

Covid-19 Testing Methods Bulletin No 1 – 16 April 2020

Dear Colleague

On Friday 10th April we launched [a crowdsourcing platform](#) to seek ideas and solutions to four specific challenges, identified as part of the nationwide programme to scale up our COVID-19 testing programme across the UK. This has been a coalition of groups from the NHS, Department of Health and Social Care, BioIndustry Association, Bio In Vitro Diagnostic Association, Royal College of Pathologists, Medallia Crowdicity and our scientific community in health services, universities and industry.

We have had an outstanding response from colleagues across the country with more than 140 submissions to date and several suggestions that are ready to be adopted and scaled up. This bulletin focusses on sharing innovations in RNA extraction that may help solve some of the current challenges. More are coming in, so this is the first wave!

We now need your help: the aim of the crowdsourcing work was to find solutions that could be adopted straightaway. The solutions below have been assessed by our moderators as having that potential. Please will you look at them, make local decisions on which protocols might be useful in your context and validate them in your usual way. Clearly not all methods will be applicable to all.

RNA Extraction suggestions

- [RNA extraction free and heat treatment free COVID-19 PCR direct from swab method](#)
- [NWLP extraction free protocol - Using SPS and Non-proprietary buffer with the AusDiagnostics SARS CoV-2 assay](#)
- [Beads based method for RNA extraction](#)
- [Fast and scalable extraction protocol from AusDx](#)
- [Heat inactivation, no extraction needed](#)

Our first priority is to spread solutions that can help to scale up testing. We will continue to send you this bulletin with potential solutions. At the same time, we would like to know if these ideas are usable and being put into practice. Next week we will send you a quick and easy survey to understand your experience with these solutions.

If you have any questions, want to suggest the names of other people who should receive this bulletin or are able to tell us about your experience with this solution, please contact bev.matthews@nhs.net

In the meantime, the crowdsourcing platform will remain open so please keep adding your solutions, ideas and comments at <https://testingmethods.crowdicity.com/>

Thank you for everything that you are doing!

Professor Dame Sue Hill
Chief Scientific Officer, NHS England

Professor Jo Martin
President, Royal College of Pathologists

On behalf of the moderators' group