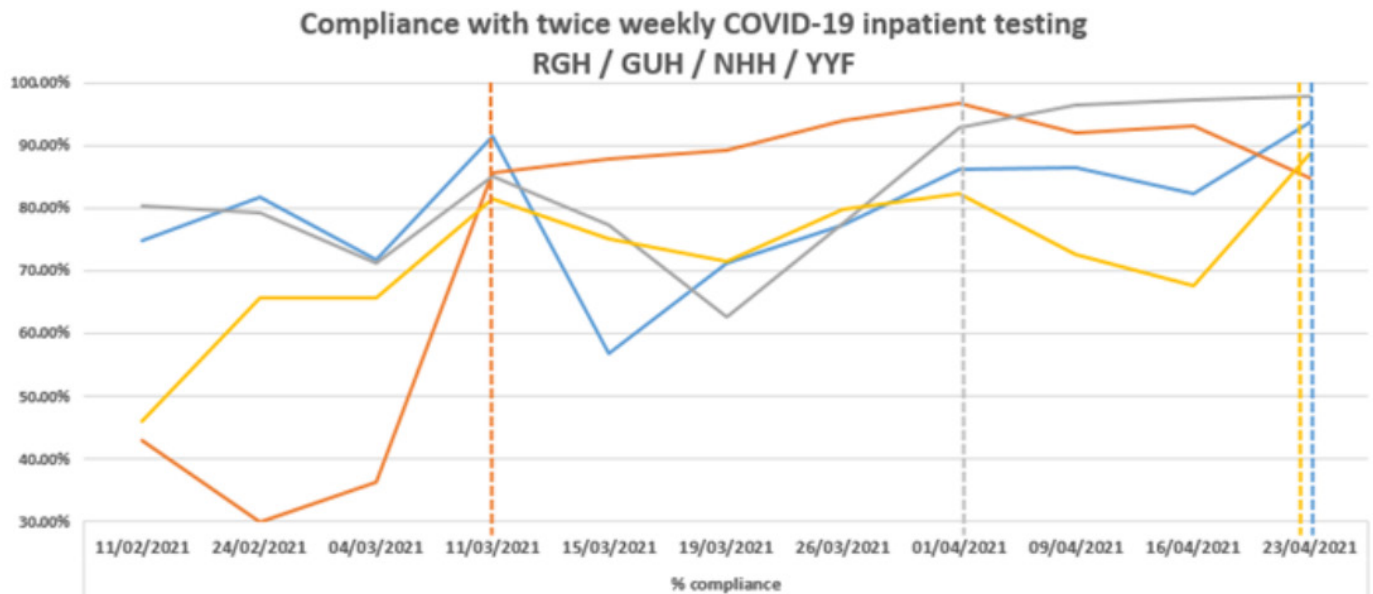
A simple digital solution for logging approved specimens now enables pathology to quickly determine which specimens need prioritisation. Turnaround times have come down. We can manage the allocation to ensure value. A reserve of urgent tests has now been built up to ensure resilience for any subsequent waves.



WHOLE SYSTEM APPROACH

DEPARTMENT	SUPPORT	DESCRIPTION
Point of Care	Device validation Training & delivery Staffing	To enable a quick delivery of new devices we work in collaboration, utilising the high throughput of community testing. A band 3 role is within the department in currently funded by the COVID-19 Testing Service to support rapid deployment of new PoC COVID devices.
Electronic Test Requesting	Staffing	Two band 3 posts funded by the COVID-19 Testing Service have been utilised to work alongside microbiology and the clinical areas to increase support. The team promote best practice on requesting COVID-19 tests.
Microbiology (ABUHB)	Service improvement support Reactive support with staffing and transport Engagement with clinical areas	In conjunction with Health Improvement Cymru we have provided service improvement support on both urgent & routine workflows. Ongoing help is on offer with both ad-hoc transport and staffing. COVID-19 Testing Service staff have rotated into microbiology to bridge staffing deficits pending recruitment.
Microbiology (ABUHB)	Staffing	A COVID-19 Sample Co-ordinator role (4 FTE posts) were funded by the COVID-19 Testing Service. These individuals act as a link between microbiology, clinical areas and the testing service. They effectively route work to the most appropriate laboratories and work streams.
Maternity	Support visitor testing Staffing	Working alongside IPAC & maternity services a protocol was agreed to test visitors to the department. Whilst this protocol is designed to protect staff, patients and visitors it adds pressures to the clinical area. To mitigate this the COVID-19 Testing Service currently have three members of staff working within the department providing visitor testing and HCSW support.
Mental Health /Learning Disabilities	COVID-19 Testing Support /Transport	When writing the second iteration of the testing policy it became apparent the unique challenges facing MH & LD needed special attention. The testing policy now enables access to urgent testing to prevent long isolation periods for extremely vulnerable patients. Ad-hoc sample transport is also provided to ensure the best possible patient outcomes.
Paediatric Services	Results notification service	To enable patient discharge in the paediatrics department an agreement was reached for the COVID-19 Testing Service to provide a results notification service for the department. Prior to this the medical team was responsible for monitoring COVID-19 results on discharged patients and informing them of their results. This is now incorporated into the COVID results cell workload with the aim to enable safe patient discharge and relieve work on the paediatric team.

