

Press release

Embargo: until 00.01 hours on 16th October 2020

UPDATE: Covid-19 testing for care home residents and staff in England (up to the end of 13th October)

The weekly testing rate of care home residents has been broadly unchanged at around 30% throughout the summer

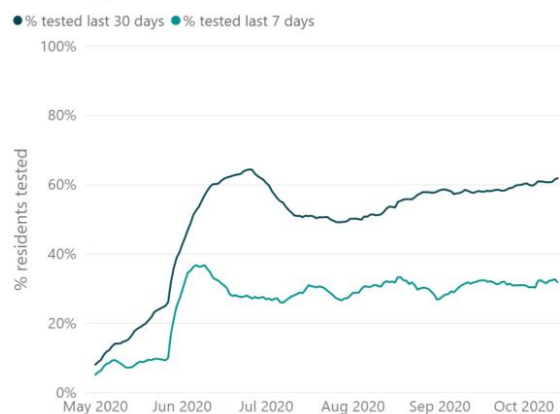
The good news is that we have no evidence yet of a rise in infections in care homes mirroring that seen in the wider community in many areas of the UK – we assume that the steady 2% infection rate does not conceal any change in testing patterns by homes

Despite a summer of testing, roughly a fifth of residents (22%) have not been tested since the end of May when the government pledged to have a more thorough Covid-19 testing regime in elderly care homes in England

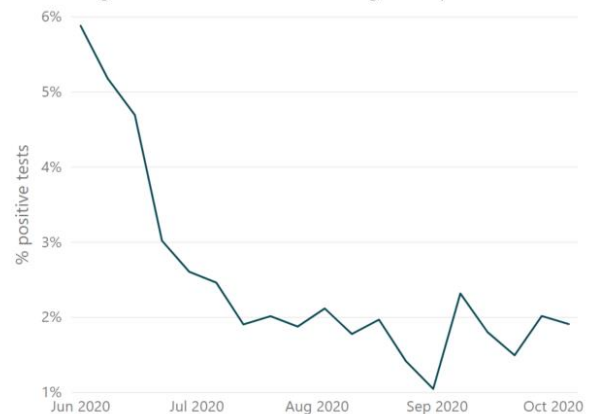
Care homes need access to test kits but also stronger and more consistent local guidance if they are to achieve universal testing

Just 5% of care homes have not had any residents tested at any stage

Percentage of residents tested for Covid-19



Percentage of Covid-19 tests coming back positive



If quoting this data please note: This new research comes from The Data Analysis Bureau and is based on anonymised data from Person Centred Software, one of the leading suppliers of near real time management information systems to the care home sector.

This analysis is conducted by The Data Analysis Bureau (T-DAB) based on anonymised data from Person Centred Software. It can be updated daily and includes data on testing for carers in the residential setting, and residents. Updates, interactive dashboards, and additional data can be found at t-dab.com/care-home-covid-data/

Simon Briscoe, Director of T-DAB said: “Until universal and frequently repeated testing of staff becomes policy care home residents remain at risk. The rate of testing rose sharply into June as the government sent roughly 1 million test kits to care homes but a larger and more managed scheme is needed now. The many links in the chain of testing have left care home staff having to deal with local public health officials, the NHS, a website and test centres, with the result that testing rates are still too low.”

Simon Papworth, co-founder and director of Person Centred Software, said: “The government’s test and track initiative is struggling and mixed messages have been received by care homes about the effectiveness of testing. As barely half of residents have been tested in the last month it is clear that more than making test kits available is required to provide care homes with the support and guidance they need.”

Eric Topham, CEO of T-DAB said: “The dataset that Person Centred Software have is incredibly rich and provides a level of detail that does not exist in public health organisations’ own reporting systems. It is collected digitally and in real time, offering an insight view not available to the CQC and ONS. The analytics that can be offered for monitoring and prediction of trends, would provide a vital tool in closely coordinating the response to Covid-19 in care homes, particularly in anticipation of a possible second wave.”

T-DAB is a London-based data science, data analytics, and data engineering innovation agency specialising in delivering cutting edge data analytics and machine learning driven applications, helping clients to understand their data and discover new insights. T-DAB collaborates extensively with both private and academic partners. T-DAB is driven to further the use of data and AI for good. <https://t-dab.com/>

Person Centred Software is one of the leading suppliers of near real time management information systems to the care home sector. Its digital point of care recording system is used for 50,000 service users across more than 2,000 care providers in the UK. There is an average of 50 care actions recorded per service user per day (2.7 million records a day), which evidence the detail of the care people receive. Person Centred Software’s digital care system, Mobile Care Monitoring, reduces paperwork and gives carers more time to care. Person Centred Software’s philosophy is person-centred; providing benefits to everyone involved in care by delivering exceptional tools.

