

ΑΝΑΚΟΙΝΩΘΕΝ

Improvement of procedures informing persons who test positive for the virus and their close contacts

In the light of the increased COVID-19 cases being recorded daily and in an effort to improve the procedures of informing persons testing positive to the virus as well as their close contacts, the Tracing Team of the Epidemiological Monitoring Unit has proceeded to implementing some changes in its procedures. The objective is to minimize the time required to inform both the confirmed outbreaks and their contacts, given the big increase of the confirmed COVID-19 cases as well as of their close contacts.

More specifically, as regards the briefing of those persons testing positive to the virus, the procedure has been modified so that if they are not informed by telephone by the end of the day, they are informed through the sending of a written text message (sms) that the result of their laboratory test has been positive. Besides the result, the written message also gives a link with written instructions (in Greek), which must be followed by a person who is positive to the virus. Upon receiving the message, the said person should place him or herself in house-isolation and begin to write down the persons with which he or she had close contact 48 hours before having symptoms or before the day of the sample taking, if it has to do with a non-symptomatic patient.

Thereafter and within 24 hours, the Tracing Team shall make telephone contact with the person and write down the information, while a form is sent via email to the confirmed case in order for him or her to write down the close contacts. **The person positive to the virus is also obliged to communicate with his close contacts, informing them that their details have been given out for tracing** and telling them that they must remain in self-isolation until the Epidemiological Unit contacts them in order to arrange an appointment for a blood sample.

As regards the communication with persons defined as **close contacts**, the first information is given by the outbreak themselves. Immediately afterwards they should remain in self-isolation and wait for a telephone contact within 72 hours from the Services of the Ministry to arrange an appointment for a blood sample. In parallel and in addition to the briefing conducted by the confirmed case themselves, the persons stated as close contacts shall receive a written message (sms) which includes a link with the written instructions (in Greek) that they ought to follow.

It is noted that in both the cases of the persons testing positive to the virus and of the close contacts, **the information through written message is considered official and the person concerned shall be obliged to strictly follow the instructions given to him or her.**

If a person who has been informed that he or she is a close contact of an outbreak, has symptoms before the Tracing Team communicates with him/her, **he/she shall be obliged to inform his/her Personal Physician about the symptoms, making sure that he/she states that he is a close contact of a confirmed COVID-19 case.**