REGULAR PATIENT TESTING



SITE	PERCENTAGE COMPLIANCE (TWICE WEEKLY PATIENT TESTING)	
	Week prior to implementation	Week after implementation
GUH	82.50%	93.70%
RGH	36.30%	85.60%
NHH	77.60%	92.90%
YYF	67.70%	88.70%

The COVID-19 Testing Services has created two new services within ABUHB hospitals, routine swabbing and reactive support. We now provide a complete twice weekly COVID-19 in patient testing service on the four eLGH sites. This system has removed pressure on frontline staff, reduced nosocomial transmission and supported patient flow/discharge twice weekly testing. This enhanced phlebotomy style service ensures everyone is offered a test.

Regular staff testing

Asymptomatic staff testing was first introduced to safeguard green pathways across ABUHB. We have subsequently rolled out lateral flow testing to all health board staff. To ensure a rapid LFD deployment an internal system was developed for users to register and results to be submitted. This was done to ensure we were not dependant on a slow paced national system. As a result of this decision we have been able to offer all staff access to LFD testing, with over 11,000 already signed up. The British Medical Association highlighted significant variation in the availability of staff testing across NHS Wales in March 2021. We were able to say with confidence that ABUHB staff have already been offered access to testing. Over 1,000 LFD tests are now carried out each day on ABUHB staff. We continue to work in conjunction with the nosocomial transmission group and divisions to encourage and support compliance.

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

DATE	ACTIONS	FINANCIAL
1 June 20	Initial financial coverage for six months	£257,333/month
12 August 20	Additional coverage for winter infrastructure and more staff	+ £27,151/month
20 November 20	Additional coverage for more staff	+ £127,229/month
7 December 20	Additional coverage for hospital testing	+ £223,559/month
	Total coverage for 2020/2021	£3,900,136
	Current monthly coverage	£624,452.23

For 20/21, the service has cost £2,724,175. The IMTP assumption for 21/22 has been submitted based on a consolidated model of all coverage at £607k per month for testing for 6 months of the year. A total estimate of £3,642,000.

Based on the demand during February and March 2021, the service operated at a monthly cost of circa £400k per month with recruitment sustaining the service as staff left rather than increasing service levels. On this basis, the projected costs for April are expected to be circa £400k.

The key financial uncertainties are:

- Additional requirements of surge testing of variants (unknown);
- How long the existing service will remain in place at Rodney Parade and whether there will be a step down to a smaller facility on Health Board premises sometime during 21/22;
- A significant new wave of the virus.

TESTING ON ADMISSION

Understanding the COVID-19 status of our patients as they are admitted into hospital is vital. It allows us to protect staff, patients and services. The Welsh Government guidelines requires all patients to be COVID-19 tested upon admission to hospital. To support this the COVID-19 testing service offers dedicated support to GUH admission locations from 8am to 10pm each day. Clinical staff are only required to highlight which patients to test and the swabbing team will manage the rest of the process.



WORKFORCE

On 1 June 2020, the Executive Team approved financial coverage to recruit a fixed-term workforce to form a Testing Service across Gwent. Since then, we have recruited 238 people into the Health Board and finished the 20/21 financial year with a headcount of 136 and a WTE of 121.23.

