COVID-19 Telephone assessment and testing pathway for patients who phone general practice and healthcare settings other than receiving hospitals

1. A patient with acute respiratory illness (fever AND at least one sign/symptom of respiratory disease, e.g., cough, shortness of breath);

OR

2. A patient with any acute respiratory illness AND having been in close contact (<2 metres face-to-face contact for greater than 15 minutes) with a confirmed or probable (person who meets criterion 1 but has not been tested) COVID-19 case in the last 14 days prior to symptom onset

Unless assessment at hospital is indicated:
- Advise patient to stay at home and self-isolate for a minimum of 14 days from the onset of symptoms, the last 5 days of which they should be without fever. Refer to the Patient information sheet for self-isolation. If patient is a healthcare worker, they must self-isolate for 14 days. A derogation from management may be given to return to work before the 14 day period under passive self-monitoring only, however they must be symptom free for 48 hours prior to return to work.
- The whole population is being asked to stay at home, where possible. Additional restrictions for household contacts are outlined in the information leaflet Advice for people who share a home with someone who has symptoms of Coronavirus. If household contacts are healthcare workers they must inform their manager. A derogation from management may be given to return to work before the 14 day period under passive self-monitoring only.

Categories for priority testing:
- Close contacts of a confirmed case.
- HCW who are front facing/ have regular patient contact.
- Groups most at risk of severe infection such as persons with ischaemic heart disease, hypertension, cerebrovascular disease, diabetes, obesity, active malignancy in last 5 years, chronic lung disease, chronic renal disease, chronic liver disease and the extremely medically vulnerable as outlined in Guidance on Cocooning.
- Household contacts of HCWs and of at-risk groups above.
- Staff and residents of nursing homes and other residential care settings and those in direct provision, homeless, Roma and travelling community settings where symptom management is difficult.
- Prison staff and inmates where it may be difficult to implement self-isolation advice.
- Pregnant women to ensure they can be managed safely in hospital, minimising the risk of spread in the maternity hospital.

Unless assessment at hospital is indicated:
- Arrange COVID-19 testing using Healthlink.
- If you do not currently have access to Healthlink, click here to apply
- Advise the patient who to contact if symptoms are worsening, including out-of-hours

If positive:
- Advise patient to self isolate for a minimum of 14 days from the onset of symptoms, the last 5 days of which should be without fever. See Patient information sheet for self-isolation.

If not detected:
- Advise patient to self isolate until 48 hours after resolution of symptoms. Patients, household contacts and the whole population are still asked to stay at home, where possible.