



Clinician alert #37 – Testing

Effective from 16 December 2020

SARS-CoV-2 testing

ALL PEOPLE WHO MEET THE TESTING CRITERIA SHOULD BE TESTED BY PCR

The downward trend of SARS-CoV-2 testing rates in Western Australia is a cause for concern. The recent situation in South Australia has highlighted the importance of robust surveillance testing of all individuals who meet the testing criteria for SARS-CoV-2. Patients with influenza like illnesses should be tested for respiratory viruses including COVID-19.

If your patient is tested for SARS-CoV-2, please ensure you inform them to stay at home and isolate until they receive their test result.

Contact and droplet precautions are required for any testing of SARS-CoV-2 (symptomatic or asymptomatic patient). This includes mask, gloves, gown and eye protection.

Isolation after COVID-19 testing

Infection control measures for individuals awaiting a test result have changed.

As per the [Quarantine and Isolation \(Undiagnosed\) Direction \(No 2\)](#), individuals in isolation who are awaiting a test result are required to:

- Cover their mouth and nose when they sneeze or cough
- Wash their hands often and thoroughly with soap and water or alcohol rub for at least 20 seconds

Under the Direction, a person who is required to isolate after being tested and whilst waiting for their test result is not required to wear a face mask or ensure that they do not share household items.

Exemptions from isolation in WA

The following people do not need to isolate after testing, provided they do not have symptoms of COVID-19:

- People tested under the Presentation for Testing (Quarantine Centre Workers) Directions (No 2).
- People tested under the Transport, Freight and Logistics Directions (No 2).
- People tested as part of the DETECT borders program.
- Carers of a dependent who has been tested, whilst waiting for the result of the dependent person.
- People who undergo serology testing.
- **People who need to provide evidence of a negative COVID test for overseas governments. Testing under this circumstance can occur at private pathology collection centres and should not occur at WA government COVID clinics.**

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