STAFF GROUP	2021 / 01	2021 / 02	2021 / 03
Health Care Support Worker (Testing) Community	26.02	39.57	30.73
Health Care Support Worker (Testing) Hospital	12.53	22.77	20.79
Administrative and Clerical	44.05	32.85	46.31
Estates and Ancillary	14.07	14.07	12.07
Nursing and Midwifery Registered	8.28	8.48	11.33
Grand Total	104.95	105.52	121.23

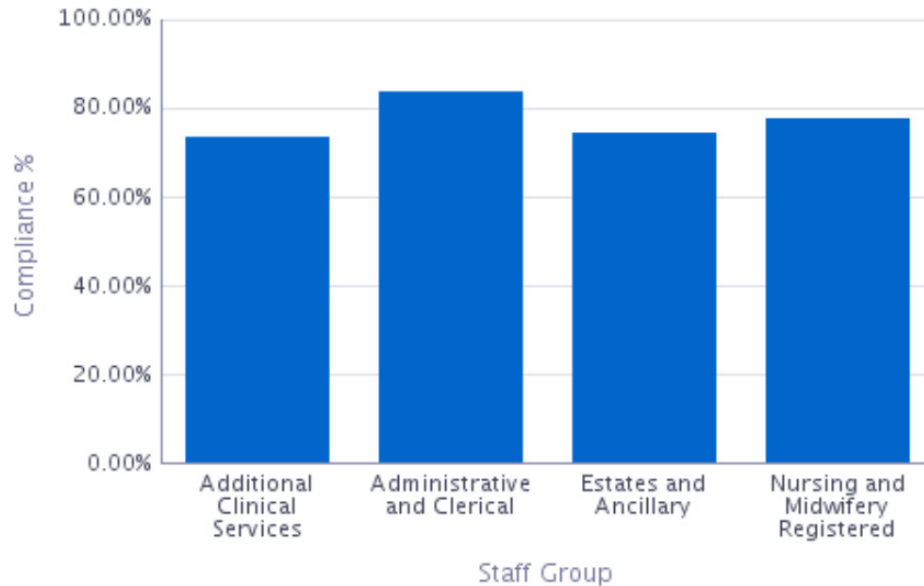
On 7 December 2020, Executive Team made the decision to offer staff associated with testing a permanent contract to help with recruitment and retention. Those staff have been informed that their current role will continue for as long as there is a need to test for Covid-19; when that need reduces they will be offered to be redeployed within the Health Board to a role which is in line with their skills, experience and current terms and conditions as set out in the organisation's Organisational Change Policy.

The service has also taken on additional fixed-term contracts to flex up programmes that are expected to be relatively short. The service is currently made up of:

GRADE	ROLE	PERMANENT	FIXED-TERM	SECONDED
BAND 2	HCSW	31.5	24.5	0
BAND 2	A & C	23	0	1
BAND 2	Facilities	6.5	5.5	0
BAND 3	A & C	6	0	4.2
BAND 5	A & C	3	1	0
BAND 5	Nursing	5.3	0	1
BAND 6	Nursing	1	0	1
BAND 7	Nursing	0	1	1
BAND 7	A & C	0	1	2
BAND 8a	A & C	0	0	1
TOTAL	-	76.3	33	11.2

