Social Care (Alba) Limited
26 George Square, Edinburgh, EH8 9LD

Review Sheet

Last Reviewed 17 Mar '22	Last Amended 17 Mar '22	Next Planned Review in 12 months, or sooner as required.

Business impact	**MEDIUM IMPACT** Changes are important, but urgent implementation is not required, incorporate into your existing workflow.
Reason for this review	Scheduled review
Were changes made?	Yes
Summary:	This policy will inform staff on the rules around testing for COVID-19. It has been reviewed with minimal change. The references and links have also been checked to ensure they remain current.
Relevant legislation:	• Coronavirus (Scotland) (No 2) Act 2020 • Civil Contingencies Act 2004 • Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 • Equality Act 2010 • Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 • The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011
Underpinning knowledge - What have we used to ensure that the policy is current:	• Author: Scottish Government, (2020), *COVID-19 - Obtaining an upper respiratory tract diagnostic sample (video)*. [Online] Available from: https://www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/web-resources-container/covid-19-obtaining-an-upper-respiratory-tract-diagnostic-sample/ [Accessed: 17/3/2022] • Author: Scottish government, (2021), *Coronavirus (COVID-19) fully vaccinated social care and care home staff after a COVID-19 contact: return to work guidance*. [Online] Available from: https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-exemption-of-fully-vaccinated-social-care-staff-from-isolation-information-for-providers/ [Accessed: 17/3/2022] • Author: SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT, (2021), *Coronavirus (COVID-19): social care and community based testing guidance*. [Online] Available from: https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-social-care-testing-guidance/ [Accessed: 17/3/2022] • Author: Scottish Government, (2020), *Coronavirus (COVID-19): Getting tested in Scotland*. [Online] Available from: https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested/pages/arrange-a-test/ [Accessed: 17/3/2022]
Suggested action:	• Encourage sharing the policy through the use of the QCS App
Equality Impact Assessment:	QCS have undertaken an equality analysis during the review of this policy. This statement is a written record that demonstrates that we have shown due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations with respect to the characteristics protected by equality law.

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1. Purpose

1.1 To reduce the risk of COVID-19 spreading within Social Care (Alba) Limited by confirming whether staff and Service Users' are COVID-19 positive.

1.2 To ensure that Social Care (Alba) Limited remains up to date with the swabbing process for COVID-19 and can support staff and Service Users to complete this where necessary.

1.3 This policy forms part of the COVID-19 hub and must be read alongside other policies and procedures, including:

- SHS11 - Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Policy and Procedure
- SHS16 - Coronavirus Policy and Procedure
- SCC34 - Infection Control Policy and Procedure

1.4 To support Social Care (Alba) Limited in meeting the following Quality Indicators:

Key Question	Quality Indicators
SUPPORT-AND-WELLBEING	CAH.S1.4: People are getting the right service for them
LEADERSHIP	CAH.S2.3: Leaders collaborate to support people
STAFF-TEAM	CAH.S3.2: "Staff have the right knowledge, competence and development to care for and support people"
COVID	CAH.S7.1: People?s health and wellbeing are supported and safeguarded during the COVID-19 pandemic

1.5 To meet the legal requirements of the regulated activities that {Social Care (Alba) Limited} is registered to provide:

- Coronavirus (Scotland) (No 2) Act 2020
- Civil Contingencies Act 2004
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002
- Equality Act 2010
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011

2. Scope

2.1 The following roles may be affected by this policy:
- All staff

2.2 The following Service Users may be affected by this policy:
- Service Users

2.3 The following stakeholders may be affected by this policy:
- Family
- Advocates
- Representatives
- Commissioners
- External health professionals
- Local Authority
- NHS

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3. Objectives

3.1 As the spread of the coronavirus is resulting in response requirements changes, Social Care (Alba) Limited will ensure that it stays up to date with reliable sources of information and has the flexibility to respond when required.

3.2 Social Care (Alba) Limited will ensure that safe, effective COVID-19 testing procedures are in place with staff and Service Users having information in an accessible format.

4. Policy

4.1 Social Care (Alba) Limited recognises that testing for COVID-19 continues to be an evolving situation and that it is an important factor in planning care and support delivery at Social Care (Alba) Limited. Swabbing is a process to test for whether a person is currently infected with COVID-19 and the tests are currently available for anyone at Social Care (Alba) Limited.

