

Guidance for health care service providers and carers on alternative approaches to COVID-19 testing for people with disability

There are alternative options to access a COVID-19 test for people with disability

- People with disability can face barriers that prevent them from having a COVID-19 test through existing testing services (i.e. COVID-19 testing clinics). These barriers include, but are not limited to:
 - difficulties accessing a testing clinic
 - difficulties communicating with health care workers, for example, through a communication impairment, or staff wearing masks, or where the individual who displays behaviours of concern.
- To prevent community transmission in NSW, it is important that everyone in NSW can get tested for COVID-19 when required.
- For those living with disability, there are alternative approaches to be considered that might assist them in having a test. These are:
 - having a test at home by a health care worker, or by a trusted carer¹ under the instruction of a health care worker²; or
 - supervised specimen collection by a person familiar to them at the GP practice, COVID-19 testing clinic or at home.
- Primary care physicians, disability support providers, COVID-19 testing clinics and hospitals are all in an important position to support people with disability get tested for COVID-19.

How to support a person with disability access a COVID-19 test

- Please contact your local Public Health Unit on 1300 066 055 for more information and advice on available options to support people with disability access a COVID-19.
- It is important to note that the type of testing service utilised will depend on the individual circumstances of the person with disability.
- The testing options should be discussed and decided by, or in collaboration with, the person with disability and where appropriate, their personal support team, including their GP and service provider as well as the Public Health Unit.

1 A 'trusted carer' may be a person who provides unpaid care and support to people with disability, including family members or friends

2 Health care worker collection of the specimen is preferred. If self-collection is used, NSW Health Pathology recommends that it should be done under instruction of a health care worker.