

## Media Release

**Date: 16 March 2022**

### **Confirmatory PCR tests no longer available as States seeks to manage capacity**

---

Islanders receiving a positive lateral flow test will no longer be able to request a confirmatory PCR test.

This decision has been made to help manage capacity at the Pathology Lab and hospital testing facility, which are currently stretched due to the high number of cases in the current wave and associated staffing challenges within those teams.

With immediate effect community testing will be primarily focused on utilising LFTs, which have been proven to be a reliable diagnostic method.

This is similar to changes introduced on 27<sup>th</sup> December 2021 when LFTs became the primarily method to diagnose positive cases. Confirmatory PCR tests were re-introduced on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2022 when capacity allowed, but unfortunately this is no longer possible during the current wave.

The removal of confirmatory PCR test means it will no longer be possible for the States to provide a certificate of recovery to those who want one. This is because the Public Health team have not overseen the testing process unless it is carried out via a PCR test. While the number of people requesting a recovery certificate was low, we appreciate this will be frustrating for anyone who wants this documentation; however the priority has to be on effectively managing resources.

PCR tests will continue to be available for the time being for anyone who is symptomatic but receives a negative LFT result. In such cases people can call 01481 220001/220002 or complete the online referral form at <https://www.gov.gg/covidnotification> to book a PCR test.

Dr Nicola Brink, Medical Officer of Health, said:

‘This is a similar situation to that we experienced during the Christmas period, when we announced on 27<sup>th</sup> December that we needed to focus our testing strategy on the use of LFTs. The current wave of infections is presenting challenges to the delivery of a range of public services and the pathology lab and testing facility at the

PEH are not immune from that. We need to manage our capacity and therefore the removal of confirmatory PCR tests has become necessary.'

**Ends**