4.2 Social Care (Alba) Limited will ensure that staff and Service User are aware of the testing process and are supported to complete it, where required.

4.3 Social Care (Alba) Limited also recognises that staff at Social Care (Alba) Limited are now eligible for frequent COVID-19 testing as per government guidance and will ensure that this is followed.

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5. Procedure

5.1 Antigen Test
This test identifies if the person is currently infected with COVID-19. These are the tests that are widely available and are used within Social Care (Alba) Limited to monitor and clarify the health status of staff and Service Users.

5.2 Antibody Test
Tests are only available to certain groups.
This test detects antibodies made after vaccination or infection.
People booking a PCR test for COVID-19 will also be given the option to take part in antibody testing.
Other tests taken as part of a research study or survey may only look for antibodies made after you have had the virus.
You can still get an antibody test if you have had the COVID-19 vaccine.

5.3 Independently Applying for a COVID-19 Antigen Test
Any person with symptoms can apply for a COVID-19 antigen test to ascertain if they currently have COVID-19.
This can be applied for via the online government test service.
Instructions in alternative formats can also be applied for with the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) able to send braille, audio or large print instructions.

5.4 Staff Antigen Testing
Personal Assistants at Social Care (Alba) Limited are entitled to have regular tests. All tests are to be arranged and provided by Social Care (Alba) Limited following the latest process and guidance that can be accessed here.
Anyone working in adult social care who is not part of regular testing at work, such as unpaid carers, can access COVID-19 testing. All social care staff are encouraged to undertake daily LFD tests, particularly on the days they are working with vulnerable people.
It is also important to note that many people with COVID-19 do not have a fever, while some people can have a fever that is not caused by an infection. Thermal scanners just pick up body surface temperature, and not true fever. Therefore, temperature checks using no-contact thermometers, e.g. forehead scanners, are not accurate for testing asymptomatic staff.

5.5 Rapid Lateral Flow Tests
Everyone in Scotland is now eligible for free rapid lateral flow tests to be sent to their home. More information and how to order the tests can be found here.

5.6 Applying for a Coronavirus Swab Test
An application can be made by Fatou Sanneh here. To apply, you will need:

l The Unique Organisation Number (UON) received from NHS Test and Protect for Social Care (Alba) Limited

l The total number of Personal Assistants for testing

Fatou Sanneh will receive an email confirming when the tests will arrive and the tests must be completed as directed.
Tests kits must be ordered ahead of each 28 day testing cycle and distributed to all Personal Assistants.

5.7 Consent to Tests
Consent must be gained from staff prior to the test being undertaken and also when registering the test kits after completion.
Where staff refuse to take a test, Fatou Sanneh will review the COVID-19 risks for Social Care (Alba) Limited in relation to testing and also try to understand the reasons the member of staff is refusing to take a test. Fatou Sanneh will also refer to the suite of HR suite of policies at Social Care (Alba) Limited.

5.8 Preparation for Testing
Prior to receiving the test kits, staff should:

l Read the testing guidance and watch the instruction video

l Read the guidance for care at home workers

l Read the guidance included with the testing kit

Once received, ensure that any PCR test kits are used in date order. Any expired PCR testing kits must not be used as they will be classed as a void result.

5.9 After Testing

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Once the test has been completed, staff should:

l Register the test after completion

l Apply the pink pre-paid label to the delivery packaging and post the test in a Royal Mail priority box, at least an hour before designated collection times

Staff will receive test results back via email or text message and Fatou Sanneh should be informed of any positive results.

Where a positive result is received, the member of staff is not required to retest for 90 days and must follow self-isolation requirements.

Further testing for those who are negative should take place in line with current testing requirements.

5.10 Service Users and Testing

Those Service Users who do meet the government criteria and have applied to be tested, will only be supported by Personal Assistants with testing when instructed to do so by Fatou Sanneh . Personal Assistants must follow the process and ensure that the correct PPE is worn before the procedure is followed. Government guidance on the home test can be found here.

SHS11 - Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Policy and Procedure at Social Care (Alba) Limited provides further information on the current PPE guidelines for staff.

Service Users must inform Social Care (Alba) Limited of the test results and the Personal Plan will be updated accordingly by Social Care (Alba) Limited.

