

FFP3 respirators information sheet

FFP3 masks are being distributed by NHS Supply Chain for fit test training and immediate use.

These respirators are being supplied from the Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Programme (PIPP) stockpile maintained by Public Health England (PHE).

In the management of this stock, it has been considered prudent that Public Health England works with manufacturers to extend the life of their masks where possible, through a formal scientific testing programme, including accelerated aging, which allows for appropriate over-labelling with a later expiry date as specified by the manufacturer.

These products held in the PIPP stockpile have been stored since new in temperature monitored and controlled dedicated storage facilities. There have been no temperature excursions recorded with this monitoring that would have affected or compromised the stability of the product. This is a mandatory requirement before manufacturers will extend the life of their products.

Cardinal (now Medline) FFP3 respirators

Further supplies of the Cardinal (Medline) mask with a longer shelf life will become available shortly.

Specifically, the manufacturer of the masks (Medline) has undertaken accelerated age testing of these products to provide an additional three-year shelf life to provide assurance that **the product not only remains fit for use now but also for a further three years.**

The relevant tests and acceptance criteria applicable to the test samples submitted for the protocol are as follows;

- a. Total Inward Leakage – in accordance with EN149 as test method.
- b. Penetration of filter material – in accordance with EN149 as test method.
- c. Breathing resistance – in accordance with EN149 as test method.
- d. Fluid resistance – in accordance with EN149 as test method.
- e. Earloop/ties/strap tensile strength.

All samples tested adhered to the stability acceptance criteria for each test undertaken by Medline and are re-labelled ahead of onward distribution to the NHS.

A fit testing training and support service is to be made available for NHS trusts to access and further details will be made available in a further communication.