**Coronavirus testing**

Providing a negative test result to key frontline health care workers is vital in allowing them to return to work much sooner than the 7/14 day self-isolation periods which have been specified.

Testing staff means that we are building a resilient work force, operating at the maximum possible capacity to deal with this virus. It is essential that we are not losing front line staff, for periods of up to 14 days, who may be fit and healthy enough to work.

These tests will allow those with negative results, if they are fit to do so, to return to work in our hospitals and community as soon as possible

***Does a negative swab mean I can return to work?***

Not automatically.  This is to be guided by your symptoms.

* A symptomatic staff member with a negative swab must continue to isolate until their symptoms have resolved for 48 hours.  Although our COVID test is sensitive, it is not infallible, and we therefore ask staff to remain at home until they have recovered from their symptoms, however, they do not need to remain in isolation for 7 days assume they recover quickly.  It is obviously important they we do not circulate other illnesses amongst our workforce at this time, another reason for this stipulation.

* A symptomatic staff member who tests positive should self-isolate for 7 days AND must be 48 hours free of fever before returning to work

* An asymptomatic staff member whose family member tests negative for COVID-19 may return to work, but should remain vigilant for symptoms and self-isolate if any develop.  They should then inform their line manager to arrange testing if appropriate