# Lancashire and South Cumbria Antibody Testing Programme

## How to book an appointment for a Coronavirus (COVID-19) antibody test if you work in the social care sector in Lancashire and South Cumbria

Antibody tests for [Coronavirus (COVID-19)](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/) are now available to book for staff working in social care for local authorities and independent sector workers in domiciliary care across Lancashire and South Cumbria.

Please note that tests are available by appointment only. You must attend at your allotted time to help maintain social distancing and to ensure the capacity within the phlebotomy (blood testing) service is maximised.

Appointments will be available from Monday 17 August in most locations, but check details by area below. There are limited slots available each day, so it is important you book early to help us plan. Testing for social care and domiciliary care workers will continue for eight weeks, finishing at the end of October.

When you book an appointment, you will be required to provide the following details:

* Name
* Date of birth
* Address
* Postcode
* Mobile phone number
* NHS number, if known
* GP name and practice address

**All staff are required to complete the consent form included at the end of this document. Please print and this and bring it with you to your appointment.**

**Please also ensure you take your staff photo identification card to the appointment with you.**

In line with [Government guidance on Coronavirus (COVID-19)](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus), staff are asked to wear a face covering when attending their appointment. Should you need to use public transport, please remember that a face covering must be worn. As you would usually when outside of the home, please take care to wash your hands often with soap and water and use sanitiser where available.

The antibody test works by taking a 10ml blood sample with a needle, from a vein in the arm or the back (top) of the hand. Booking an appointment implies you are comfortable with this process. You should expect to receive your test results within seven days.

If for any reason you cannot make your appointment, you must notify the relevant site as soon as you are able.

Please note that whatever the outcome of the test, you will still need to maintain social distancing and continue to follow all other Government guidelines (wearing of PPE, hand washing etc.), even if you test positive for COVID-19 antibodies. This is because there is as yet no strong evidence to suggest that those who have had the virus are immune or cannot pass it on to others.

## Where you can get tested in Lancashire and South Cumbria

### Morecambe Bay

Morecambe Bay, including North Lancashire, South Lakes and Furness, staff are able to register online for the test using the link below. Staff will be asked to formally consent to the test and state which hospital site they prefer to attend for the test (Furness General Hospital in Barrow or Royal Lancaster Infirmary in Lancaster). The test is entirely voluntary and staff will be expected to make their own way to the clinical appointment at the allotted time.

You may need to wait up to a week to be invited for the blood test and then up to two weeks before you receive your result. Results will be sent either to your email address or the phone number that you provided at the time of registration. The results of the blood test will be shared with your GP; however they do not need to be shared with managers in your organisation.

Antibody testing is available from Monday to Friday in core working hours at Furness General Hospital and Royal Lancaster Infirmary, time slots will be confirmed at the time of registration.

Please use the link below to book your antibody test and refer to the frequently asked questions below. Please note that you will need your NHS number to access the service.

Book a test in Morecambe Bay online: <https://fx.uhmb.nhs.uk/AntibodyRequest/covid19>

### Fylde Coast

Staff working across the Fylde Coast (Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre) should apply for an antibody test by emailing Fylde Coast Medical Services at [fcms.antibodytesting@nhs.net](mailto:fcms.antibodytesting@nhs.net)

You will be required to complete a consent/application form and need to provide all the details requested. You will receive a call within 72 hours from the booking team to confirm your appointment details.

You will receive your result by text message sent from FCMS / PDS Medical, once the information is received from pathology. If a number is not provided or the text fails, the result will be sent to the email address you have provided on your referral form.

Your GP should be able to access the result if required and according to local information sharing protocols.

### West Lancashire

Please book an appointment, following the steps below:

* Appointments are available from Monday to Friday. Appointments are available at Skelmersdale Walk-In Centre between 8.15am and 12.30pm and at West Lancashire Urgent Treatment Centre between 8.15am and 4pm. Weekend slots will also be available soon.
* To make an appointment, please call 01695 402 200 between 12.30pm and 5.30pm.
* There is an antibody screening request form (which must be completed and taken with you to your appointment) and FAQs about the test. If colleagues do not have access to a printer, there will be forms available at either centre for you to complete upon arrival at your appointment.
* You must also take your staff ID badge with you.

You will receive your result by text message. It is expected that this will happen within two working days. If you haven’t heard anything within seven working days, you can follow up with the microbiology department on 0151 430 1837.

