

Enhanced Testing Manchester

February – March 2021

Context

- Four cases across two households in densely populated area in south Manchester
- Very diverse population - age, ethnicity, housing, student accommodation, lots of businesses and lots of retail
- One week later - single case in north Manchester.
Not as diverse, but younger population and half term
- Both areas have high levels of digital exclusion, health inequalities and deprivation - approach needed to reflect our understanding of these factors
- We have to be as one with PHE - the partnership is equal and vital

Summary of testing offer

Area 1

- 3 Mobile Testing Units:
 - Our Lady's R C Church, Raby St
 - The Guru Nanak Dev Ji Gurdwara, Sikh Temple, Monton Street
 - Arrahman Islamic Cultural Association, Bedwell Street
- 1 additional testing site at Moss Side Leisure Centre (temporary conversion of LFD testing Centre)
- Drop and collect facility for businesses, schools and other settings at Moss Side Leisure Centre
- Home testing kits (and assisted swabbing if required) for clinically vulnerable and housebound residents and contacts of positive cases

Area 2

- 2 Mobile Testing Units:
 - Car Park Ebsworth Street
 - Car park Thorp Road
- Drop and collect facility for businesses, schools and other settings at St Dunstan's Church Hall
- Home testing kits (and assisted swabbing if required) for clinically vulnerable and housebound residents and contacts of positive cases

Communications

Media

- Holding statements drafted in case of leak
- Pre-announcement media briefing under embargo with the MEN
- Post announcement proactive media release issued
- Significant media interest managed

Letter to residents - included FAQs

- Translated into 21 languages
- Distribution by external company for speed and neighbourhood teams
- BSL video, braille translation and easy read version
- Flyer and poster based on national artwork
- All materials uploaded to resources hub on the website

Community briefing note

- Note drafted to support multilingual neighbourhood teams, contact centre, primary care, councillors and VCSE partners. Follow up briefing with GPs in the local area.
- Includes FAQs from the local community
- Regular updates of note throughout testing period



Communications

Stakeholders and community groups

- Local councillors and MP briefed beforehand and then daily briefings
- Communities toolkit essential
- Worked with local councillors to film videos
- Registered housing providers, plan for vulnerable people, adult social care

Education

- Letter shared with schools and youth settings
- Briefing to headteachers/leadership teams
- Letter of reassurance for parents to address any potential concerns
- Messages aligned for comms to university staff and students
- Message to students from our DPH. Ongoing reminders from lecturers at the start of lessons.

Communications to businesses

- Note to 250 email addresses from local Test and Trace Team
- MCC work and skills team also sharing via SMEN, Growth Hub and Midas, but only to those contacts that they have in the area with the clear message to check the list postcodes to see if they fall in the catchment area.
- Letters delivered to approx 650 business addresses (using business rates data)
- Door knocking of businesses



Communications

Social media

- Social media messages across partner channels, engaging where possible (eg CAHN)
- Messages shared with relevant community groups
- Paid for targeted messaging on Facebook

Outdoor Media

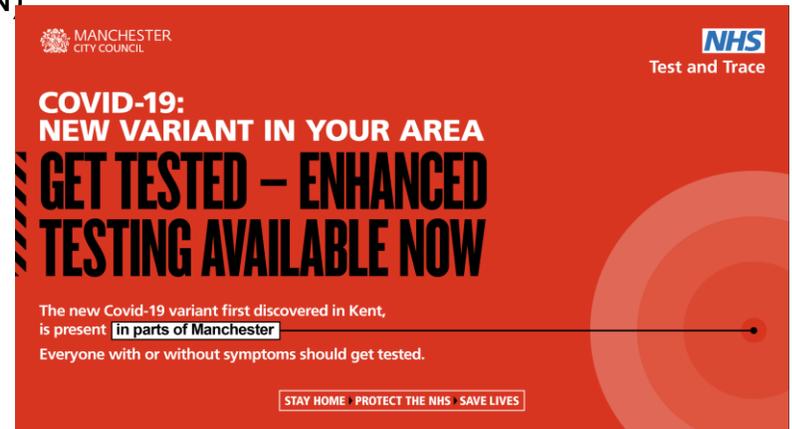
- AdVan with messages (in Somali and English in Area 1, week 2)
- Large digital screen near local supermarket promoting testing in the area

