Suffolk Resilience Forum news release
For further information contact: Mark Langford
Tel: 07598 404131
Email: communications.team@suffolk.gov.uk

Asymptomatic testing centres open in Haverhill and Lowestoft

Two new Covid-19 rapid testing centre targeting people who unwittingly have the virus and do not show symptoms are to open in Suffolk.

They will begin operating in Haverhill and Lowestoft and use lateral flow testing to identify people who may have coronavirus but who are asymptomatic – crucial in stopping the spread of the virus as the UK vaccination programme is rolled out.

The centres are for anyone living or working in the towns and surrounding area who are unable to work from home. Employers are also being urged to encourage their staff to book regular for testing.

The Lowestoft facility is at Kirkley & Pakefield FC clubhouse in Walmer Road and opens on Friday February 5.

The Haverhill facility will be in the Arts Centre in the High Street and will begin operation from Monday February 8.

The centres are operated on behalf of Suffolk County Council (SCC). Both will operate seven days a week between 7am and 6pm. Tests should be booked in advance.

The launches follow the opening of the first centre at the University of Suffolk in Ipswich, then at The STEM Innovation Campus West Suffolk College in Western Way, Bury St Edmunds.

Lateral flow testing involves taking a swab from the throat and nose to see whether coronavirus is present in the body.

The person tested will then receive a text message giving the result within an hour.

Anyone giving a positive test will be told to self-isolate and advised on what to do next.

People are being asked to get tested twice a week, three to four days apart, as part of their weekly routine.

Anyone receiving a negative result needs to continue to follow the social distancing guidance as they may only be at the early stages of developing the virus.

This is in case levels of the virus in a person at the earlier test were too low to be detected at that time.

The centres are being run by contractors Commisceo on behalf of SCC through government funding.

Appointments for tests can be made through registering on the booking website https://commisceo-pcs.shiftpartner.com/ or calling 0333 772 6144.

The centres are only for people not showing symptoms of Covid-19.

Anyone who is showing symptoms, or who may have been in close contact with someone who has, should not visit the centre.

Instead, they should ring 119 or go to the NHS website to book a test at one of the 12 symptomatic testing sites in Suffolk.

For more details about testing go to the Suffolk County Council website.

VIDEO: Stuart Keeble, Director of Public Health for Suffolk, talks about the roll-out of community testing in the county and why it is so important.