**COVID-19 Testing Strategy:**
**TEST TO PROTECT**
Huddle Messages for Health Care Workers and Physicians

**Test To Protect – Huddle Messages**

**What You Need to Know – New Testing Strategy for COVID-19**
- Saskatchewan has created a strategy to expand rapid antigen testing for COVID-19 in asymptomatic individuals in a variety of settings across the province.
- Testing will be voluntary but it is an important way for everyone to know their status and to protect themselves and those around them and help maintain a safe workplace and home environment.
- This ability to Test to Protect will be key to maintaining healthcare system capacity, preventing unchecked surges of the variants of concern (VOCs) and keeping the workplace safe. It’s important that everyone be tested, and tested regularly.

**Why Are We Focusing on Testing?**
- The presence of new variants across Canada means an elevated risk of transmission for everyone. More information on the variants of concern, can be found [here](#).
- Because these variant strains are more transmissible, it’s more important than ever before to be vigilant and get tested to help protect yourself and those around you. Testing is an important element of a multi-layered approach that will usher us through the pandemic, along with proper personal protective equipment (PPE) use, limiting gatherings, keeping two metres away from others when in public and wearing a mask, washing your hands often, staying home if you are unwell and getting vaccinated when it’s available to you.

**What Does This Mean For Me?**
- Over the coming days, you’re going to be hearing a lot more about testing. We will have teams working to deploy these rapid antigen point of care test for use in walk-in, drive-thru, mobile and pop-up specimen collections sites, as well as long term care homes, personal care homes, shelters, detox facilities, group homes and emergency service agencies (Police, Fire, EMS).
- You are also going to hear about the importance of being tested. We are encouraging everyone, including healthcare workers (HCWs), to get tested.
- Part of this expansion of testing includes providing an option for health care workers to receive training to perform rapid antigen testing, at home, on themselves and members of their household. The SHA will be doing a pilot program at Regina Pasqua Hospital and Regina General Hospital beginning the week of March 29 to test the training and uptake of testing kits. The training and testing kits will be rolled out to the rest of the SHA once the pilot is complete. More information on this program will be available once the pilot is complete. The option to the take the training and participate in at home testing will be voluntary, but by knowing your status you can yourself and those around you and help maintain a safe workplace and home environment. It’s important for everyone to be tested and tested regularly.
- We know we are asking a lot of teams that have already been tasked with so much during this pandemic but it is critical to ensure a robust testing strategy is in place to facilitate case identification and isolation in order to rapidly prevent further transmission.
- It is also crucially important that you do not come to work if you are sick or experiencing symptoms, even if they are mild. Please ensure that you complete your healthcare worker screening and get tested. The screening guidelines are in place to help protect everyone who enters our facilities and they need to be
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done before every shift.

- If you are unable to work due to illness or self-isolation requirements, please take advantage of your sick time bank. If you have a lack of sick days, or for other reasons, there are supports available to you:
  - [Federal Support Resources](#)
  - [Employee and Family Assistance Program](#)

- If you are feeling pressured to come in to work, even after you’ve failed screening, please contact the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Hotline at 1-833-233-4403, or via email at [OHS_Healthcareworkers_COVID19@saskhealthauthority.ca](mailto:OHS_Healthcareworkers_COVID19@saskhealthauthority.ca).

- Testing is an important element of a multi-layered approach that will usher us through the pandemic, along with proper personal protective equipment (PPE) use, limiting gatherings, keeping 2 metres away from others outside of your immediate household, wearing a mask, washing your hands often, staying home if you are unwell and getting vaccinated when it’s available to you.

- Thank you for all that you do to deliver people centred care to our patients, clients and residents. Thank you for all that you do to support your team and fellow health care workers (HCW) through leading by example and trying to stay healthy to keep yourselves and your loved ones safe. Testing and staying safe at work are important ways to help keep you, your family and your workplace safe and we thank you for your help and service in protecting everyone.