Additional resources/channels

- Area 1 - Flyer produced to hand out before Friday prayers with core message in Somali and Arabic
- Text message to residents in the catchment area via GP messaging system
- WhatsApp content on new variant mutation detail shared with local councillors and mosque leaders for their networks
- Messages in the covid e-bulletin (6000+ subscribers) and weekly community toolkit

Exit comms

- Final push a few days before testing ended - news release issued and messages on local radio bulletins, targeted facebook ads, messages shared via community networks, refreshed social media posts on our channels
- On completion - thank you message on social media and to community groups. News release issued with key facts and figures.
- Difficulty with media responses on data because of delays at national level



Outcomes

Moss Side, Hulme, Whalley Range and Fallowfield



Local teams knocked on **6,130** properties
2,065 received a second visit



5,000+ tests taken (MTU and home testing)
Circa **90** positive tests



72% positive cases successfully traced

120 contacts identified



97% contacted and supported to
self-isolate

Moston and Harpurhey



Local teams knocked on **2,900** properties



2,700+ tests taken (MTU and home testing)
Circa **55** positive tests



96% positive cases successfully traced

42 contacts identified



95% contacted and supported to
self-isolate

Younger people are often keen to complete the online tracing questionnaire but then fail to do so	Many people were feeling anxious and uncertain about the situation going on in their neighbourhood	People who are symptomatic often want to rest and be left alone and are therefore less inclined to answer questions	Older residents have said how pleased they are to speak to the team as it may be the only call they receive that day
On the whole, people testing positive through Operation Eagle have been more engaged with the tracing process - many were expecting the call from us	Some people need guiding through the Test & Trace Support Payment online application	Some people say they are unable to go back 14 days and remember what they were doing	Five people required the use of translator services to complete contact tracing

Our revised approach to Surge Testing and Variants of Concern:

- Partnership - business networks, university, schools is vital; as is the speed of translations
- Switch off other potentially conflicting messages (this was start of roll out of LFD tests for those who can't work from home)
- Preference is to "switch on" genomic sequencing for positive tests in designated areas, alongside enhanced contact tracing
- Consider wastewater sampling, building on the approach taken in other parts of Greater Manchester
- Be specific on postcodes - partial caused a lot of calls/confusion. Google map invaluable with borders and test locations
- The thank you message at the end went down very well in communities and with partners

We are working with national colleagues to improve processes for responding to Variants of Concern, sharing our experiences and findings from our work.

There were many elements of success to the delivery of the project. Partnership working, drawing on previous knowledge, pre-established relationships and strong local knowledge all contributed to the successes of the programme. Key lessons with recommendations from our rapid debrief.

Observation: Trusted sources of information - these must be the people communities trust, not necessarily who we trust.

Recommendation: We need to understand who is best placed to give a message and answer questions - even if that is sometimes uncomfortable for us. Then give them the materials to do it.

Observation: Door To Door teams worked best if areas were broken into zones and sub zones. Having housing provider staff and translators on hand is key. Prioritise most needed translations.

Recommendation: Housing providers a good information source to involve when reaching residents and unblocking challenges and barriers. Engage with housing providers now to secure their help in advance of and future testing.

Observation: Neighbourhood team volunteers were often not local to the targeted area. Staff put their daily roles and responsibilities on hold to support the surge testing by door knocking.

Recommendation: Earlier engagement with multi-lingual community and faith leaders using their credibility and influence to encourage local volunteering, share key messages and assist with differing beliefs and myth busting.

Observation: Media coverage and our relationships with networks are vital.

Recommendation: Engage as early as NHS allow - earlier if possible. Pre-record video and Facebook content before launch - clear call to action and clear perspective of risk, alongside why surge testing is inconvenient but appropriate.

Observation: Comms and stakeholder engagement are critical to reaching our communities. At Moss Side there were stakeholders we could have engaged earlier and used more strategically if we had more time to plan.

Recommendation: Ensuring maps and engagement exercises are up to date now would help to ensure we are starting from a position of strength in the future.

Observation: We responded to project Eagle under crisis circumstances with very little time to prepare before launch.

Recommendation: Develop an Eagle checklist / plan including clear roles and responsibilities for fast but considered mobilisation, with all the right stakeholders and boards. Internal protocols and briefings should be developed now ready to redeploy MCC staff as necessary. Pre prepared comms, leaflets and signage templates also drafted now, including translations of key messages.

Thanks for listening

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