Information

Sheet Number:

2017-21/183

Providing support for County Councillors

for County Councillors

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| From: | Alison Bell, Strategic Manager Public Health  Cheryl Vidall, Patient Safety and Governance Manager Public Health |

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| Relevant SLT Director and sign-off date: | Trudi Grant |

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| Date: | 26.05.21 |

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| To: | All County Councillors |

**Pilot programme to encourage Covid-19 testing among hard-to-reach groups**

Somerset County Council will receive funding for a 12-week pilot programme starting on Wednesday, May 26, targeting hard-to-reach communities to provide translated information about the importance of community testing and support to undertake lateral flow testing for people the testing programme has not yet reached.

In addition to testing we will put people in touch with local support services to enable them to stay at home should they need to self-isolate, such as prescription collections, shopping and dog-walking.

We have been working on this pilot for several months with the Department of Health & Social Care, Somerset Diverse Communities and Diversity Voice, focused largely on rural workers with the aim of increasing engagement and regular testing among these workers.

The pilot funding will be used to translate materials, support self-testing and put people in touch with the coronavirus helpline and volunteer support if they are required to self-isolate.

Somerset has been selected by the Department of Health & Social Care to receive funding because we are a rural area with particular challenges around access to testing for some members of our local communities. not because of concerns over Covid-19 rates in Somerset. This pilot programme will help us identify the barriers around access to testing and find solutions, working with local community organisations.

The total amount of funding we will receive from DHSC for this programme is still to be agreed, but we believe it will be in the region of £50,000.

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