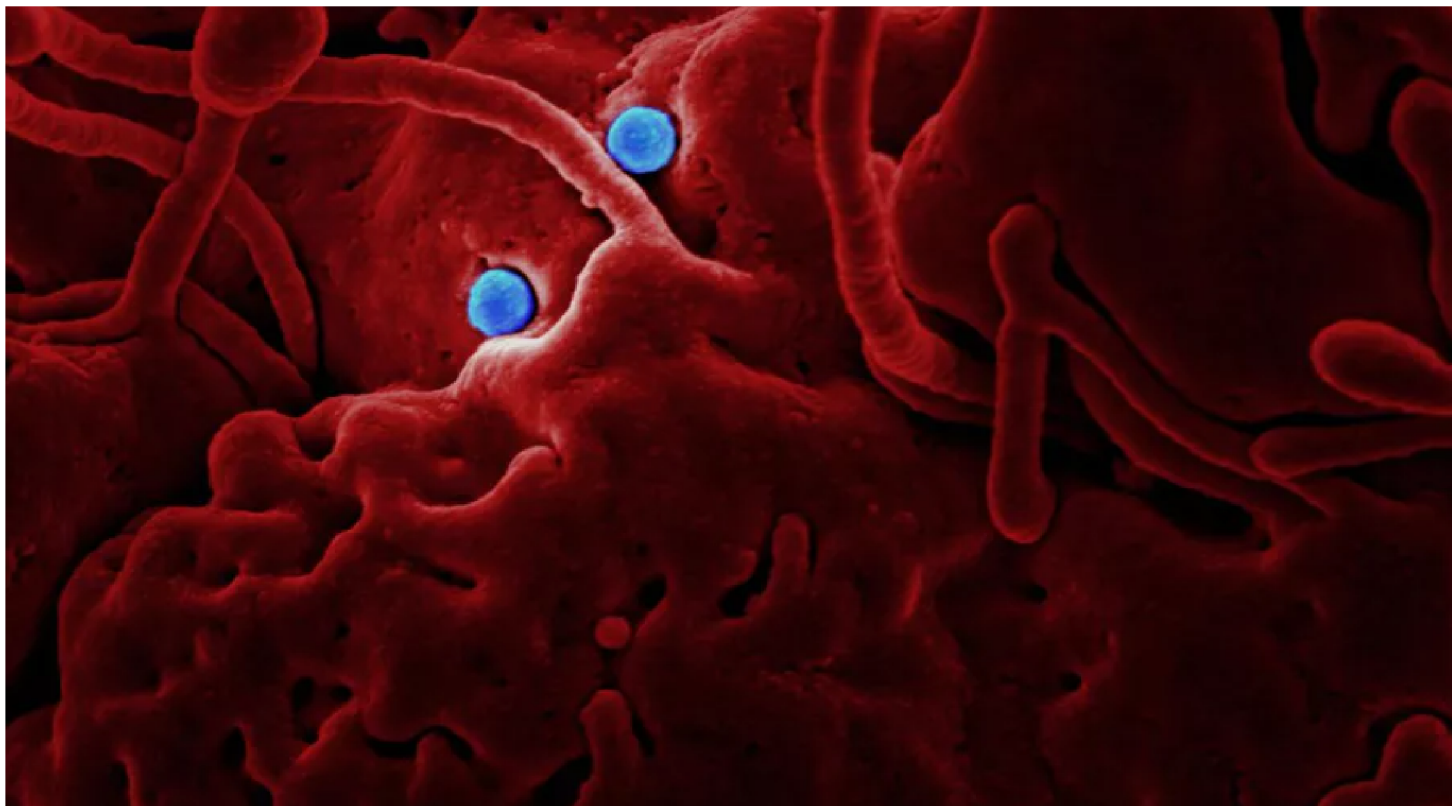


New covid testing plans 'gesture politics of worst kind'



Daily testing affects tiny fraction of key workers and relying on lateral flows skews figures and tempts low paid workers to ignore results

GMB Union has described new covid testing plans 'gesture politics of the worst kind'.

From today [10 January 2022] 100,000 'critical workers' will have to take a test every day there are working'

Then from tomorrow [11 January 2022] covid testing rules are to be eased for people without symptoms, who will no longer need to confirm a positive lateral flow test with a PCR.



Dan Shears, GMB Director of Health and Safety, said:

"This is gesture politics of the worst kind.



"The new testing rules cover just a tiny fraction of the UK's 10 million key workers and will be completely ineffective.

"Meanwhile scrapping the need for a PCR test following a positive lateral flow (LFT) will massively skew the infection figures.

"A positive LFT is only added to official figures if someone inputs results into the NHS system themselves - most won't do this.

"With statutory sick pay at poverty levels of £96 a week, it creates a perverse incentive for workers to ignore a positive LFT and keep working - potentially infecting lots more people.

"It's placing responsibility back on the individual, and many people can't afford it.

"It's a recipe for disaster."

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