



FACT SHEET: MOBILE TESTING CLINICS - VICTORIA

20 July 2020

WHY ARE MOBILE TESTING CLINICS TESTING RESIDENTS AND STAFF IN RESIDENTIAL AGED CARE FACILITIES THAT DO NOT HAVE A COVID-19 OUTBREAK?

- Australians living in aged care are among those most vulnerable to becoming seriously unwell with COVID-19. Stopping this virus from spreading into Victoria's aged care facilities is our top priority.
- Testing gives health authorities the chance to find people with COVID-19 who are living and working in aged care, before they appear unwell. This will help health authorities identify where community transmission is occurring, before there are COVID-19 outbreaks.
- Five new COVID-19 testing teams are testing staff and residents in residential aged care facilities (RACF) across metropolitan Melbourne and the Mitchell Shire. Testing is voluntary.
- These teams are in addition to the in-reach pathology services deployed by the Australian Government to residential aged care services with a confirmed or suspected COVID-19 outbreak.
- **Remember:** COVID-19 tests are only a point in time indication of whether someone has the virus. Everyone working and living in aged care must:
 - maintain good hygiene measures
 - be alert to symptoms of COVID-19
 - be retested if they become even mildly unwell.

Who will be conducting the testing?

- Aspen Medical COVID-19 Mobile Testing Clinics (MTC) will visit RACFs that have not reported positive COVID-19 cases.
- The MTC will collect specimens from every staff member and resident who agree to be tested. They will need to be at the RACF on the day the MTC visit.
- Sonic Healthcare will test the specimens collected by Aspen Medical and will provide the results to participants and the RACF.
- Sonic Healthcare will also inform the Victorian Public Health Unit if there is a positive result.

Do all RACFs in metropolitan Melbourne and Mitchell Shire need to participate?

- Participation in the MTC is voluntary; however, we strongly encourage RACFs to participate. Testing will help providers know the COVID-19 status of staff and residents at the facility on a given day. This may also help providers know if someone is positive before a significant outbreak or further transmission occurs.

How will the RACF know when their service is being tested?

- An Aspen Medical Clinical Coordinator will call the RACF two days before arriving for testing. They will identify a point of contact in the service and organise a preliminary site visit for the day before testing.
- The Clinical Coordinator will email the RACF a registration spreadsheet.
- The Clinical Coordinator will visit the RACF the day before the MTC arrives to:
 - establish contact with senior management at the RACF
 - complete the registration of staff and residents who agree to be tested
 - identify two stations for testing (one for staff, and one for ambulatory residents)
 - determine how the stations will be set up (including personal protective equipment (PPE) donning and doffing stations)
 - identify non-ambulatory residents who will be tested in their rooms
 - investigate clinical waste management in RACF to facilitate MTC waste management
 - identify appropriate areas for the MTC vehicles to park
 - communicate the needs of the MTC to the RACF staff so that they may provide appropriate support.

What will happen on the testing day and how long will the tests take?

- The MTC will arrive on site at the agreed time and the Clinical Coordinator will accompany the team into the RACF testing areas.
- The MTC will provide PPE for its staff; the RACF will provide PPE for its residents and staff (surgical mask for test participants; gloves and surgical mask for staff who assist residents to the testing areas).
- All RACF staff will be tested at one designated testing station, one by one.
- All RACF residents will be tested at a second designated testing station, one by one.
- The RACF will need to provide two staff to:
 - escort ambulant residents from their rooms to the testing area
 - provide support for the resident through the process of testing
 - escort the resident to their room afterwards.
- A RACF staff member must also accompany, guide, and assist the GP in taking the samples from non-ambulatory residents in their rooms.
- All participants will be asked if they consent to being tested.
- The MTC will adhere to all environmental cleaning standards and supply its own cleaning materials.
- Every effort will be made to complete testing within one day. However the time to complete testing at a RACF will depend on the number of people being tested. The MTC staff will have a break after every four hours.

What is the cost of testing?

- There is no cost to the facility or any participating resident or staff member. The Australian Government is fully funding this testing.

What if a resident or staff member declines a test?

- Participation is voluntary. There will be no adverse outcomes for any resident or staff member who opts out of this testing program.
- Some staff may have been tested already. These staff may not wish to be retested. It is important to note that tests are only a point in time indication and a person's COVID-19 status could change on any given day.

What will happen if someone presents for a test and appears unwell?

- If a staff member or resident is symptomatic, or becomes symptomatic, of COVID-19, they must follow the RACFs COVID-19 protocols. This may include isolation of residents until tests results are known. Staff may need to take sick-leave and isolate until test results are known.

How will people find out their results?

- Sonic Healthcare will test the specimens and will report positive COVID-19 results directly to the Victorian Public Health Unit (PHU). The PHU are responsible for notifying the participant and RACF. The PHU will support the RACF to undertake contact tracing. See [First 24 hours](#) checklist for what to do if there is a positive result.
- The responsible clinical manager at the RACF will receive all results for residents and staff.
- Staff who have registered with a mobile number will receive negative results by text message.
- Staff who test positive will be contacted by a clinical practitioner from Sonic Healthcare.
- Staff and residents are not required to isolate while waiting for the results of the COVID-19 tests.
- However, staff should not attend work if they are feeling unwell, even mildly unwell, and wait for test result, or be retested.