

Covid-19 Update Briefing – Hambleton District

Produced on 23rd September 2020 by North Yorkshire County Council's Public Health Team

Summary data (from data available on 21st September 2020):

- 3,331 total cases in North Yorkshire.
- There have been 409 total cases in the Hambleton District.
- 7-day infection rate per 100,000 population is 26.4 in North Yorkshire. The highest level in NY is in Craven at 59.5. The Hambleton rate is currently 30.6, which is the second highest rate (locality) in North Yorkshire.
- Hambleton has had 28 new cases over the past 7 days.
- Craven, Harrogate and Hambleton have the highest number of new, daily cases in the past seven days. The average number of new cases per day in Hambleton is 4.0 (7 day rolling average), compared to Harrogate 6.0 and Craven 4.9.

Question and answer section:

1. How many cases are there in the Hambleton District (meaning number of tests over last 7 days coming back as positive)? How much has it increased since the previous week?

Data shows us that the number of new cases of Covid-19 has continued to grow across the district since 1st September (28 reported (from the previous 7 days) in data available on 21/9/20 vs 6 reported in data available on 27/8/20). Whilst not publically available data, we also know that the number of positive tests as a proportion of all tests completed has also increased.

2. Are the positive test results concentrated in any particular areas, and if so where?

Below shows the number of cases in middle-layer super output areas (MSOAs) in the past 7 days:

- Thirsk North (9)
- Northallerton (6)
- Great Ayton & Stokesley (5)
- Rudby & Ingleby (3)

3. Have events in Hambleton been cancelled?

Due to the recent increase in COVID-19 infections across North Yorkshire, the NYCC Public Health team is not supporting events that encourage the social interaction of large groups of people. Event organisers are advised to cancel events in areas of concern.

Where there are events planned across the county, event organisers are expected to be fully compliant with the following 10 public health principles as set out below which are required to ensure a COVID-19 secure environment. See link below to our North Yorkshire event organiser guidance for more detail.

<https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/guidance-events>

We will monitor the level of COVID-19 in areas closely, as decisions about events proceeding may need to change at short notice in light of local infection rates.

4. How many of the new infections are in the community, how many in factories and how many in schools?

Most spread continues to be between people who spend extended time together in household and social settings. However, this will inevitably include individuals who work in local businesses (including care homes) or attend local schools, and so we are seeing an increase in cases associated with these settings. It is important to note that in the majority of cases the transmission is occurring outside of the settings themselves – schools, care homes and businesses have worked very hard to make premises COVID-secure.

In Hambleton, since 7th September, there has been the following cases (confirmed, positive cases):

- 10 cases recorded in 8 education settings;
- 5 cases in 3 care settings;
- 6 cases in 3 workplaces.

There are currently the following incidents in Hambleton (includes suspected and confirmed cases, enquiries etc):

18 incidents (10 education; 3 care settings; 3 workplaces; 2 hospitality)

5. Is there any source of infection that has been identified – on social media there are reports that a lot of them are people who have come back from foreign holidays – is there any truth in this?

We are aware of some cases in people who have returned from abroad. However, the majority of cases are currently spread between social and household contacts.

6. How many schools in Hambleton District have infections?

Unsurprisingly at the start of a new term there are pupils from a large number of schools who have been showing symptoms of coughs and colds. This does not mean that all the infections are related to coronavirus, although we are monitoring a number of schools who have reported cases. All pupils who have developed a new cough, fever or change in sense of taste/smell will have been asked to isolate at home and get tested.

We are in contact with those setting where there are confirmed outbreaks, to advise them on reducing transmission and identifying close contacts (who will need to self-isolate). We have been supporting these settings throughout. An education setting communications pack has been developed and circulated to all settings.

8 educational settings in Hambleton have positive cases at the moment, and we are supporting them (alongside Public Health England and the Department for Education) to undertake the necessary action.

7. What is the policy if a child has a cough at school? Is it correct that the school should send the child home and insist they are tested and show negative before they can return, even if the cough stops?

Anyone who is displaying symptoms of coronavirus (fever, new persistent cough, loss or change in sense of taste or smell) should isolate at home and get tested. Any pupil who has a new, persistent cough will need to follow this advice. They do NOT need to show proof of a negative test before returning to school.

8. When children are sent home their parents are told to get them a test - what are they supposed to do when they are unable to book a test?

Anyone who is displaying symptoms of coronavirus (fever, new persistent cough, loss or change in sense of taste or smell) are advised to keep trying to access the testing portal. In the meantime they will need to isolate at home for 10 days (or until they get a negative test result).

9. How many teachers and other staff in schools have tested positive?

We are aware of a number of school staff across the county who have tested positive. In the vast majority of cases across the county, however, transmission has not occurred in the school setting itself.

Currently 2 staff members and 8 pupils have tested positive from Hambleton schools since 7th September 2020.

10. Are care settings allowing visitors?

Currently, visitors are allowed to visit relatives in care settings where there are no current outbreaks and subject to a risk assessment. Care settings are following national government guidance to protect residents and prevent infections in homes. Visiting arrangements are currently being reviewed in Hambleton. In other areas of concern, including Selby and Scarborough, visiting is now restricted.

11. Why are people unable to get a test? When will test be available?

The problem is with capacity in the national laboratories – over the last few weeks demand has increased to a level where it is greater than the available lab capacity. The government is looking to bring 3 additional labs online in the next month to help increase available capacity.

12. Why are the test centres not taking more bookings?

See above – whilst local test centres have the ability to take a large number of swabs, at the moment the labs do not have the capacity to process them. This has meant the number of slots available to book has been restricted.

13. Is there a priority system so that people at higher risk get priority? If not why not?

The online portal has a route specifically for testing essential workers, who we understand have some priority. We are also working locally with colleagues including the NHS and emergency services to see if we can support key workers who are struggling to access tests. We also have access to a small stock of swabs that we can use to directly support in outbreaks and other high-risk situations, which we have particularly used to support care homes, education settings, workplaces and high risk accommodation settings.

14. How long does it take to get results back?

Currently 81% of swabs are returned in 48 hours. Currently 24hrs is less than 1%

15. When are the mobile testing unit (MTU) in Hambleton District?

There is a MTU in Northallerton every Monday and Friday. There are discussions taking place to increase frequency of MTUs given current case infection levels.

16. What can people do to ensure they get tested or get a home test kit?

We understand that slots on the national testing portal are added around 8am and 8pm, so would advise this is the optimal time to try and book a slot. For more information, please visit <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/book-coronavirus-covid-19-test>