

Email for campaigners to send to their MP - draft

Dear _____,

I am writing to you as a constituent as I am concerned about the plans to end free Covid-19 testing and what this means for people at highest risk. I am asking you to call on the Chancellor and the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care to make sure that everyone at the highest risk from Covid-19 is supported to live safely, by taking these steps proposed by Kidney Care UK, MS Society and other charities:

- Continue to make adequate free lateral flow testing available to people who are eligible for Covid-19 treatments, their households and personal contacts – regardless of whether they have symptoms – until at least June 2022.
- Provide new money to the NHS and local authorities to fund regular testing of frontline health and social care staff.

[Personal statement added here, e.g. I am concerned about this because...]

1.3 million people are eligible for treatments like antivirals if they get Covid-19, because the UK Government has identified they are at highest risk of severe illness. Around 500,000 of these people are immunocompromised, meaning it's less likely that they received the same level of protection from Covid-19 vaccines. While Covid-19 treatments are a lifeline, infection is still a terrifying and uncertain prospect for many of these people.

But the UK Government's "Living with Covid-19" plan confirmed that, in England, it will only provide free tests to those who are at highest risk if they currently have Covid-19 symptoms.

This means that from 1 April, their family members, friends and carers cannot be confident they are not exposing their loved one to infection, unless they can pay for a test. No one should be put at risk because they cannot afford a test. Imagine relying on a care worker to help you get washed and dressed every day, but knowing that they have taken buses to care for at least 20 different people already this week and have not had a test in all that time.

Imagine being immunocompromised and wanting to see your parents or friends like everyone else, but they can't afford a test to know they are not passing on a potentially deadly virus to you.

Without testing, many will feel they have little choice but to limit their contact with others – with appalling consequences for their mental health and wellbeing.

These are impossible choices, but the simple changes above can create a Plan for Living with Covid that includes those who are at highest risk from the virus. Under the current plan, instead of 'restoring freedom', many feel like they are

less free than ever. Please urgently raise these concerns with the Chancellor and the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care.

Yours sincerely
[insert name]
[Insert postcode]