

Drive through facility will test people for coronavirus

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A 'drive-through' facility has been opened in Wolverhampton – by referral only – to quickly, safely and conveniently test people suspected of having coronavirus.

The facility, which has been set up in a City of Wolverhampton Council-owned car park off the A449 to the north of the city centre, will enable people from Wolverhampton who have been referred by NHS 111 to be swabbed for the virus, also known as Covid-19, without them having to enter a hospital building or their local doctor's surgery where they might inadvertently put others at risk.

It is one of a number of temporary mobile test centres to be set up around the country. Individuals will be swabbed from the comfort of their vehicle before returning home and receiving their results from a healthcare professional once the sample has been tested. Please note, individuals will only be able to use the facility if they have been referred by NHS 111.

Mike Hastings, Director of Operations at Wolverhampton Clinical Commissioning Group, said: "We are working in collaboration with NHS colleagues to begin community drive-through swabbing of patients to test for coronavirus.

"By testing people in their cars rather than inviting them into hospital sites or GP surgeries we are able to greatly reduce the risk of spreading the virus.

"It's important to stress that this service is available by referral only. People will not be seen or tested if they turn up without a referral from NHS 111."

John Denley, the City of Wolverhampton Council's Director of Public Health, said: "This temporary facility has an important role to play in allowing people who show symptoms of coronavirus to be tested in a safe and convenient location without having to go into hospital or another clinical environment where they may inadvertently put vulnerable people at risk of infection.

"Individuals using the drive through facility will not leave their vehicles, so will not place others at any risk, nor will people living or working nearby be at any increased risk of infection.

"I'd like to reassure people that the risk to the general public from coronavirus remains low and that we are working with health partners at a regional and national level to do everything to ensure the people of Wolverhampton are protected.

"Good hygiene is the best prevention and there are some simple steps you can take to protect you and your family by washing your hands regularly and thoroughly using soap and water for at least 20 seconds at a time and, if you

cough, to cover your mouth and nose with a tissue and dispose of it immediately.

“If you have recently been to one of the affected areas and show any of the symptoms of coronavirus, including a cough, fever or difficulty breathing, you should use the NHS 111 online coronavirus service or call NHS 111 for further advice straight away – please don’t go to your doctor or a hospital.”

There’s lots of advice on how people can protect themselves online at www.nhs.uk/coronavirus. For further information and advice, please also visit www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/coronavirus.

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