WORKFORCE

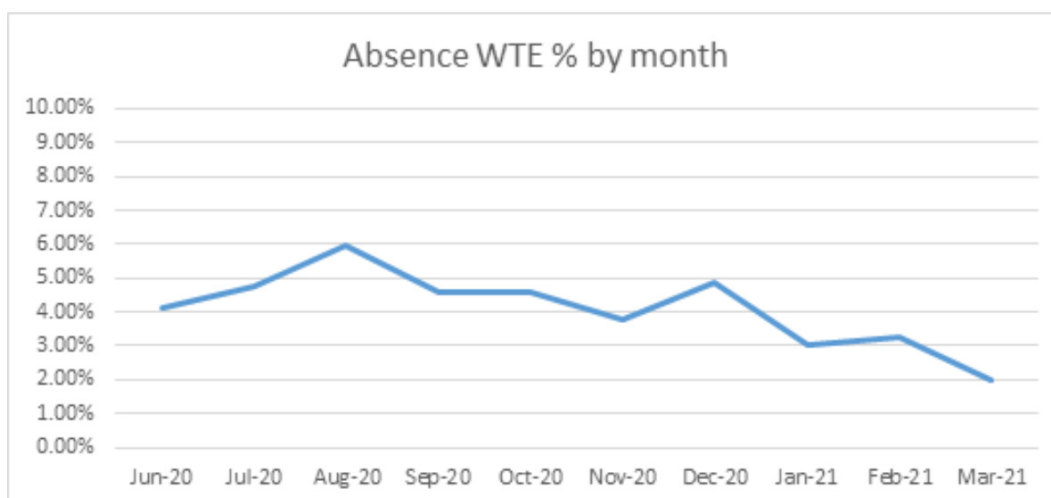
During the induction of staff, all new recruits are required to undertake their online ESR training modules. Staff have the maximum possible compliance without undertaking the classroom learning which have not operated this year.



In addition to mandatory compliance training, the service has offered its staff:

- 4x4 and Dangerous Weather Driving training for all drivers;
- The Complete Microsoft Excel Course Collection for all administrative staff;
- Taking the Lead for new managers;
- Adult Mental Health First Aid Wales for all managers;
- Chubb's Fire Marshal training for site staff.

The service had an average absence WTE percentage of 4.1% against an organisational average of 8.1%.



USER EXPERIENCE

COMMUNITY TESTING

To monitor and evaluate the user experience, the testing team is actively seeking feedback to influence the delivery of the testing function. We have asked for feedback on the booking process, the testing experience and how and when they received their results.

Booking Process

How did you find the knowledge and helpfulness of our staff?

[More Details](#)
[Insights](#)

Very Poor	0
Poor	0
Fair	0
Good	4
Very Good	80



How was the overall booking experience

[More Details](#)
[Insights](#)

Very Poor	0
Poor	0
Fair	2
Good	8
Very Good	74



Testing Experience

How safe did you feel when you had your test

[More Details](#)

Very unsafe	1
Somewhat unsafe	0
Neither safe nor unsafe	0
Somewhat safe	0
Very safe	83



How was the overall test experience

[More Details](#)
[Insights](#)

Very Poor	0
Poor	0
Fair	0
Good	12
Very Good	72



Results

How did you receive your test results?

[More Details](#)
[Insights](#)

Call	5
Text	75
Email	3
Other	0



Did you receive your result within 24 hours

[More Details](#)
[Insights](#)

Yes	48
No	34
Other	1



Overall experience

[More Details](#)
[Insights](#)

Very poor	0
Poor	1
Fair	0
Good	10
Very good	73



USER EXPERIENCE

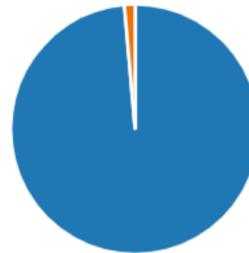
Asymptomatic Staff Testing using Lateral Flow Devices

To maximise compliance, the testing team designed a simple and quick process. To monitor the user experience, all participants are automatically asked to submit feedback. This feedback has allowed us to adapt our process and communications to ensure it is fit for purpose. Please see feedback below.

Are the instructions and guidance on regular testing easy to understand and follow?

[More Details](#)

 Insights



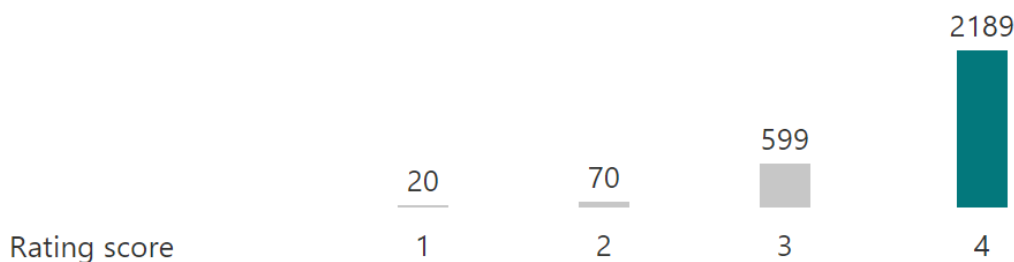
Have you successfully recorded a result for your lateral flow testing?

