

Dear friends and family members,

Following positive Lateral Flow Test (LFT) results for four members of staff last weekend, we carried out PCR tests for all patients and staff on Monday. We also initiated the Infection Prevention protocols we use in the event of a suspected outbreak (eg FFP3 masks, visiting suspended, etc). Other enhanced protocols were already in place such as zonal working, daily LFT testing, etc.

The PCR results confirmed that four staff have Covid-19, but no additional cases were detected.

With Omicron being a new variant (highly transmissible and with community prevalence increasing) we have decided to repeat the PCR testing tomorrow morning, Thursday 23rd December. Results should be confirmed by Friday 24th (unsure of timing being Christmas eve)

Another reason for repeating this test is to see whether or not we can reinstate Christmas visiting. In other words, if the PCR results from Thursday and LFTs from Thursday and Friday come back as negative (and providing we have no other emergent risks) we plan to reinstate visiting between Saturday 25th and Tuesday 28th. We will NOT be in a position to confirm this until around midday/ later on Christmas Eve (by email).

In the meantime

As communicated previously, visits will have been pre-booked (our reception team has the list of bookings). If you are on the list we will contact you by 4pm on Friday to confirm whether you would still wish to visit (in the event of visiting going ahead*). We will also take enquiries about visiting if you have not yet contacted us. The Reception Team will be available today until 4pm, tomorrow (10am-4pm) and Friday 10am-4pm) and can be contacted on 01428 643311. Please note that there will be no reception cover between 25th and 28th, so all visits will need to have been booked by 4pm this Friday.

Visit Protocols

There will be a limit of two visitors with negative LFT results ahead of the visit, time limited to 1.5hrs, and with hygiene and social distancing measures undertaken (we will send additional details in the email on Friday, if visiting is reinstated).

We appreciate that this email provides a further delay to providing definitive news about Christmas visiting, and that our next communication on Friday will provide very short notice. We have a fluid situation, with advice being subject to change.

Thank you for your understanding.

Kind regards

Ross White

IMPORTANT: In the event of visiting being reinstated, can we please ask you to consider carefully whether or not to visit. Your decision should take into account your social interactions over the last few days (and the next couple of days), whether you have been in large gatherings or crowded spaces, if you have used public transport, felt unwell, etc., as well as any relevant information in the news. Please note that information about the new Omicron variant is still being evaluated, and information is subject to change.

*If you have pre-booked a visit but decide against coming to Holy Cross could you please let the reception team know. Thank you. Rest assured that we will take special care of everyone.

