

Home Testing for COVID-19 in the United Arab Emirates

Geography and scale: National

Type of Disability

Those who have difficulty reaching testing facilities, particularly those with communication and mobility disabilities

Involved actors

- Ministry of Community Development
- Ministry of Health
- Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan

Best practice description

To ensure universal access to COVID-19 testing, the United Arab Emirates launched home testing for residents with disabilities* who may otherwise not be able to access a COVID-19 testing facility. In particular, the program targets individuals with mobility and communication disabilities for whom travelling to a testing centre or communicating with health workers is challenging. Individuals or their families can call a number to book an appointment when a specialized team will come by the home to do the test. The program also expands drive-through testing facilities, which has also increased access for some people with disabilities.

Origin / impetus for best practice

- Desire to ensure all citizens and residents had access to preventative and diagnostic measures, such as testing
- Government's priority to include people with disabilities in mainstream programs, as well as targeted programs to ensure health and safety

Impact / results of implementing best practice

- Reduced barriers to getting tested for COVID-19
- Enhanced accessibility for people with disabilities

Critical success factors for best practice

- Government effort to identify barriers and address them through targeted programs
- Sufficient resources (Human resources for health, personal protective equipment, tests, etc.) to provide at-home testing

Impact statement

Lessons learned

- Two-tracked approaches (universal access and targeted programs) are critical to meeting the health needs of people with disabilities
- Governments need to identify and find innovative ways to address gaps in services for people with disabilities, such as home-based services where feasible

Sources

[United Arab Emirates National Home Testing Program for People of Determination](#)

Further links & information

- [Mohamed bin Zayed launches 'National Home Testing Programme for People of Determination'](#)
- [Coronavirus: UAE launches home testing option for 'people of determination'](#)

* People with disabilities are referred to as "people with determination" in the UAE