COVID-19 Public Health Alert No. 14 / 4 June 2020

Testing for SARS-CoV-2

Testing for SARS-CoV-2 to find cases of COVID-19 and minimise onward transmission is directed by the Series of National Guidelines and the Australian National Disease Surveillance Plan for COVID-19.[1,2] The aim of this Public Health Alert is to provide a simple guide to testing and isolation requirements. The key public health objective to be met is minimising transmission of the virus.

To achieve this, the following is recommended:

Essential testing

- Clinical criteria present: – Fever (≥37.5° C) **OR** history of fever **OR** acute respiratory illness

AND

- Epidemiological criteria: – Close contact; international, interstate or cruise travel

     – Health, aged or residential care worker with patient contact

     – Travelled through hotspot(s) or admitted hospital patients with no other cause for their infection evident.[2]

= Suspect case of COVID-19 => Isolate until results available

Enhanced testing

- Clinical criteria only present: – Fever (≥37.5° C) **OR** history of fever **OR** acute respiratory illness

= NOT a suspect case of COVID-19 => Isolation NOT required unless clinically appropriate for the patient's condition

Expanded testing

- All patients presenting to fever clinics, including those with atypical symptom presentations for COVID-19

=> Isolation NOT required unless clinically appropriate for the patient's condition

Extended testing will be used in identified high-risk environments and groups at the discretion of the Incident Management Team (IMT)/Public Health Unit (PHU) and Chief Health Officer (CHO).

Serological testing may be used in upstream case and contact tracing and serosurveillance at the discretion of the IMT/PHU and CHO.

Prof Dr Scott Kitchener, Public Health Incident Controller, Communicable Diseases Branch Incident Management Team

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[1] Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), Communicable Disease Network Australia National guidelines for public health units, v3.0

[2] Australian National Disease Surveillance Plan for COVID-19, May 2020. Communicable Disease Network Australia

Queensland Government