

What do I need to know about Fit Testing for FFP3 (and FFP2/N95), Respiratory Protective Equipment for Dental Practice?

Fit testing is a method for checking that a specific model and size of tight-fitting facepiece matches the wearer's facial features and seals adequately to the wearer's face. It will also help to identify unsuitable facepieces which should not be used.

Advice on fit testing for the employer and those conducting fit testing from the HSE can be found on the link below

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg479.pdf>

Current situation:

A small number of dental registrants have been trained in each NHSEI region of England to undertake fit testing of the dental teams working in urgent care hubs. With dental practices able to open in England from 8th June all dental practices will require their teams to be fit tested prior to beginning aerosol generating procedures (AGP's). It is likely that most practices will need to source fit testing from an accredited fit tester as it will take several months to provide appropriate training capacity cover all dental practices, unless a practice member has undertaken an approved 1 day fit testing course (see below).

How can you find an accredited fit tester?

There are several accredited fit testers that can be contacted to fit test dental teams in their practices, and this is likely to be the fastest option for obtaining fit testing in the short term. In England the majority of fit testing is qualitative.

The accredited testers can be found on <https://www.fit2fit.org/find-a-tester/> the regions the testers cover are listed on the site.

When booking qualitative fit testing, you need to check the following:

- Whether the tester will bring the fit testing hood and chemicals, you may be able to access a fit test hood and chemicals locally, but as fit testing is an ongoing process it would be appropriate for dental practices, or groups of practices to source and purchase fit testing kits, where available.
- Ensure you have FFP3, FFP2 or N95 masks available in the practice for all staff to be fitted, ideally more than one type and a variety of sizes.

(If you opt for quantitative testing, you will not require the hood and chemicals. However, the cost for this type of testing may be higher).

The fit tester should ask in advance if any staff members have allergies or asthma. One of the chemicals often used contains denatonium benzoate which is commonly found in household cleaning products

When booking a fit testing session in your practice, consider:

- Where participants should sit during the stages of the fit testing sessions, to adequately enable social distancing. Fit testing should be conducted in a large ventilated area e.g. the waiting room. Decide where to set up the PPE donning and doffing videos and printed guides to watch, and an area for participants to practice donning and doffing if they wish (at their own risk).
- Gloves – for fit testers to wear, and anyone else who wishes to.
- Normal disinfectant wipes - for wiping the hood and cleaning nebulisers between use.
- Normal fluid-resistant surgical face masks – for fit testers to wear. As per NHSE guidance, all members of staff should wear surgical masks at all times within a healthcare premises (when not wearing PPE).
- Any personal eye protection or loupes that will be worn by members of the clinical team.
- Spare visors in case participants forget to bring their eye protection (only headband/frame part to be used in the fit testing process if it has the potential to interfere with the fit of the respirator – see below).
- FFP3/FFP2/N95 respirators for everyone to be tested - the fit test is specific to this make and model ONLY (and will need to be repeated if the model changes).
- Printed copies of qualitative fit test results sheets for recording the process (2 per person present). Please ensure there are enough copies printed out for the whole day.
- Disposable plastic cups of plain drinking water for each participant.
- Mirror for checking the fit.
- Have examples of the PHE-recommended PPE for participants to practice donning and doffing with if they wish (at their own risk).
- On the day confirm that staff members attending are not COVID-19 positive/ symptomatic or been required to self-isolate.
- The fit testing of FFP3/2/N95 masks require individuals to be clean shaven

Remember: The fit testing is only valid for the mask you have been fitted with, further fit testing will be required if you need to use a different make or style of mask.

It also needs to be repeated if:

- Weight loss or gain
- Facial changes around the face seal area e.g. scars, piercings, new facial hair
- Change in other head worn PPE

It is a recommendation that fit testing is repeated at least once every two years for each mask type.

How can you access training to be a fit tester?

HEE Regions will be coordinating several training courses for each Region. The courses are 1 day in length and the content has been judged to include all aspects of the HSE's face fitting guidance and protocols. They are delivered by an Fit2Fit accredited fit tester.

If you wish to source your own fit test training, you will find a list of accredited trainers on the link below:

<https://www.fit2fit.org/fit2fit-approved-training-providers/>

These training courses provide a certificate of attendance at an approved course, **they do not provide accreditation**. They do however cover all the theoretical and practical skills and knowledge base to meet the requirements of HSE INDG 479 for “Fit Test Operators.”

Attendance at this course would evidence appropriate training to provide for testing for dental staff.

Will my current professional indemnity cover fit testing?

Fit testing of other members of the dental team should be covered by employer’s liability insurance. Further clarity is being sought on liability cover for fit testing in practices where the fit tester is not an employee. NHS employed registrants should be covered by NHS resolution.

Employing principal dentists should first check with their Public Liability/Employer’s Liability Insurers to determine if this is included within these policies.

Registrants should check with their own indemnifier to ensure they are covered for personal indemnity and ask:

- Whether indemnity will be extended to others in the practice should the task be delegated by the principal dentist
- (To)Undertake fit testing for their employer or employees in their own practice
- If the practice is in a group of practice owned by the same employer/ corporate that they can undertake fit testing in any of the employer’s practices
- Whether they can undertake fit testing in another practice, different employer (unpaid)

Further information on indemnity can be found on the following websites

<https://www.mddus.com/coronavirus/coronavirus-update/2020/june/indemnity-fit-testing-of-dental-ppe>

<https://www.dentalprotection.org/uk/articles/fit-testing-of-masks-dental-protection-position-statement>

<https://bda.org/advice/Coronavirus/Pages/face-mask-shortage.aspx>

<https://www.theddu.com/coronavirus>

Further detailed guidance on fit testing for dental teams can be [accessed here](#), including information for trained fit testers, and for participants of fit testing. This link also provides information on choosing a suitable respirator.

Information given on liability and indemnity is current as of 16th June 2020 but may be subject to change.