5.11 Service Users with Complex Behaviour

A COVID-19 test can be uncomfortable and distressing and it is important to consider the effect this may have on Service Users before it is carried out. Each Service User must be assessed on an individual basis when they are being supported with a test as to the care they require. Service Users with dementia, complex behaviour and learning disabilities may be distressed by having a swab. Where staff are required to support a Service User, they must:

l Ensure that the test is being carried out in the best interest of the Service User

l Ensure the reason for testing is proportionate and is not going to cause undue distress or anxiety

l Not use restrictive intervention to enable the swab to be taken

l Reassure the Service User

l Where possible, use a staff member that is experienced and understands the specific needs of the Service User

l Guide them through the process, explaining each aspect in a way that they understand

Where it is not possible to swab a Service User because swabbing will cause undue distress and there are concerns that they may have symptoms of COVID-19, the Service User must be isolated and cared for on the assumption they are COVID-19 positive.

5.12 Self-isolation Exemptions and Testing

Where staff are fully vaccinated and identified as being a contact of a COVID-19 case, they are no longer required to self-isolate if they meet set criteria as detailed in SHS16 - Coronavirus Policy and Procedure and government guidance.

Testing for COVID-19 forms part of this process and staff must:

l Only attend work after receiving a negative PCR test

l Undertake a daily lateral flow antigen test

l Where the staff member has tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 90 days, they must complete daily lateral flow antigen tests only

5.13 Protect Scotland App

Test and Protect is Scotland's way of putting into practice the test, trace, isolate, support strategy.

It will prevent the spread of coronavirus in the community by:

l Identifying cases of coronavirus through testing

l Tracing the people who may have become infected by spending time in close contact with them

l Supporting those close contacts to test and ascertain if they must self-isolate, following government guidance

Please refer to the Government's privacy notice in relation to data collected through the NHS Test and Protect service.

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6. Definitions

6.1 Swab Testing
- A swab test allows viruses to be detected. The swab looks similar to a cotton bud and must be rubbed over the required area to allow a sample to be collected for analysis

6.2 Coronavirus (COVID-19)
- Novel coronavirus is a strain of coronavirus first identified in Wuhan City, China. The virus was named 'severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2' (SARS-CoV-2). The disease it causes is called COVID-19

Key Facts - Professionals

Professionals providing this service should be aware of the following:
- All staff conducting tests need to have appropriate training on the correct procedure to follow
- Testing has been introduced to support with confirming cases of COVID-19 and helping with the planning of the required support for Service Users and staff
- Consent has to be sought from Service Users and staff for the tests to be conducted

Key Facts - People affected by the service

People affected by this service should be aware of the following:
- If you require support to complete a swab test you must speak to Fatou Sanneh
- COVID-19 is a highly contagious virus and testing is important to identify if you are infected so that appropriate care and support can be provided
- Once you have received your test results, you must inform Fatou Sanneh

Further Reading

As well as the information in the 'underpinning knowledge' section of the review sheet we recommend that you add to your understanding in this policy area by considering the following materials:

Protect Scotland App - Used to help protect each other, reduce the spread of coronavirus and avoid further lockdowns:
https://protect.scot

Excellent Practice

To demonstrate Excellence in this policy area ensure that:
- Social Care (Alba) Limited has robust infection control policies and procedures in place and staff understand the importance of good hand hygiene, how to use personal protective equipment appropriately and they share their knowledge with Service Users appropriately
- Staff have accurate and up-to-date information and Social Care (Alba) Limited is able to respond quickly and safely to a fast-changing situation
- Social Care (Alba) Limited has shared its pandemic and business continuity plan and everyone knows what their roles and responsibilities are
- The wide understanding of the policy is enabled by proactive use of the QCS App

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Forms

The following forms are included as part of this policy:

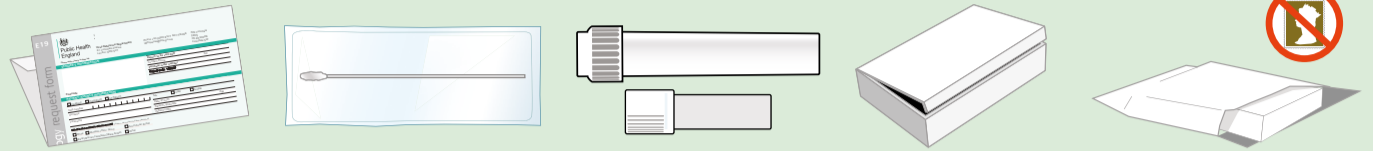| Title of form	When would the form be used?	Created by
How to Take a Combined Throat and Nose Swab (Postal Version) - SCC98	To support with completing a throat and nose swab.	UK Government
How to Take a Combined Throat and Nose Swab (Courier Version) - SCC98	To support with completing a throat and nose swab.	UK Government

How to take a combined throat and nose swab | Postal version

To test for coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) we need two samples, one from the back of your throat and then from inside the nose with the same swab.

Both tests are commonly used by doctors and nurses but you can take both samples safely yourself.

The testing kit you have received contains everything you need to take the samples:

- a request form
- one swab – this is like a long cotton bud. The kit also contains a small collection tube which you will use to hold the complete swab tip
- a larger white screw topped tube which is used to transport the small collection tube containing the swab
- a cardboard box
- a plastic envelope with pre-paid postage.

It is very important that you attach the label with your name and date of birth (if there is one) or write this on the small collection tube.

1 Prepare to take throat sample

Please wash your hands carefully before you start.

Then unpack the kit onto a clean surface.

A. First take the throat swab. Open the swab packet which contains the small bottle and pull out the swab.

B. Wipe the soft tip of the swab around the back of your throat as shown in the diagram. Stand in front of a mirror. Open your mouth wide and stick out your tongue – you will see an arch at the back of your mouth. Try to swipe the soft tip of the swab across the five areas in the picture as below.

Rub the swab several times across the very back of your throat, behind the arch. This may make you gag but should not be painful.

Ensure you also swab the sides of the arch where your tonsils protrude.

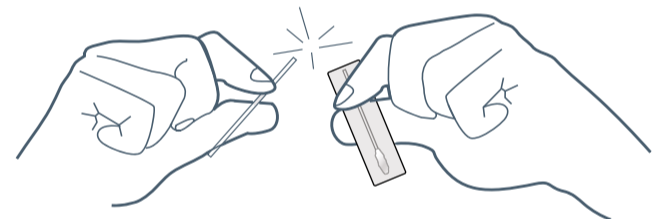**Try to avoid swabbing your tongue and teeth.**

2 Next, take the nose sample

A. Place the tip of the cotton bud gently JUST inside one of your nostrils and gently wipe the cotton bud around the inside of your nose. Please repeat this for your other nostril using the same swab.

No force is needed and you do not have to push far into your nostril.

B. Once you have taken the swab, place the soft tip of the swab into the collection tube and break off the plastic end (at the breaking off point where the swab stick is thinner). Replace the lid on the bottle.

Please avoid touching the cotton bud tip with your hands (before or after the swabbing) to avoid contamination.

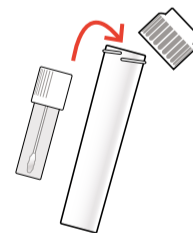## 3 Finally, pack the samples

A. Wash your hands again.

B. Write your name, date of birth and today's date on the outside of the small collection tube with the swab. This is very important. Your GP may include sticky labels.
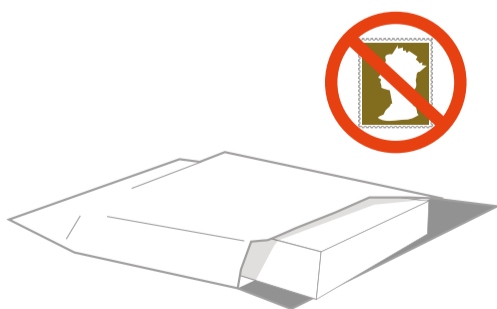
Name
Date of birth:

C. Place the small tube inside the large white screw topped lid contained and close the lid tightly. Place the white top container into the cardboard box.

D. Make sure the request form details are correct and place inside the box.

E. Place the box into the plastic envelope. Postage has been pre-paid by PHE.

F. Post the box back to the laboratory. You can ask a friend, neighbour or family member to drop the pack off at a postbox or post office.

Contact them by phone and leave the pack outside your door ready for them to collect. This is so you don't risk passing on the infection.

Please follow current advice on isolation.

Visit:
www.nhs.uk/coronavirus

If at any stage your condition worsens, or if you are more worried about your health contact NHS 111 urgently
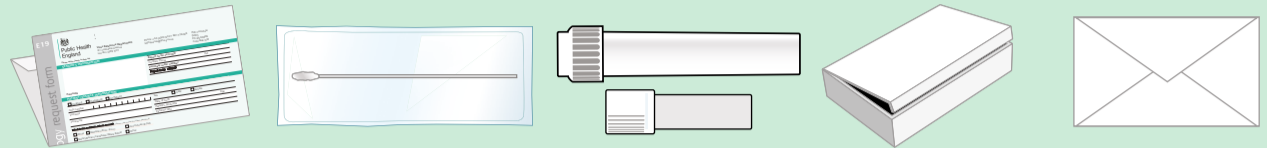
How to take a combined throat and nose swab | Courier version

To test for coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) we need two samples, one from the back of your throat and then from inside the nose with the same swab.

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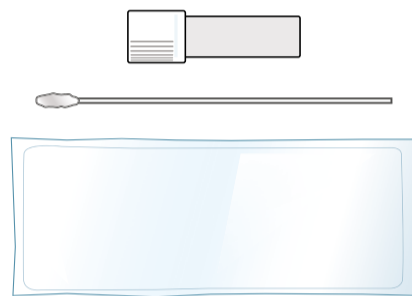- a plastic envelope with pre-paid postage.

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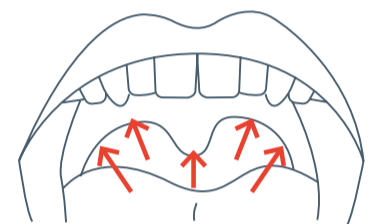
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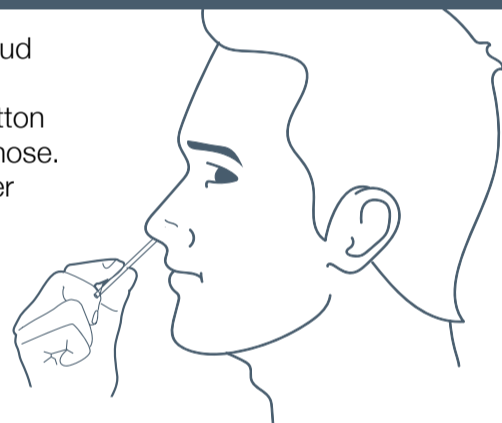**Ensure you also swab the sides of the arch where your tonsils protrude.**

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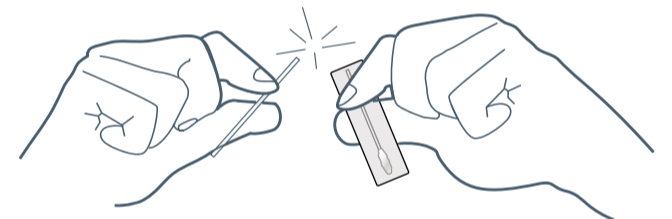
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B. Once you have taken the swab, place the soft tip of the swab into the collection tube and break off the plastic end (at the breaking off point where the swab stick is thinner). Replace the lid on the bottle.

Please avoid touching the cotton bud tip with your hands (before or after the swabbing) to avoid contamination.

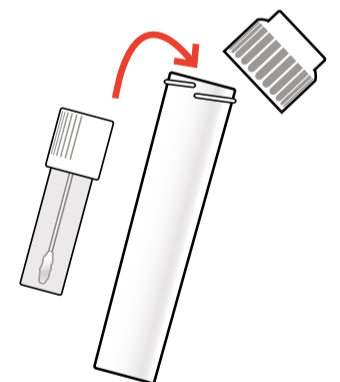## 3 Finally, pack the samples

A. Wash your hands again.

B. Write your name, date of birth and today's date on the outside of the small collection tube with the swab. This is very important. Your GP may include sticky labels.
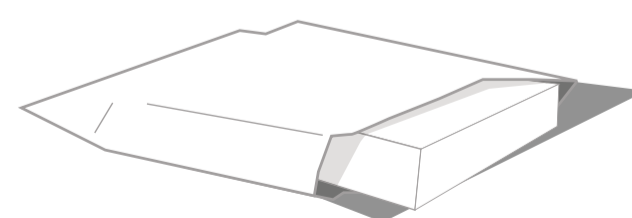
Name

Date of birth:

C. Place the small tube inside the large white screw topped lid contained and close the lid tightly.

Place the white top container into the cardboard box.

D. Make sure the request form details are correct and place inside the box.

E. Put in plastic envelope and seal.

Courier will arrive to pick up the envelope containing the sample inside the box.

If at any stage your condition worsens, or if you are more worried about your health contact NHS 111 urgently