[More Details](#)



76% rated between "4-4" for this question

Score distribution



Feedback from Staff;

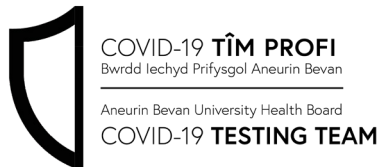
- Easy to use and definitely recommend it
- Really easy to use! Love it. Thank you
- Easy I'm not that young or computer literate so if I can manage it anyone can
- Incredibly easy. The testing team shows how things could be done across the NHS - easy, simple and effective!
- Not much more you could improve...
- Just started using it and all good so far. Much better to be able to test from home and arrive into work at the vaccination centre knowing my result is negative

COMMUNICATION

COVID-19 TESTING TEAM IDENTITY

As part of the Covid-19 testing communications strategy, a professional and distinctive AB Covid-19 testing brand/identity and guidelines was created to support the team with internal communications. The brand aims to achieve the following;

- Define and express the benefits and opportunities that C-19 TT has to offer;
- Grow value of C-19 TT functions through professional and outcome based evidence;
- Raise awareness of the C-19 TT and our functions, especially in our Hospitals;
- Improve the user experience through engagement while challenging systems or processes for improved outcomes.




COMMUNICATION

COMMUNITY TESTING


During January 21, the testing team felt the need to develop a campaign to actively promote and influence communities across Gwent to seek testing opportunities. The team developed and deployed a dynamic and comprehensive campaign that adapts to demands and other external factors while encouraging patients, staff and communities to book a test if they are symptomatic while following Public Health Wales guidance. The campaign key messages included;

- Now more than ever, we need to keep going
- We are in this together;
- Protect what matters most;
- One year on, we are 2 meters apart, but closer than ever.



COVID-19 Tŷm Profi
Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol Aneurin Bevan
Aneurin Bevan University Health Board
COVID-19 TESTING TEAM

Please CALL 0300 30 31 222 to BOOK A TEST.






COVID-19 Tŷm Profi
Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol Aneurin Bevan
Aneurin Bevan University Health Board
COVID-19 TESTING TEAM

BOOK A COVID-19 TEST

Rhumney, Caerphilly
COVID-19 Local Test Site

Former Aldi Carpark, Old Brewe
NP22 5EZ. Open 8 am to 8 pm.

[f](#) [t](#) [i](#)

#InThisTogether



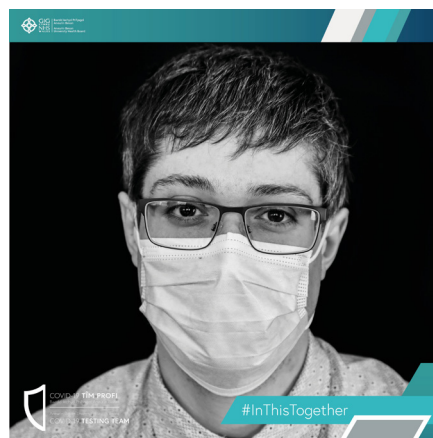
BOOK A COVID-19 TEST

Now more than ever, we need to keep going.
If you feel unwell, please book a Covid-19 test.
Covid-19 test are **FREE**, **QUICK** and **PAINLESS**

Please CALL 119 or visit www.nhs.uk/coronavirus to book a test.



#InThisTogether





COVID-19 Tŷm Profi
Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol Aneurin Bevan
Aneurin Bevan University Health Board
COVID-19 TESTING TEAM

BOOK A COVID-19 TEST

Rhumney, Caerphilly
COVID-19 Local Test Site

Former Aldi Carpark,
Old Brewery Lane,
NP22 5EZ.

