



Clinician alert #38 – all clinicians

Effective from 18 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 current situation in New South Wales is highlighting 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.

Restricted locations

As per the [Controlled Border for Western Australia Amendment Directions \(No 5\)](#), New South Wales is now considered a restricted location.

Travellers from New South Wales

As per the [New South Wales Outbreak Response Directions](#), travellers who have been in New South Wales after 12:01am on 11 December 2020 and have entered Western Australia any time after that time up to 12:01am on 18 December 2020 must immediately quarantine. They must present for COVID-19 testing as soon as possible after arrival and isolate after testing until they receive a test result that is negative for COVID-19.

Testing **can** occur at:

- WA government metropolitan and regional COVID clinics (see below)
- Emergency department of a public hospital that is located outside of the Perth metropolitan area
- Private collection centres. A medical referral is not required, and travellers will not be required to pay.

To assist in this PHEOC asks that:

- A record of those tested must be maintained daily (include name and mobile phone number) and reported to COVID19.HealthOperations@health.wa.gov.au by 8am each day.
- All other usual reporting requirements (positive and negative) are maintained.
- Those tested receive notification of their result as soon as possible.
- Those tested are reminded to return to self-quarantine until a negative test result is confirmed, or until other directions are provided.

As per the [Controlled Border for Western Australia Directions](#), travellers who have been in New South Wales in the 14 days prior to arrival in WA AND have entered Western Australia **after** 12:01am on 18 December are required to quarantine for 14 days on arrival to WA.

As per the [Presentation for Testing Directions \(No 11\)](#), travellers who have been in New South Wales in the 14 days prior to arrival in WA AND have entered Western Australia **after** 12:01am on 18 December must present for COVID-19 testing on day 11 after their arrival.

Transport, Freight and Logistics

As per the [Transport, Freight and Logistics Direction \(No 2\)](#), drivers who have been in a restricted location, have been in New Zealand and another Australian State or Territory, or have knowingly been in direct contact with a person who, in the 14 days prior to the direct contact, had been in a restricted location or a place outside of Australia, **will be required to undertake COVID-19 testing every 7 days.**

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

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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