

Ref: OSHE 007/21

CIRCULAR 5

25 March 2021

Dear Staff and Students

COVID-19: UPDATE ON SWAB TESTS CONDUCTED AT UTOWN RESIDENCE

Outcome of swab tests

1. On 23 March 2021, residents of affected apartments at UTown Residence North Tower underwent mandatory swab tests for COVID-19, in a special testing operation carried out by the Ministry of Health (MOH).
2. In total, 438 individuals were swabbed; 437 results have come back negative for COVID-19 infection, and one is pending.
3. This is a precautionary measure by MOH following low levels of COVID-19 viral ribonucleic acid (RNA) being detected from wastewater sample collected on 20 March 2021 from the inspection chamber linked to the bathrooms at UTown Residence North Tower.
4. There is evidence to suggest that this may be due to viral shedding from a recovered past infection among the residents. Further investigations are being carried out by MOH.
5. Implemented since 7 December 2020, the Wastewater Surveillance Programme (WSP) is an added measure for a safe, effective and non-intrusive way to detect COVID-19 positive cases, in addition to the prevailing safe management measures already in place across our campuses. WSP is an accurate and sensitive technique to pick up traces of COVID-19, and it will continue to complement all the measures we are doing to ensure a safe campus.

Safe management measures

6. The safety and health of our staff and students are of the highest priority.
7. All staff and students are reminded to strictly observe all safe management measures on our campuses, which include social distancing, wearing of masks at all times, close monitoring of their health, declaration of temperature through uNivUS, and the use of Trace Together and NUSafe app. If you are unwell, please exercise social responsibility and see a doctor immediately.

8. If you have further questions, please check with the management office of your faculty, school or department, or email COVID-19@nus.edu.sg.

Dr Peck Thian Guan
Senior Director
Office of Safety, Health and Environment

Stay updated:

- NUS circulars, FAQs, emergency contact numbers, as well as useful links on the COVID-19 situation are available at emergency.nus.edu.sg.
- The latest NUS-related news, research and commentaries on COVID-19 are available [here](#).
- Please refer to the [Ministry of Health](#) for the latest information on the COVID-19 situation in Singapore.