Open 08:00 - 20:00
Monday - Sunday

Booking required: 119 / gov.wales

[f](#) [t](#) [i](#)

#InThisTogether

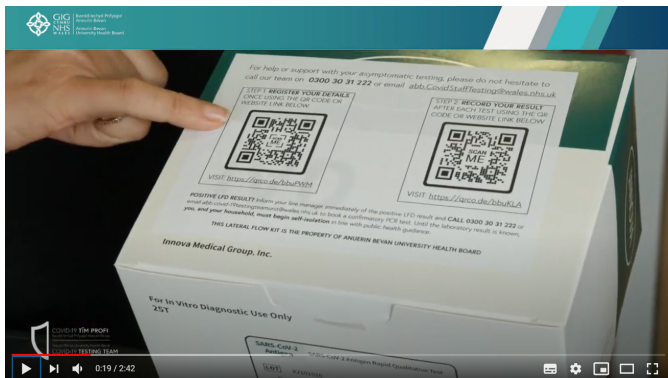


COMMUNICATION

STAFF TESTING

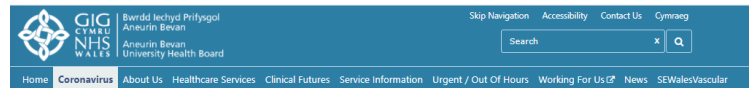
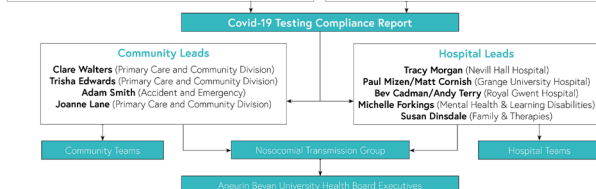
During the planning process for deploying asymptomatic testing using lateral flow devices, the team wanted to develop a quick, scalable, user-friendly system. A community facing website was developed to enable access to all staff when testing at home. The dynamic website was created with be used with any device i.e. mobile phone, iPad or laptop. Additional content was developed to aid the user during the process and proactively answer any questions or concerns. Additional instructions and stickers were produced to make it easier for staff to access the website by scanning the QR code on top of the box. We also include key information in the sticker including the procedure for a positive test and contact details for the covid-19 testing team. Other content produced includes;

- A website;
- Instructions;
- Videos;
- Flowcharts;
- FAQ's;
- Guidance;
- Documentation.



COVID-19 TESTING: COMPLIANCE REPORTING

COVID-19 Patient Testing Compliance	COVID-19 Staff Testing Compliance
Kye Smith (Assistant Ops Manager - Data & Reporting)	Dale Evans (Assistant Ops Manager - Projects Lead)
The report highlights the following:	The report highlights the following:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Patients who have been admitted in Hospital for longer than 7 days. Patients who have not tested positive in the 90 days. Patients who have been tested in the last 5 days. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff who have registered for Staff Testing (Lateral Flow Devices) Staff who have not tested positive in the last 90 days. Staff who have submitted a result within the last 7 days.



Home > Lateral Flow Device Information

Lateral Flow Device Information

Please be mindful that lateral flow testing is designed for **asymptomatic testing only**. If at any point you develop COVID-19 symptoms, please isolate, inform your line manager and book a test on **0300 30 31 222**.

Here is some useful information to help you carry out your twice-weekly asymptomatic testing successfully, including a walk-through video, instructions and frequently asked questions.

Please make sure that you read all the information that is available to you before starting your routine testing. Your testing kits will be provided to you by your place of work or line manager. You will be provided with a kit containing:

- 25 sterile swabs
- 25 test cartridges
- 25 extraction tubes
- 2 bottles of solution

This is enough for **12 weeks of testing**, please use them all (unless you test positive).

Please read our [Privacy Statement](#).

Step 1: Registering

Watch this video tutorial on how to register for your test.

Use this link to register for Lateral Flow Device testing. Please only register your details once.

Step 2: Tutorials and Guidance

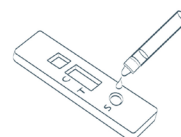
Watch this Video Tutorial to complete your test.

View the Quick Guide Instructions.

View the full instructions.