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Notes for Editors:

Data

The data above relates to the period up to and including 13th October 2020. There is no equivalent up to date information on the sector as a whole because more than half of the homes have no detailed, timely or automated data collection.

The graphs in this release show the Covid-19 testing of residents as a percentage of the population for which a Person Centred Software Mobile Care Monitoring (MCM) Covid-19 audit was undertaken. The dataset for analysis includes roughly 13,000 care givers and 32,000 residents from care homes across England. This is a sub-sample of the total care homes in the MCM system. In order for a care giver to be included within the observational group, they must have had a Covid-19 audit form filled out in the MCM software in the last month. This data covers a minority of care homes but more than any other provider. Given the geographic spread and size of the Person Centred Software client base, there is no reason to believe that the sample is not broadly representative of the sector.

- ‘% residents tested in the last 30 days’ is the count of residents recorded as being tested* at least once in the last 30 days, as a proportion of all residents audited during that period.
- ‘% residents tested in the last 7 days’ corresponds to the number of residents recorded as being tested* in the 7 preceding days as a proportion of all residents audited in the last 30 days.

* Residents identified as ‘being tested’ are those for which the status ‘in test’, ‘tested - confirmed’ or ‘tested - negative’ was recorded in their audit. The date at which any of these appears first, is taken as the date of testing.

Policy

The government [announced on 15 April](#) that testing will be available for all care home residents with symptoms.

[The UK Government’s COVID-19 recovery strategy](#) (6 May, CP239, page 35) said: “The Government is offering a COVID-19 test to every staff member and resident in every care home in England, whether symptomatic or not.”

The government [repeated this on 11 May](#), saying that “All symptomatic and asymptomatic care home staff and residents in England are now eligible for testing. Testing will be prioritised for care homes that look after the over 65s.”

At the same time, Minister of State for Care Helen Whately said: “Care homes are on the frontline in the fight against COVID-19 and we are determined that staff have everything they need to keep themselves and their residents safe. Testing is a crucial part of this. It helps prevent and control outbreaks and means steps can be taken to reduce the spread the virus and protect the most vulnerable.” “Testing asymptomatic workers helps prevent and control outbreaks. It means those who test positive can be isolated, reducing the number of people who can spread the virus and protecting the most vulnerable. It also helps to build up a strategic understanding of the prevalence of the virus in local areas and the sector as a whole.”

On [15 May](#) at the daily briefing Secretary of State for Health and Social Care Matt Hancock said: “We will test every resident and every member of staff in our elderly care homes in England between now and early June”. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vM-2DsysyQI> (7.36 minutes)

On [7 June](#) it was announced that “COVID-19 tests offered to every care home for elderly or those with dementia” allowing the government to claim that its target to offer test kits to every care home for over-65s by 6 June has been met. Health and Social Care Secretary Matt Hancock said: “We have now managed successfully to offer tests to every care home that is eligible, both for staff testing and for residents to be tested. What that means is that for about three-quarters of a million people living and working in nearly 9,000 eligible care homes, the tests have been delivered.” The government sent test kits to all eligible care homes unless they stated they did not want to receive them.

The Government has set out [support for care homes](#) (9 July including the £600m care home infection control fund) and care home managers are able to request test kits for staff and residents [to be delivered](#). On 11 September DHSC sent a [letter](#) to “All care providers Local Authority Chief Executives and Directors of Adult Social Care” about the pick-up in infections among care home staff and residents. It said that “all care home staff (including bank and agency staff), including those without symptoms, should be tested every week”. The same letter also says: “Please be aware that care homes do not automatically receive their next round of regular testing and so each care home needs to reorder towards the end of each round of testing. Care homes are able to reapply 21 days after their last order.” This suggest that kits are not available for weekly testing. A new ‘[adult social care winter plan](#)’ was launched on 18 September, offering free PPE and a ‘new dashboard will monitor care home infections’.

ONS has published data relating to deaths in care homes on 3 July:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/datasets/deathsinvolvingcovid19inthecaresectorenglandandwales>

and on 15 September:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/datasets/numberofdeathsincareshomesnotifiedtothecarequalitycommissionengland>

Date: 15th October 2020

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