

OFF-SITE COVID-19 TESTING CENTER (OSCTC) CONSIDERATIONS

1

IDENTIFY LEADERS AND PARTNERS

- FEMA and federal partnerships may come with constraints.
- Neighboring healthcare providers may or may not offer collaboration.
- State and local partnerships with public health and municipal organizations are valuable.



2

DETERMINE TESTING CAPACITY & FOLLOW-UP PROCESS FOR RESULTS

Different laboratories have different turn-around times for COVID-19 tests.

- Federal or state partnerships may require use of certain laboratories.
- OSCTCs may need to retest patients in cases of significant delays.

Consider the best ways to reach your patient population with their results.

- Determine whether you are sharing the results directly with the patient or with their PCP.
- Daily telemedicine patient appointments following testing may help monitor ongoing symptoms and address anxiety.
- Some healthcare providers may not feel comfortable giving positive test results to patients.



3

WHO YOU ARE TESTING

Consider testing priorities in context with severe limitations in testing supplies.

- With limited testing supplies, most OSCTCs are now only testing for COVID-19.
- Patients can be co-infected with COVID-19 and other respiratory illnesses.
- If tests with a quick turnaround are limited, consider who your priority populations are.

Prepare for patients that require special accommodations.

- Consider having a separate protocol that supports “walk-up” patients.
- Provide materials in other languages.
- Make provisions for patients with physical and mental disabilities.



4

PLAN A PROCESS THAT PROTECTS YOUR STAFF

- Think through how OSCTC staff will be staying warm, cool, or dry depending on the weather conditions.

Engineering and administrative controls can minimize risk of infection.

- Keeping patients in their cars minimizes exposure points.
- Tables without smooth surfaces may minimize areas where virus can linger.
- Quicker visits reduce healthcare worker exposure time.
- More than one drive-thru lane can increase efficiency and decrease waiting times.
- Triage and pre-registration in advance may reduce exposure time.
- If patients need to fill out their own paperwork, have patients bring their own pen, or supply pens for patients.
- Preparing test order documentation and labeling sample collection materials in advance can save time and reduce exposure risk.
- In sites where screening and triage occur, consider allowing nurses to submit orders for testing under a physician.

PPE shortages and unique PPE needs require creative solutions.

- Review CDC’s guidelines for extended and reuse of PPE.
- Weather and patient demographics may impact appropriate PPE.

Consider ways to ensure the number of staff is adequate for OSCTC demand.

- If OSCTCs require appointments, they can plan appropriately.
- If OSCTCs DO NOT require appointments, regular communication with local providers ordering tests helps with planning.
- Ensure staff have adequate breaks throughout the day.

Work as a team.

- Have a morning “huddle” with staff members to define roles and workflow.
- A dedicated “watcher”, who monitors staff-patient interactions, can identify potential contamination.

Consider how you inform the public about your OSCTC.

- A trial run with few patients, prior to broadly publicizing, may be a good place to start.
- Developing appropriate educational materials for patients benefits everyone.



5

HOW YOU WILL GET PAID

- Know how these tests are reimbursed by private and public insurers.
- Stay alert about changes in federal legislation around funding support (Families First Coronavirus Response Act).



We want to hear from you! What challenges are you facing at your off-site testing sites?

What have you learned that will benefit others? Please share your feedback at COVID19@nrhi.org.