View the Process (Flowchart)

STAFF SELF-TESTING FOR CORONAVIRUS USING A LATERAL FLOW DEVICE (LFD)

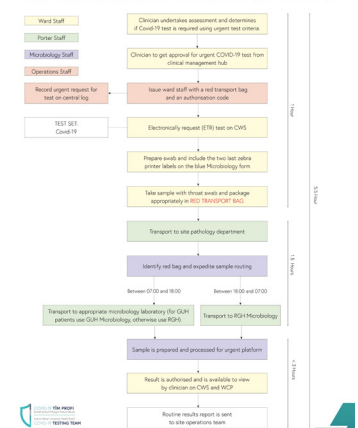


Collect your **SELF-TESTING KITS** before
Sunday 14th March 2021

The LFD collection point is available at
Monday to Friday
09:00-17:00 at Level 2 (Admin area)
17:30-23:00 at Level 3 (Education Centre)
Saturday & Sunday
09:00 to 18:00 at Level 2 (Admin area)

Covid-19 Testing Team

URGENT REQUEST FOR PATIENTS TESTING





Any questions?

If you have any questions, please contact:

Dan Davies

Head of Covid-19 Testing
Aneurin Bevan University Health Board
dan.davies2@wales.nhs.uk



Our compliance with Welsh Government's Refreshed Testing Strategy

Welsh Government published its Refreshed COVID-19 Testing Strategy on 28 January 2021, which was an updated version of its strategy that was published in July 2020.


Since the July 2020 strategy was published, new testing technologies have demonstrated it is possible to test at far greater scale, frequency and speed than ever before. This refreshed strategy identifies national testing priorities, which are:


- **Test to diagnose** (to support NHS clinical care testing helps identify those who are infected so that clinical judgments can be made to ensure the best care)
- **Test to safeguard** (to protect our NHS and social care services and individuals who are our most vulnerable)
- **Test to find** (to target outbreaks and enhance community surveillance in order to prevent the spread of the disease amongst the population)
- **Test to maintain** (to support the education system and the health and well-being of our children and young people and to enable them to realise their potential, and to identify cases and contacts in workplaces to prevent them from potentially spreading the infection if they were to become infected and infectious, and to maintain key services)
- **Test to enable** (to promote economic, social, cultural and environmental wellbeing and recovery)

The Testing Service in Gwent prides itself in being pragmatic, resourceful and agile when needing to deliver on national guidance. We have outlined how we meet the expectations of Welsh Government in the matrix below.

Above all guidance and advice, we adopt the operating principle that:

Aneurin Bevan University Health Board's Testing Service delivers efficient and effective COVID-19 testing for everyone Gwent, in a timeframe that supports their reason for a test.

Welsh Government Priority	Welsh Government's Aim	Aneurin Bevan University Health Board's Response	Rating
Test to diagnose	<p>We need to identify patients who are infected/infectious as quickly as possible, particularly those presenting to hospital so that they may benefit from specific treatment for Covid-19.</p> <p>Testing of patients on admission; 5 days after admission; and within 3 days of a planned admission</p>	<p>Our <i>In-Hospital Testing Protocol</i> supports the hospital flow and the ability to understand the infection status of patients in a timely manner. It provides guidance on our COVID-19 testing processes for elective and non-elective patient pathways including adult, paediatric and maternity services and also provides information on management of COVID-19 results as part of patient care planning and pathway.</p> <p>We test all patients on admission and all our inpatients twice a week. Weekly compliance reports for this regular testing are presented by our site leadership teams every week at our Reducing Nosocomial Transmission Group.</p> <p>We have a dedicated team of testing staff based at Royal Gwent Hospital, Grange University Hospital, Nevill Hall Hospital and Ysbyty Ystrad Fawr. They routinely test inpatients, all admissions and respond to patients who become symptomatic whilst they are with us. We also have a community-based testing team that routinely tests patients across our community hospitals.</p>	