### Pennine Lancashire

Appointments for antibody testing will be offered at the old Outpatients department, Burnley General Hospital site, Casterton Avenue, BB10 2PQ.

From Tuesday 18 August 2020, you will be able to book an appointment by emailing

[antibody.booking@nhs.net](mailto:antibody.booking@nhs.net)

You will need to enclose the following details:

* Name:
* Address:
* Mobile phone number:
* Date of birth:
* GP name and practice:
* Address of GP practice:
* NHS number (if known):

You will be contacted with an appointment date and time within three working days. Appointment sessions will be available from Wednesday 19 August, between 9am and 12 noon and 1pm to 4pm.

### Central Lancashire

Antibody tests will be available from 24 August 2020.

Staff working in the Central Lancashire area will be able to have their test at Greater Lancashire Hospital, PR2 5BW by booking directly at <https://greaterlancashirehospital.co.uk/covid-19/>

Alternatively, you can call 01772 808222 (Monday to Friday, from 9am to 5pm) and staff will assist you.

Appointments will be available between the hours of 8am and 8pm, 7 days a week.

You will need your NHS number to complete the booking and you will need to print and sign the consent form at the bottom of this document and bring this with you on the day. You will need to bring your staff ID with you to your appointment. Results will be sent either to your email address or your phone contact that you provided at the time of booking. The results of the blood test will not be shared with your employer. Greater Lancashire Hospitals will be providing a remote service for larger employers at their own premises, once these have been identified.

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

**What is an antibody test?**

A COVID-19 antibody test (also known as the SARS CoV-2 antibody test) can tell you whether you have had [Coronavirus (COVID-19)](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/) in the past. It detects if your body has produced an immune reaction and developed antibodies to the COVID-19 virus.

Antibodies develop in viral infections as part of the body’s attempt to fight the virus.

The test works by taking a blood sample from the arm and testing to see if there are antibodies to the COVID-19 virus.

**What do antibody test results mean?**

A positive antibody test means you have caught COVID-19 at some point in the past and that your body has responded and developed antibodies. This usually happens about two weeks after the first symptoms, but may take up to six weeks following infection.

A negative antibody test means your body has not responded to the virus and you have not developed antibodies. This does not mean you have not had COVID-19, just that your body hasn’t staged an immune response. Samples from very early on in infection can produce negative results, so this test cannot be used to diagnose an acute (current) infection.

There is no evidence yet to suggest that people who have had the virus, and have received a positive antibody test result, are immune. This means you could still pass the virus onto others; so you will need to keep using personal protective equipment, such as a mask, social distancing and following [Government guidelines on COVID-19](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus).

**If you test positive for antibodies, can you ignore Government guidance?**

No. There is no strong evidence yet to suggest that people who have had the virus, and have received a positive antibody test result, are immune.

This means you could still pass the virus onto others; so, you will need to continue social distancing, infection control plans and following Government guidelines.

**How will I be told of the result?**

This will vary depending on which region of England you have your test. The results will not go on your employment record and your GP should be able to access the result if required and according to local information sharing protocols. You should receive the result within two weeks of the test in the post.

**How will my information be used?**

Positive results will be shared with [Public Health England](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england) to help understand how the virus spreads and where it has been present in different regions of the country.

**Are there any risks to having the test?**

There are some risks related to having a blood test, such as bruising, feeling dizzy and faint during and after the test. Swelling of the vein can happen but it is extremely unlikely.

**What to do if you have symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) now**

If you develop coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, you should ask for a viral detection test, which tells you whether you currently have coronavirus or not. The viral detection test is a swab test in which two separate viral swabs are taken. If the test is to be successful, you need to get it done in the first five days of having symptoms. Do not wait – you should ask for the test as soon as you have symptoms. Find out more about [getting tested for Coronavirus (COVID-19)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested).

## Consent for antibody test

**Please print and sign this page and bring it with you to your appointment.**

* I confirm that I have read the above information; I understand that taking the test is my choice and I give my consent to have an antibody test.
* I have read the information and I understand the purpose of this test, together with the benefits and risks.
* I understand that a positive test will not mean that I am immune and therefore I will continue to keep social distancing, using personal protective equipment and following Government guidelines.
* I declare that the information I have given on this form is correct and complete.

First name:

Last name:

Sign:

Date: