

Primary care and other clinic-based settings

Testing in primary care and clinic-based settings is aimed at protecting vulnerable patients, reducing transmission in these facilities, and ensuring that a sustainable healthcare workforce is maintained at all health services.

These settings include

- primary care
- GP
- pharmacy¹
- outpatient clinics; and
- other health professional clinics (for example, dentist, chiropractor, physiotherapist).

Testing enables access to antiviral treatment for those at greatest risk, within the recommended treatment window or where a result will change clinical decision. The need to, and the choice of, test will be a clinical decision and should be based on need and the urgency of the test result. This may be dependent on local testing services available.

During high transmission a pre-visit questionnaire may be considered prior to attendance for an appointment, either by phone conversation or via a texting app, to support advice to patients and visitors. In low prevalence remind patients to not attend if unwell with respiratory symptoms and the appointment is unrelated to seeking care for those symptoms.

Symptomatic people should be discouraged from attending healthcare facilities for **non-urgent care** while they are unwell, and appointments should be deferred where practicable. Providing access to virtual assistance and appointments should be considered as an alternative if practicable.

Symptomatic people who **require treatment** which cannot be deferred should be encouraged to complete a self-test RAT before the appointment.

The following is the recommended testing for GPs and urgent care – for more detail, please refer to the [COVID-19 Testing Operational Guidance for General Practice and Urgent Care](#).

¹ People with a high risk of severe illness from COVID-19 are eligible for treatment with COVID-19 antiviral medicines. Many pharmacists can supply COVID-19 antivirals without a prescription based on a positive result of a self-administered RAT at home, or to a household contact.