

Hartlepool Outbreak Control Plan - a summary



The Hartlepool Outbreak Control Plan establishes a collaborative approach to be taken in Hartlepool to minimise new COVID-19 outbreaks and also includes details of the steps to be taken in the event of an outbreak.

Given the fast-paced environment we are working within, the plan will be constantly reviewed and developed by the Hartlepool Outbreak Control Board which includes members from Hartlepool Borough Council, Public Health England, NHS Tees Valley Clinical Commissioning Group, North Tees and Hartlepool Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and Tees, Esk and Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust.

The Hartlepool Local Outbreak Control Plan focuses on seven key themes:

- Planning for local outbreaks in care homes and schools
- Identifying and planning how to manage high risk places, locations and communities of interest
- Identifying methods for local testing to ensure a swift response that is accessible to the entire population
- Assessing local and regional contact tracing capability in complex settings
- Data integration
- Vulnerable people - supporting vulnerable local people to get help to self-isolate and ensuring services meet the needs of diverse communities
- Local Boards - establishing governance structures led by existing COVID-19 Health Protection Boards in conjunction with local NHS and supported by existing Gold command forums and a new member-led Board to communicate with the general public

Activation

The Hartlepool Outbreak Control Plan will be activated when an outbreak is either detected through the analysis of local data, or when an outbreak is notified by Public Health England through the NHS Test and Trace scheme.

An outbreak – defined as two or more confirmed cases in a particular setting – will always be confirmed in conjunction with Public Health England.



CORONAVIRUS

Why take the risk?



Keep a safe distance from others



Stay home as much as possible



Keep washing your hands regularly

A full set of FAQs are detailed below and will be updated frequently as and when the plans develop and take shape.

1 What is Hartlepool's Outbreak Control Plan?

All upper tier local authorities (county councils and unitary authorities) were asked to produce Local Outbreak Plans by the end of June 2020. Local authorities have significant knowledge and expertise in managing outbreaks and so have a significant role to play in the identification and management of COVID-19 outbreaks. Our plan will ensure that any local outbreak is identified and responded to quickly, protecting communities and helping prevent the spread of the virus. The plan is built around seven key themes with an emphasis on prevention and control as well as ensuring we are prepared for any community outbreaks.

2 Who will manage the COVID Control Plan?

The Council has set up an Outbreak Control Board to oversee the implementation of the plan. There is also an Engagement Board which is a sub group of the local Health and Wellbeing board which provides a link to communities and supports the outbreak control measures.

3 What is NHS Track and Trace?

NHS Test and Trace ensures that anyone who develops symptoms of Coronavirus (COVID-19) can quickly be tested to find out if they have the virus, and helps identify close recent contacts of anyone who tests positive for Coronavirus and, if necessary, notifies them that they must self-isolate at home to help stop the spread of the virus.

4 What happens if there is a local outbreak?

The precise action that will be taken will depend upon the complexity of the outbreak. The local and regional public health teams are working together to identify outbreaks and to agree the appropriate actions that follow. This could involve working with partners to put in place measures to stop the spread of the disease locally. There are plans for specific settings such as schools and workplaces.

5 When should I book a test?

Only request a COVID-19 test if you are displaying symptoms. This could be one or more symptoms of a new and persistent cough, a high temperature, or a loss of taste and/or smell. If you are in self-isolation because a member of your household has tested positive for COVID-19, you do not need to get tested but you must carry out the full self-isolation period of 14 days.

6 How does NHS Trace and Track work

I have symptoms of Coronavirus

- Isolate as soon as you experience Coronavirus symptoms and order a test on www.nhs.uk/coronavirus or call 119 if you have no internet access.
- Anyone else in your household must self-isolate for 14 days from when your symptoms started. They don't need to order a test until they have symptoms.
- If your test is positive you must complete the remainder of your 10-day isolation – the people in your household must also finish their 14-day isolation.
- The NHS Test and Trace service will send a text, email alert or call you with instructions of how to share details with people with whom you have had close, recent contact with and places you have visited.
- If your test comes back negative, you and other household members no longer need to self-isolate.

I have been contacted by the NHS Test and Trace service because I have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for Coronavirus.

- The alert will usually come by text, email or phone call. You will then need log on to the Test and Trace website, or a trained call handler will talk you through the next step. Under 18s will get a phone call and a parent or guardian will be asked to give permission for the call to continue.
- You will be told to begin to self-isolate for 14 days from your last contact with the person who has tested positive. You must do this even if you don't feel unwell because you may have been infected and could infect other people.
- Other members of your household don't need to self-isolate if you have not shown any symptoms – but take extra care to follow the guidance on social distancing and hand washing and avoid contact at home.
- If you do develop symptoms you must follow the steps detailed in the point above – self-isolate, order a test and your household will also need to self-isolate for 14 days. Even if this test comes back negative, you must still complete your 14 day isolation as the virus may not be detectable yet – but you could unknowingly be spreading the virus.

7 How do I know the person claiming to be contact tracing is genuine?

NHS contract tracers will first speak to you about your positive diagnosis to ensure you understand the self-isolation guidance and know what is being asked of yourself and others in your household. You will then be asked about the places you have been and the people you have spent a significant amount of time with. They are particularly interested in people you have been near for periods of 15 minutes or more. They will never ask you to make any form of payment, provide bank details, give any password or PIN number, request you download something, or ask you to call a premium rate phone number.

8 How does NHS Trace and Track work

People with COVID-19 symptoms, others in their household and people they have encountered will go into self-isolation, preventing them from spreading the virus with the wider community. This will enable most people to return to a more normal way of life. However, it only works if everybody who is required to self-isolate does so for the necessary length of time.

9 How is all this work being coordinated?

Directors of Public Health at local authorities across the North East are working with health colleagues to establish and implement a Local Outbreak Control Plan. This plan will bring in partners from both the council, NHS and other local services as part of local boards. These boards will be able to make decisions, engage with the public and respond to local outbreaks.

10 What testing facilities are available?

For ways to book a COVID-19 test, visit the NHS website [here](#). Locally there is a testing site at Middlehaven in Middlesbrough open every day and, at the current time, a mobile testing unit visits Hartlepool Waterfront for two days per week.

11 Will I only have to self-isolate once?

Not necessarily. You will only be asked to self-isolate because of a positive result once. But you may be asked to self-isolate several times because of close contact with a confirmed case.

12 I have done an anti-body test and it confirmed I have already had the virus – do I still need to self isolate?

The Government said this will make no difference and you must follow the instructions around self-isolation. The science remains unclear about how much immunity you get from having COVID-19.

13 How do I make sure my setting is COVID-19 safe?

There is guidance on the government website to support different settings to become COVID-19 safe. These can be found at:

- www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19
- www.gov.uk/coronavirus/business-support
- www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship-during-the-pandemic

14 What measures should I be taking?

Wherever possible, you should maintain two metres social distancing. Guidance remains to work from home if you can and avoid public transport where possible. When it is necessary to use public transport, face coverings must be worn. Keep washing your hands regularly.



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