



Test and Trace

VENUE ALERTS PROCESS FOR NON-APP USERS

NOTIFYING INDIVIDUALS AT RISK OF COVID-19:
CREATING A PROCESS EQUITABLE WITH THE NHS COVID-19
APP (NHS QR CODE CHECK IN)

APRIL 2021

Background

In developing this solution, we have engaged:

- Public Health England
- The Association of Directors of Public Health
- Local health protection teams
- environmental health officers
- Local Government Association

We will continue to engage with all the above, as well as:

- businesses and designated venues (where the policy applies)
- trade associations
- other government departments

Designated venues are legally required to request and maintain customer, visitor and staff contact details (venue logbooks) and display an official NHS QR code poster.

Previously, local health protection teams (LHPTs) would contact venues they had identified as being the source of a potential outbreak to obtain the venue's logbooks and deliver public health advice to people who were there and who may have been exposed to COVID-19. There were challenges with this process, including resource constraints, so a new process has been co-designed to ease pressure on LHPTS and reduce the barriers of implementation.

A new operating model will automate the process as much as possible. Previously, individuals at risk of exposure would receive a phone call from their LHPT. The new process ensures that these individuals can receive public health advice via SMS. This warn and inform message is the same message received by NHS COVID-19 app users (who check in to a venue using the NHS QR code).

The new process is efficient, ensures a standardised approach nationally, provides an equitable solution for app users and non-app users, and is compliant with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). It utilises centralised capacity within NHS Test and Trace, easing burdens on local health protection teams and provides analytics that allows us to monitor and evaluate the venue alerts policy. This new operating model for venue alerts will allow LHPTs to prioritise those venues that require detailed investigations, outbreak management or work on COVID-secure practices.

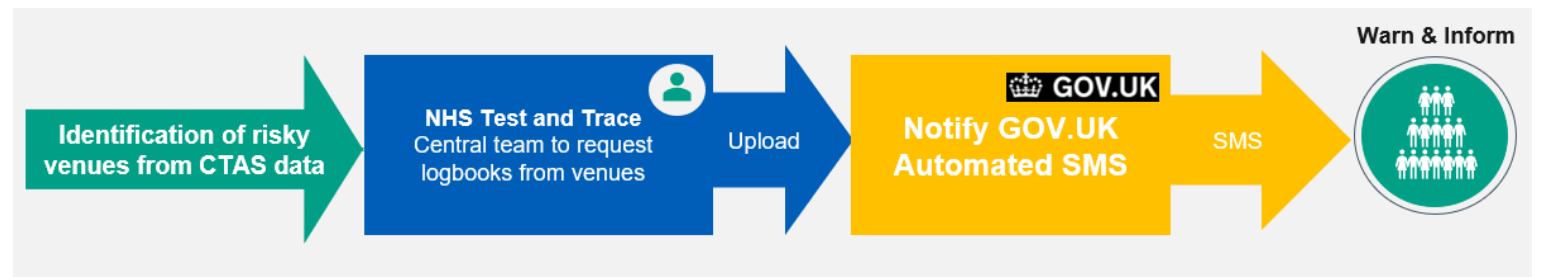
Solution

From 14 April 2021, if two or more people who test positive for COVID-19 are linked to the same venue on the same day, NHS Test and Trace will send a 'warn and inform' message to remind people to follow the guidance and be vigilant to symptoms. If four or more people test positive, people who visited the venue on the same day will be requested to book a test.

This will ensure that individuals will have the necessary public health advice to stop the spread of the virus, protect their local communities and ease the pressure on the health and care system. It will also aid the reopening of the economy by supporting businesses and venues to remain open. This will also improve public trust and significantly ease the capacity burden at a local level.

The process to notify people at risk is as follows:

- CTAS data identifies venues where two or more people who later tested positive for COVID-19 had visited on the same day
- NHS Test and Trace contact the venues to obtain the venue logbooks
- NHS Test and Trace uploads the details into Gov.UK Notify
- A 'warn and inform' or 'book a test' message is sent via SMS to non-app users
- App users also receive this message as a notification within their app



Collaborating with local teams...

PowerBI dashboards will be refreshed daily to **inform local authorities when a venue alert has been generated in their area**. Local authorities can then conduct a follow up with these venues, if deemed necessary, knowing that those individuals who left their contact details or checked in via the NHS QR code **will have received the necessary public health advice**.

This will **ease the significant administrative burden** on LHPTs. Local authorities will only receive this notification when a venue alert has been triggered in their area, i.e., when two or more people who have visited a venue have gone on to test positive.

Following up with venues may involve **working with businesses and venues** on their COVID-secure practices or investigating the source of the outbreak further. You should not contact the venues and request their logbooks again as they will have already been contacted by NHS Test and Trace.

