

Update for NHS, social care service managers and staff

“Reduce exposure, reduce transmission, protect yourself, protect your team and keep patients safe”

What is Test and Protect?

Test and Protect is the Scottish Government implementation of the UK Test, Trace, Isolate and Support strategy.

This approach involves identifying people including NHS and social care staff, that have confirmed COVID-19 and undertaking an assessment to identify their contacts in order to ask them to isolate for 14 days. As per the current guidance, these contacts can be divided into two groups:

All household contacts	This will not be further covered in this document
Workplace contacts	Anyone with face-to-face contact with the case for any length of time, within 1 metre, including being coughed on, a face-to-face conversation, unprotected physical contact (skin-to-skin); this includes exposure within 1 metre for 1 minute or longer; or travel in a small vehicle (such as a car or van) with the case.
	Anyone with extended close contact (between 1 and 2 metres for more than 15 minutes) with the case.

An assessment will be undertaken for exposures in the workplace to identify contacts, whether these are patients or colleagues of the case. Anyone identified as a contact will be required to self-isolate for 14 days. If the contact subsequently develops symptoms they will be required to self-isolate for 7 days from the onset of their symptoms. This may shorten or lengthen the original isolation period.

What factors will inform the assessment of a contact?

During the infectious period of a case (2 days before symptom onset to 7 days after symptom onset) the following are considered:

- **Duration** – the length of time a person spent with a case (e.g. 1 minute or longer within 1 metre as might happen when sitting having coffee with a colleague/15 minutes or longer less than 2 metres apart, as might happen when car sharing with a colleague). Reducing duration and frequency of staff to staff contact will reduce the risk.
- **Distance**– how far away the person was from the case (e.g. increasing the physical distance between staff wherever possible, will reduce the risk). It is recognised when in the presence of patients, staff may have to be close to colleagues or patients, but at all other times, the distance between staff should be at least 2 metres. As a reminder, where no patient is present, there should be no proximity between staff. This can be summarised to: “no patient, no proximity”.
- **Precautions**– if any control measures were in place (e.g. adherence to 2 metre social distancing, systems and process controls, such as screens or one way systems) and whether appropriate PPE has been used; whether it has been used consistently and correctly, with appropriate information, instruction and training. Ensuring and evidencing that control measures have been in place and adhered to will reduce the risk.

And because

- **Only contacts as defined require to self-isolate for 14 days, by reducing exposure (e.g. social distancing of 2 metres, and wearing correct PPE) in all workplace settings you will protect yourself, your work environment, your teams, your patients, and maintain resilience and service continuity.**

Managers must:

1. Provide and ensure control measures in all work environments, and travel to and from work, so that staff can naturally and easily minimise exposure to all persons outwith their own household, including reinforcing the message “no patient, no proximity”.
2. Reduce transmission by reducing exposure to protect teams; maintain service continuity and keep patients safe.