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8 February 2021

To whom it may concern

Study Title: Incidence of COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2) infection and prevalence of immunity to COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2) in the UK general population as assessed through repeated cross-sectional household surveys with additional serial sampling and longitudinal follow-up - an Office for National Statistics Survey

Short title: COVID-19 Infection Survey

Ethics Ref: 20/SC/0195

IRAS Project ID: 283248

ISRCTN: 21086382

This is to confirm that this survey is an observational study regularly testing individuals aged 2 years and older within the community for SARS-CoV-2, regardless of whether they have symptoms or not.

These tests are done for **research purposes only and are not part of the NHS community testing programmes**. The vast majority of participants have no symptoms and participants with symptoms get standard tests as per government guidance from the NHS community testing programmes.

The Department of Health and Social Care confirm that the research tests done as part of the study **should not be considered in any activity that is standardly reliant on results of a test done through the NHS testing programme**.

Therefore, **survey participants should not be excluded from any activity on the basis of pending research test results, this includes:**

- **COVID-19 vaccinations**
- **Attendance at schools or nurseries**
- **Workplaces**

They will continue to request NHS tests in the case of any symptoms, and NHS tests should continue to be used to assess activities. Survey participants are required to self-isolate following a positive swab test, but are specifically exempted from repeated isolation if they continue to test positive survey following Public Health Regulations that explicitly recognise that individuals may be swab positive for some period of time but pose a minimal infection risk from 10 days after the start of symptoms or first positive test if asymptomatic.

This survey is of vital importance to managing the UK's response to the pandemic, and it is critical that participants are not penalised for their generosity in contributing to this research.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. Smith'.

A. Sarah Walker
Chief Investigator, COVID-19 Infection Survey
Professor of Medical Statistics and Epidemiology