

Guidance for international stem cell couriers entering the UK to deliver or collect stem cell products

Background

From 8 June 2020, new rules for entering the UK were put in place because of coronavirus (COVID-19). These rules now mean that visitors:

- Will need to provide journey and contact details when travelling to the UK
- Will not be allowed to leave the place they are staying for the first 10 days they are in the UK, except in very limited situations (known as 'self-isolating')

From 18 Jan 2021 proof of a negative coronavirus (COVID-19) test taken within 72 hours of arrival is also needed to enter England.

Exemption for couriers

We have secured an exemption in The Health Protection (Coronavirus, International Travel) (England) Regulations 2020 that allows people transporting human cells and blood products to enter without a COVID test or the need to self-isolate. This exemption covers –

A person who has travelled to the United Kingdom for the purpose of transporting material which consists of, or includes, human cells or blood and which is to be used for the provision of healthcare by a provider.

The evidence that will be required is:

- *the address of where the material was or is to be collected from, and the date on which the material was or is to be collected*
- *the address of where the material is to be transported to, the name of the healthcare provider that is to receive the material, and the date on which the material is to be delivered to the healthcare provider*
- *what material you are or will be carrying*
- *why you need to carry it*

What this means for stem cell couriers entering the UK

You'll need to provide your journey and contact details. **You will not need to self-isolate or have a negative coronavirus (COVID-19) test.** You'll need to show (1) your staff pass or photo identification and (2) confirmation from a healthcare provider explaining: the date, location and recipient of the products; what material you're carrying; and why you're carrying it.

You will be provided with a letter from the organising registry providing the necessary information and stating that you are exempt from self-isolation and the need for a negative coronavirus (COVID-19) test as per government guidance.

If any courier has a problem at border control on arrival in the UK, please contact the BBMR on +44117 9125729. Where the cells are being collected from the Anthony Nolan Handover Hub, please contact +44 7879 519 478.

Full information on the UK government policy can be found on their [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) and entering or returning to the UK \(https://www.gov.uk/uk-border-control\)](https://www.gov.uk/uk-border-control) website. The specific citation that human cell courier are exempt from testing is located at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-testing-for-people-travelling-to-england>



Testing within the UK

Several countries around the world have now introduced a requirement for testing within 48 hours of arrival. For example, Germany requires a mandatory negative test for all travellers coming from the UK. A PCR, LAMP, TMA or Antigen test must have been carried out less than 48 hours prior to the arrival to Germany.

In order to achieve this, as couriers are classed as critical workers, we recommend that you use the community testing programme within the UK.

Testing for people without symptoms is available in a number of locations within London. The following symptom-free coronavirus testing sites are open seven days a week. You do not need to book in order to get a free test.

- Little Venice Sports Centre, 10 Crompton Street, London, W2 1ND - 10am - 4pm
- Westminster Cathedral Hall, Ambrosden Avenue, Westminster, London SW1P 1QH - 10am - 4pm
- Moberly Sports Centre, 25 Chamberlayne Rd, Ladbrooke Grove, Kensal Green, London NW10 3NB - 10am - 4pm

While at the test centre, couriers will need to register their test online and give their email address and phone number. They will also ask for an address and our North London address can be used – NHS Blood and Transplant, Charcot Road, Colindale, London, NW9 5BG

A test takes less than five minutes and you will receive results by email and text message within one hour.

If you have any problem accessing testing, please contact us for support.