For those venues who have been contacted by the central team and are unable to provide logbooks because they were not complying with the Regulations, NHS Test and Trace will pass these cases to the environmental health department within the local authority to investigate and conduct local enforcement action.

Benefits of the new operating model

Eases capacity burden on LHPTs

GDPR compliant

Efficiency through automated process

Equitable outcomes for app and non-app users

Standardised approach nationally

Monitoring and evaluation

Next Steps

April 2021

- 12 April 2021: many businesses and venues in scope re-open
- 16 April 2021: new operating model goes live
- Regular reviews to understand how the process is working and to address issues that arise

May 2021

- Continue to iterate and improve process by monitoring and evaluating the:
 - number of venue alerts (warn and inform / warn and book a test)
 - number of tests following warn and book a test (and % take up)
 - feedback from members of the public
 - feedback from venues

June 2021

- 21 June 2021: all restrictions on social contact may be lifted
- Increase proportion of W&BT messages if proven to be successful at finding asymptomatic cases
- Share findings and progress with stakeholders

Annex A

Example of the 'warn and inform venue alert' (two or three positive cases in the venue on the same day)

NHS Test and Trace Venue Alert:

You recently visited a venue on the same day as others who have since tested positive for COVID-19, and there is a risk you may have been exposed to the virus.

Around 1 in 3 people who have COVID-19 do not have any symptoms, but they can still pass it on and put others at risk.

You do not need to self-isolate unless you are contacted again, and it is confirmed you were in close contact with somebody who tested positive.

However, please remain vigilant and continue to:

- follow the latest hygiene and safety advice such as washing your hands regularly and maintaining social distancing
- stay alert to the symptoms of coronavirus: if you develop symptoms, you should self-isolate and book a free test at <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>

Please continue to follow all the latest guidance, even if you have been vaccinated.

For further information, guidance, or support please visit www.gov.uk/coronavirus

Annex B

‘Warn and book a test venue alert’ (four or more positive cases in the venue on the same day)

NHS Test and Trace Venue Alert:

You recently visited a venue on the same day as others who have since tested positive for COVID-19 and there is a risk you may have been exposed to the virus.

Around 1 in 3 people who have COVID-19 do not have any symptoms, but they can still pass it on and put others at risk.

For this reason, please book a test now at www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test

You do not need to self-isolate, but you should continue to follow the latest advice on washing your hands regularly and maintaining social distancing. You should self-isolate immediately if you develop any symptoms.

If you test positive you, and others in your household, must self-isolate immediately.

You do not need to book a test if you have tested positive in the past 90 days. Please continue to follow all the latest guidance, even if you have been vaccinated.

For further information, guidance, or support please visit www.gov.uk/coronavirus

FAQs – Venue Alerts

In what situations would an individual receive a ‘warn and inform’ message and when would they receive a ‘warn and book a test’ message?

Individuals will be sent a ‘warn and inform’ message where there have been two or three positive cases identified at a venue on the same day. Individuals will be sent a ‘warn and book a test’ message where there have been four or more positive cases identified at the venue on the same day. These thresholds are kept under review and may be adjusted as more data is gathered.

What about when the venue is very large? Would you send out alerts to thousands of individuals?

When a venue alert report is generated, it is audited by a member of the team to ensure that they are not complex or extreme locations, such as large stadiums. This will also help to mitigate the concerns of notification fatigue and alerting large numbers of people unnecessarily. These venues are then escalated for further review to determine the appropriate course of action and the messaging required.

Will there be any kind of inbound number that people can call after getting their SMS to seek advice if they need it, or to check if the alert they have received is genuine?

Members of the public who receive a warn and inform alert and would like further information on either this messaging, or NHS Test and Trace in general, should contact 119.

With more messages being sent out, how will you avoid notification fatigue?

Notifications will only be sent to people who have been present at a venue on the same day as two or more people who later went on to test positive. We will be continually monitoring the number of messages sent out to ensure that public health messages have maximum impact and are sent at the right time, to the right people.

FAQs – PowerBI

How will local authorities (LAs) and LHPTs know which venues have been contacted?

Daily PowerBI reports will be generated when a venue alert has been issued in your area.

Are venues contacted based on postcode coincidences i.e., the cases were at the venue during infectious period?

Yes, venues are identified from the postcode coincidences. Venues meet the threshold for venue alerts if there are two or more positive cases that have been identified as having visited on the same day.

Will the Power BI report name the venues?

Yes, the PowerBI report will name the venues which meet the threshold for alerts. These venues will be contacted by NHS Test and Trace to share their logbooks and NHS Test and Trace will then contact those individuals and provide the relevant public health advice.

Will the PowerBI report go to county or district councils, or both? What is the report called so that we can easily identify them?

Access is granted at upper tier local authority level as this is where public health responsibility sits. The reports will be called 'Venue Alerts'.