		<p>We have several processing platforms across our hospital laboratories that each provide different turnaround times. They aim to turn around regular, routine tests in less than 24 hours and urgent fast track samples in less than 4 hours.</p>	
Test to safeguard	<p>Covid-19 is a challenge in closed settings such as hospitals, care homes and prisons because it can be difficult to control the spread once infection is introduced. Infected individuals may enter closed settings as symptomatic or asymptomatic residents, visitors, or staff members.</p> <p>Symptomatic staff, wherever they work, should self-isolate and request a test.</p> <p>Testing of asymptomatic staff working with vulnerable people, especially within closed settings, can potentially identify infected/infectious individuals who might otherwise pose a risk.</p> <p>Regular, asymptomatic testing of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NHS staff • Care home staff • Supported Living staff • Special school staff • Domiciliary care staff • Staff working in other residential care and support settings • Prisoners • Visitors and visiting professionals 	<p>We have successfully rolled out regular asymptomatic testing using lateral flow devices to all staff of the Health Board, including GP surgeries. Staff are provided with enough kits to undertake their own tests twice a week for 3 months. Staff are able to book a confirmatory PCR test easily if their result returns as positive.</p> <p>In the initial absence of a digital solution for recording results, we developed our own system that provides us with team-level data to monitor compliance of regular testing. This compliance data is provided to site leadership teams at the Health Board's Reducing Nosocomial Transmission Group for monitoring.</p> <p>All staff receive result receipts meaning that colleagues who may need to professionally visit a care home or other closed setting are able to be granted entry without delay.</p> <p>As part of a package of measures for preventing transmission of Covid-19 in care homes and protecting residents and staff, a programme of asymptomatic testing of staff has been in operation in Wales since June 2020. Before the online portal was available, the Testing Service in Gwent provided direct testing support for every care home across the region. Now care homes can order and manage their own asymptomatic testing resource by using the online portal.</p> <p>Welsh Government recently introduced a programme of regular, twice weekly, asymptomatic testing of care home staff in Wales, using lateral flow test devices in addition to the weekly PCR test that is currently undertaken.</p> <p>The Testing Service now provides direct testing support for care homes that have a confirmed positive case. Our teams will visit the care homes</p>	

		to undertake testing for all residents and staff, as directed by our Enclosed Setting Cell.	
Test to find	<p>Identifying and isolating Covid-19 cases in the community reduces the transmission of infection, supports contact tracing and helps to slow or stop the spread of the disease.</p> <p>Symptomatic testing through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Testing Sites (RTS) – provide drive through facilities • Local Testing Sites (LTS) – provide walk in facilities • Mobile Testing Units MTUs) – can provide flexible facilities to increase accessibility and to focus in areas of need • Home testing – for people to have tests posted to them to take at home <p>Asymptomatic testing through our Community testing framework to actively find cases that is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • locally led • based on evidence from surveillance and local knowledge • uses risk based assessments to target testing • integrates with other local testing arrangements • focusses on areas of need 	<p>We directly operate an assisted-swabbing regional testing site (Rodney Parade) and oversees five local testing sites (Pillgwenlly, Bettws, Duffryn, Pontypool and Rhymney), a fleet of seven mobile testing units, a regional testing site (Cwm).</p> <p>We also have a flexible number of home testing teams that visit vulnerable or people who are unable to drive at their home.</p> <p>We release circa 6,500 appointments for testing everyday across the network in Gwent which can be booked online, by calling 119 or contacting the Gwent COVID Testing service directly.</p> <p>We are tuned into local and Gwent Incident Management Teams and our contact tracing colleagues. We work closely with our local authority and Public Health Wales colleagues to deploy mobile testing units in areas of high prevalence or low-uptake of testing to aid surveillance and to contain clusters.</p> <p>Our <i>Surge Community Testing for Variants of Concern</i> plan outlines our approach to significantly increasing testing capacity to help contain an identified variant of concern. The plan sets out a multi-agency approach to ensure that all organisations involved are supported.</p>	✓
Test to maintain	<p>We are exploring whether asymptomatic testing to find cases and potentially contacts (as an alternative to isolating for 10 days) could support learners and teachers to remain in work or education. Finding cases faster reduces the spread of infection.</p>	<p>Rapid asymptomatic testing was introduced on site in secondary schools and colleges on 4 January. As pupils and students returned to secondary schools and colleges from 8 March all eligible staff, pupils and students were expected to test twice weekly.</p> <p>We support our local authority partners by providing enhanced support to determine any cases cross schools with confirmatory PCR tests if required. We help by quickly testing to aid decision-making in relation to year groups or school isolating. We have a <i>Learner Testing Protocol</i> that allows local authorities or schools to expedite testing with us to help keep learners in school safely wherever possible.</p>	✓