

June 2020



North Central London Clinical Commissioning Group

COVID-19 HR update 17 June 2020: Antibody Test, Supporting Remote Working, Leadership Support Circles, Demographic Risk Assessment and Workforce Status Update

This week's HR update focuses on the following areas:

- National COVID Prevalence and Antibody Test
- Enabling and Supporting Staff Working from Home – Managers Guide
- Leadership Support Circles – Online Sessions
- Demographic Health Risk Assessment Deadline and HR Drop-in Sessions
- Status Update on Workforce

National COVID Prevalence and Antibody Test

As part of the national work into the prevalence of Covid-19, NHS staff are able to choose to take an antibody test. The test does not confirm immunity, but will determine if the individual had Covid-19 previously.

There is no strong evidence yet to suggest that those who have had the virus develop long-lasting immunity that would prevent them from getting the virus again.

This means at this stage, we do not yet know if a positive antibody test result means that you, and others you are in contact with, are safe from future infection.

Therefore, the value of antibody tests is currently limited to answering the question of whether someone has had the virus or not, and providing data and a greater understanding on the spread of the virus.

The antibody test is being rolled out across frontline workers over June and July and as part of this will also be available to CCG staff. These tests will not be compulsory.

Taking the test involves a blood test and it is likely staff will need to travel to a hospital site in north central London to take it. Staff are asked to ensure they are able to travel safely to the site should they request a test.

Staff that are in a higher risk category or shielding are not recommended to travel for a test at this stage.

To put yourself forward for a test, please email: nclccg.hrcovid19@nhs.net. We will then contact you over the next few weeks to confirm arrangements.

Enabling and Supporting Staff Working from Home – Managers Guide

During these unprecedented and challenging times, it is vital that staff are provided with support whilst settling into a new way of working remotely. We encourage all managers to ensure they are providing ongoing support for staff wellbeing, remote working and maintain engagement through virtual team meetings and regular one-to-ones.

We have developed a [COVID-19 HR Factsheet: Enabling and Supporting Staff Working from Home – Managers Guide](#). This factsheet provides support to managers in the following areas;

- New ways of communicating.
- Supporting staff wellbeing.
- Delegating and working with your teams to meet targets and deadlines.
- Conducting one-to-one meetings.

For additional resources on managing compassionately and inclusively during these extraordinary times, please refer to the [COVID-19 HR Factsheet: National Support for Leaders through Our NHS People](#) and [Managers Guide to Supporting Staff](#).

Leadership Support Circles – Online Sessions

NHSE/I has developed various short group leadership sessions available online to help support managers and leaders with skills and new ways to improve work experience.

The Leadership Support Circles offer time and reflective safe space for those with responsibility for managing others through:

- Short, themed and interactive online sessions based on ten evidence-based principles for Leading Compassionately During Covid-19.
- A multidisciplinary, interactive space for people managers at all levels to come together, share their experiences and be heard.
- Drawing on practices including Schwartz Rounds and Care Circles, which are often used by clinicians.
- Signposting access to evidence-based guidance, tools and coaching, and mentoring support to line managers and leaders.

The [COVID-19 HR Factsheet: Leadership Support Circles](#) provides further information on the available group sessions and how to register to secure your place

Status Update on Workforce – absence and working arrangements related to COVID-19

It is important during this period that we have access to up to date and accurate information on our Workforce System regarding any periods of absence and working arrangements related to COVID-19, to provide NCL CCG and NHS

England/Improvement with a detailed understanding of the impact of COVID-19 on our staff and services.

We are reminding all staff to ensure that they report and update their status on Workforce by **5pm weekly on Monday**, to enable us to take all reasonable steps to fulfil our duty of care to our staff and to plan appropriately to maintain a high level of service delivery, and ensure correct payments are made to our staff.

All other periods of absence (unrelated to COVID-19) should be recorded in the usual way on the Workforce System and under the relevant category e.g. annual leave.

Demographic Health Risk Assessment Deadline and HR Drop-in Sessions

A reminder to staff and managers that the deadline for completing the risk assessment is Monday 22 June 2020. Please return all completed risk assessment pro-formas to HR by 5pm on Monday 22 June 2020: nclccg.hrcovid19@nhs.net.

Staff and managers are also reminded to seek guidance from HR, or attend one of the drop-in sessions if they would like further information or have any questions or concerns. The dates and times of the drop-in sessions are detailed below and staff should contact the COVID-19 HR email address (nclccg.hrcovid19@nhs.net) to book a slot with a member of the HR team during one of the HR drop-in sessions. An invitation via MS teams will be sent once a slot has been agreed.

Dates	Times
Wednesday 17 June	14:00 – 15:30
Friday 19 June	14:00 – 15:30

The risk assessment **is not mandatory** and therefore, if any staff do not wish to have the assessment or do not wish to share the information required for the risk assessment, the manager should record this decision for audit purposes and send the details to the COVID-19 HR email address: nclccg.hrcovid19@nhs.net.

We would like to reassure all staff that any information disclosed as part of the risk assessment process is confidential. It will not be used in any other purpose other than to identify staff who are potentially more at risk of Covid-19 in the course of their duties, due to their race and ethnicity, age, weight, underlying health condition, disability, or pregnancy.

We appreciate that the information required as part of the risk assessment process is confidential and personal to individuals. However, the diversity and health information is material to enable the CCG perform its duty of care as an employer and for the CCG to support any staff with an elevated risk of COVID-19, with the appropriate reasonable adjustments to safeguard them.

Further information and queries

Staff and managers can also contact their HR Business Partner or the HR COVID inbox nclccg.hrcovid19@nhs.net for any queries, advice or further information.