Is the venue notified of the positive cases? Is the LA informed so that they can provide additional support if appropriate?

The venue will be notified of the positive cases and given guidance on what to do next. LAs will be informed when a venue alert has been generated in their area via the PowerBI portal. This information will be refreshed daily.

FAQs – Data

What should I do with the venue information?

The venues are shared with you for your information; however, there is no further action required from you in relation to contact tracing. NHS Test and Trace will take responsibility for contacting the relevant individuals for these venues. You may wish to conduct further investigations on the venues in question, e.g., to ensure they are COVID-secure or to support them with advice on how to manage the potential outbreak in their venue. You should not request the venue logbook and contact individuals again.

How do I get this data if I want to take further action?

You should not request this data from venues. NHS Test and Trace will contact all individuals at risk and give them the necessary public health advice. Venue logbooks will only provide contact information for those that provided their phone numbers, and for the majority who check in with the app, this is done so anonymously and so cannot be shared.

Will LHPTs need to inform NHS Test and Trace if they carry out any further engagement with venues or undertaken more in-depth investigations?

No, LHPTs do not need to inform NHS Test and Trace if they are conducting in-depth investigations or working with businesses and venues locally on their COVID-secure practices.

FAQs – Supporting Businesses

How will a venue share their customer, visitor and staff logbooks?

The venue will be emailed a template attachment to download, complete, and upload to Egress via a secure link. All instructions and guidance on this process will be communicated to the venue at the time.

How long do venues have to provide this information?

Due to the importance of timeliness in informing the public, this information must be provided as soon as possible. We do not prescribe a timeframe for which the venue has to share this information, as this will vary according to size of venue and method of collecting contact details; however, it is their legal duty to provide this as soon as is reasonably practicable to do so. If we suspect a venue is not providing these as quickly as possible, this potential breach of the law will be reported to the relevant local authority who can follow up accordingly.

What should businesses do if they have any questions or need further support?

Should businesses have any questions or require any further support, they should call the Enquiries Service through 119.

FAQs – Monitoring and Evaluation

How will outcomes be evaluated, i.e., how will we know if messaging is having an impact?

We will closely monitor and evaluate the process to review how many alerts are being sent (both warn and inform and warn a book a test) and monitor the impact of testing including what proportion of individuals take up the recommendation to get tested and how many of these go on to test positive. We will evaluate the types of venues that meet the threshold for alerts and, of those contacted, what proportion of them are compliant and have logbooks to share and how long this process takes. We aim to make this as easy as possible for businesses and will gather feedback from venues to iterate and streamline the process where we can. We will also gather feedback from members of the public to understand the impact these venues alerts have on influencing people's behaviours, and we will keep the messaging and thresholds for sending alerts under regular review.

How do we improve the data quality in the logbooks themselves?

In many cases, venues are using online booking systems. For example, ~70% of the hospitality sector now take advanced bookings which should improve the accuracy of the data. We provide a standardised template for venues to securely provide their customer, visitor and staff information and keep the process as simple as possible.

What evidence is there that warn and inform messages is beneficial in supporting public health aims?

The warn and inform message highlights the potential exposure to those who otherwise may not know they are at risk. We conducted a behavioural insights study with over 8,000 members of the public which showed that 73% of people wanted to receive this kind of information, and the majority would follow the guidance given or book a test as a result of receiving a venue alert.

FAQs – The Regulations

Does everyone need to check in to a venue or can a lead member do it on behalf of the group?

On 29 March 2021, the Regulations were updated to remove the ‘lead member rule’. Venues in scope must now ask all customers and visitors to scan in or provide their contact details, not just the lead member of the group.

Why has the ‘lead member only’ rule changed?

We need to quickly inform all individuals who are at risk of having been exposed to coronavirus. Research has shown that we cannot always rely on the lead member to pass this information on to others in their group. It is essential that we can contact those at risk quickly and give them the necessary public health advice to help to stop the spread of COVID-19. This will support businesses in being able to stay open safely.

Have venues been notified of changes to the ‘lead member rule’?

We have conducted extensive communications and stakeholder engagement to make venues aware of the upcoming changes and the guidance on gov.uk has been updated. We have created new infographics and communication material to support venues to understand the rule changes and give a refresher in how to be compliant with the Regulations. These are attached in the email along with this document, so you can share with venues in your local area as well.

Are those under the age of 16 year required to scan in or provide their contact details?

Venues do not need to ask those under the age of 16 to provide their contact details or to check in. If an individual says they are under the age of 16, venues should not ask for identification unless they judge this to be false.

Further Information

Thank you for your continued engagement, feedback, comments and questions throughout this process. Thanks to your input, thousands more people will receive public health messages with advice when they have been at risk.

If you have any feedback or questions which are not listed within this pack, please contact Siriol.Leach@dhsc.gov.uk.