

VDH COVID-19 Testing Update

VDH Partners Call
April 9, 2021

Agenda

1. Overview of Covid-19 testing in Virginia
2. Update on At-Home Covid-19 Testing
3. K-12 School Testing in Virginia

Overview of Covid-19 testing in Virginia

- Since the beginning of 2021, the amount of Covid-19 testing in the state has been declining
- In January 2021, about 50,000 total tests done daily; now less than 30,000 tests done each day
- This is a concern because Covid-19 testing is our window into how the pandemic is progressing in Virginia
- The reason = in 40-50% of cases of Covid-19 infection, people have no symptoms of disease
- Therefore, it is important to test people who have no symptoms or signs of illness if you want to find more people who are infected with Covid-19
- The benefits of testing:
 - Provides very important data about the status of pandemic in Virginia
 - Allows individual and public health actions to be taken quickly = to recommendation isolation of infected people - this helps to prevent more disease transmission
 - Allows us to identify and keep better track of variant viruses
- **The main message = testing continues to have an important role in the pandemic response even though vaccinations are available**

VDH's Response to Decline in Testing

- VDH working with advertising firms to craft messages to increase testing - these will be shown on various media platforms = online, TV, radio
- VDH reaching out directly to groups in an effort to increase testing
- Examples:
 - Earlier this week, State Health Commissioner sent out letter to all medical providers in Virginia encouraging them to consider testing people who are in higher risk groups for Covid-19
 - VDH Testing Team working directly with homeless services providers, operators of long-term care facilities, and others to encourage them either to continue testing or consider starting testing of their staff or people they serve
 - VDH Testing Team provides testing supplies, guidance and support

Update on At-Home COVID-19 Testing

- Recent FDA Actions: on March 31 and April 1, 2021, FDA granted six Emergency Use Authorizations (EUAs) for serial antigen testing
- Serial antigen testing = 2 antigen tests done over 2-3 days with 24-36 hour interval between tests
- EUAs given for four nonprescription products and two prescription products
- Importantly, these EUAs were different in that tests could be done on people with or without symptoms of Covid-19, and with or without an epidemiologic reason to suspect Covid-19 – moving into screening testing
- An example of an epidemiologic reason to test for Covid-19 would be someone who had close contact with someone known or suspected to have Covid-19
- These test indications are different – previous Covid-19 antigen tests were meant for people who either had symptoms or signs of Covid-19, or who had a reason to be tested

New Abbott BinaxNOW COVID-19 Antigen Card tests

- 1. Abbott BinaxNOW COVID-19 Ag Card = the "original" -- prescription only -- single antigen test for people suspected of having Covid-19 -- tests VDH received from HHS, and that HHS sent (and continues to send) directly to long-term care and some other facilities
- 2. Abbott BinaxNOW COVID-19 Ag Card Home Test = prescription only -- single antigen AT HOME test for people suspected of having Covid-19 - uses telehealth proctor by smartphone to supervise
- 3. Abbott BinaxNOW COVID-19 Ag 2 Card = NEW TEST -- EUA approved 3/31/21 - non-prescription serial testing for people with or without symptoms of Covid-19, or people with or without epi reasons to suspect Covid-19 -- for use by medical professionals or trained personnel -- not meant for at home use
- 4. Abbott BinaxNOW COVID-19 Ag Card 2 Home Test = NEW TEST - EUA approved 3/31/21 - non-prescription AT HOME serial testing for people with or without symptoms of Covid-19, or people with or without epi reasons to suspect Covid-19 - uses telehealth proctor to supervise -- meant for people who need an "official" COVID-19 test result, but want to do this at home
- 5. Abbott BinaxNOW COVID-19 Antigen Self Test = NEW TEST - EUA approved 3/31/21 - non-prescription AT HOME serial testing for people with or without symptoms of Covid-19, or people with or without epi reasons to suspect Covid-19 -- no telehealth proctor involved -- for people who simply want to test themselves for Covid-19 at home

An additional nonprescription at-home COVID-19 antigen test

- **Quidel QuickVue At-home OTC COVID-19 Test = NEW TEST – nonprescription – serial testing – two tests over 2-3 days with 24-36 hours between tests – test takes 10 minutes to provide result – anterior nasal swab – do not need smart device to do test – patients are advised to inform healthcare provider with results**

K-12 School Testing in Virginia

- Strong interest to return children to in-person school attendance
- While there certainly have been cases and outbreaks of Covid-19 in K-12 schools; in general, K-12 schools are not considered to be a major source of Covid-19 transmission
- One caveat - this depends on the overall amount of disease in a community, region, etc. If an area has a large amount of disease, it is very likely to be seen in the K-12 schools in addition to many other locations
- Federal govt will be providing funding for K-12 school testing

K-12 School Testing in Virginia (continued)

- VDH Testing Team currently engaged in discussions with Virginia Department of Education (VDOE), school districts, school superintendents, school nurses, and others to determine how to address this issue
- Different states and cities currently using a variety of models of testing for school students, staff and teachers - there does not appear to be one uniform model of how to do K-12 school testing
- VDOE and VDH recently launched two pilot K-12 school testing programs:
 - One is for diagnosing Covid-19 in students, teachers and/or staff who have symptoms of Covid-19 while at school, or who are close contacts of a known case of Covid-19
 - Other pilot program is for screening testing of asymptomatic students, teachers and/or staff once weekly
 - Pilot programs currently run until June 30, 2021

Questions?

If COVID-19 testing-related questions, please contact me at Brooke.Rossheim@vdh.virginia.gov