Considerations for Interpreting Antigen Test Results in Nursing Homes

**Does the resident or healthcare personnel (HCP) have symptoms consistent with COVID-19?**

**SYMPTOMATIC**
- **POC Antigen Test**
  - **POSITIVE**
    - Isolate/exclude from work for 10 days. If index case, initiate outbreak response.
    - MSDH does NOT recommend confirmatory RT-PCR test.*
  - **PRESUMPTIVE NEGATIVE**
    - Perform confirmatory RT-PCR test within 48 hours.
    - Isolate/exclude from work pending RT-PCR results.
    - Confirmatory RT-PCR Test
      - **POSITIVE**
        - Continue to isolate/exclude from work and outbreak response.
      - **NEGATIVE**
        - Isolate/exclude from work until fever free for 24 hours and/or significant symptom improvement.
- **CONFIRMATORY RT-PCR Test**

**ASYMPTOMATIC**
- **Facility in an active outbreak**
  - **POC antigen testing at least weekly (HCP AND Residents)**
    - **POSITIVE**
      - Isolate/exclude from work pending RT-PCR results.
      - MSDH does NOT recommend confirmatory RT-PCR test.
    - **NEGATIVE**
      - Continue to monitor for symptoms and perform serial testing per CMS requirements.
- **Facility without an outbreak**
  - **POC antigen testing interval per CMS requirements (HCP ONLY)**
    - **POSITIVE**
      - Consider confirmatory RT-PCR test within 48 hours.
      - Isolate/exclude from work, pending RT-PCR results.
    - **PRESUMPTIVE NEGATIVE**
      - In outbreak setting, continue serial testing until no new positives for 14 days.
      - Perform serial testing per CMS requirements.

This algorithm should be used as a guide, but clinical decisions may deviate from this guide if indicated. Facilities should develop a plan to support confirmatory RT-PCR testing.

*Asymptomatic individuals who have recovered from COVID-19 in the past 90 days and live or work in a nursing home performing facility-wide testing do not need to be retested. If an individual has recovered from COVID-19 in the past 90 days and develops new symptoms suggestive of COVID-19, alternative diagnoses should be considered prior to retesting. After 90 days, individuals who previously tested positive for COVID-19 should be included in any facility-wide testing, and if they test positive, be treated as if it is a new infection.

Antigen positive symptomatic HCP and Residents should be considered a Probable Case of COVID-19 and placed in Transmission-Based Precautions (if resident) or excluded from work (if HCP).

Antigen positive asymptomatic HCP and Residents tested after having close contact with someone with COVID-19 or as part of a response to an outbreak should be considered a Probable case of COVID-19 and the facility should take the appropriate action described above.


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