



## Clinician alert #21 – all clinicians

Effective from 9 April 2020

### New information

**Any person** with documented fever ( $\geq 38^{\circ}\text{C}$ ) **OR** recent history of fever **OR** acute respiratory symptoms may be tested for COVID-19.

**Public Health approval is NOT required for patients who meet these criteria.**

### Testing criteria in Western Australia

**All people:** Consider testing where an alternative diagnosis is not more likely  
Documented fever ( $\geq 38^{\circ}\text{C}$ ) **OR** recent history of fever (e.g. night sweats, chills)  
**OR**  
acute respiratory symptoms (e.g. cough, shortness of breath, sore throat).

Clinical judgement should be exercised in testing decisions. Public Health approval is not required.

Metropolitan Perth: testing for adult patients ONLY to be done at COVID clinics; young children can be tested in Perth Children's Hospital and/or EDs.

Regional WA: testing can be undertaken by hospitals, COVID clinics, health centres and remote health clinics operated by the WA Country Health Service, Silver Chain, Aboriginal Medical Services or RFDS.

Hospitalised patients who require testing can be tested in hospital.

### Testing in high risk settings:

Test any person with a clinically compatible illness (as defined above), in aged care and other residential care facilities, military operational settings, boarding schools, correctional facilities, detention centres, Aboriginal rural and remote communities, and settings where COVID-19 outbreaks have occurred.

Metropolitan Perth: testing can be conducted either at a COVID clinic, by a GP in an aged care facility if they have correct equipment/PPE, or by domiciliary collection via the patient's usual pathology provider.

Regional WA: testing can be conducted via the regional avenues listed above; if assistance is needed to arrange testing, contact the local Public Health Unit.

### Testing

- Test using a single swab for oropharyngeal then either nasal (if using rigid shaft swab) or nasopharyngeal (if using flexible shaft) sampling. Self-collection is NOT advised. Instructions for specimen collection are on the [PathWest website](#).
- The reason for testing must be documented on the pathology request form.
- Do not test asymptomatic patients.
- Do not undertake testing for 'clearance' or return to work purposes; (except for healthcare workers).
- Patients tested for COVID-19 need to remain isolated until instructed otherwise.

### Reporting

**Notify suspected COVID-19 cases** by completing the notification form either [ONLINE](#) or by printing out the [notification form](#). Notifying by phone is not necessary.

Public Health Unit contact details			
Perth Metro	9222 8588	Kimberley	9194 1630
	1300 MCDCWA (1300623292)	South West	9781 2359
Goldfields	9080 8200	Midwest	9956 1985
Great Southern	9842 7500	Pilbara	9174 1660
		After hours/on call	9328 0553

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**COMMUNICABLE DISEASE CONTROL DIRECTORATE**

Last updated 8 April 2020

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