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## Testing times

**A** Test and Trace app, testing centres and care homes testing staff and residents; these are indeed testing times.

If you haven't seen comedian John Bishops' recent video, I would encourage you to watch it and savour some topical humour. The Royal Marine mantra is 'Cheerfulness in the face of adversity' and humour definitely helps us through this crisis. Not wanting to spoil the moment but I'm also mindful as to how best emulate his view on testing; please see below.

As John rightly says, it's so good that finally we have a government who know what they are doing regarding the virus! He mentions the Governments' urge to 'get a test' and 'test and test again' because of false positives – John Bishops' way of testing is with a large glass of red wine. As he confirmed guidelines say one of the symptoms of coronavirus is the loss of smell and taste.

He suggests we pour a glass of wine, or beer or whisky and take a deep inhale. If you can smell it, you probably don't have the

virus but just to be sure – taste it as well. If you can taste it you probably don't have the virus, you know where this is going – just to be sure, REPEAT!! (often)

The incidents of mental health relapses and people contacting MIND has increased exponentially since March. With the second wave escalating I fear this will increase as we face more adversity as the colder weather the virus loves University students in Exeter has just been ordered self-isolate for 14 days to transmission. Cold and dark days.

You might, rightly so, be asking what on earth my rambling have to do with social care, but this is another 'Cross Caron' article as I am made aware of just how much more stress and pressure some care home managers are under. Already challenged with protecting residents and staff through the first spike, the prospect of another being viewed as more challenging.

More preventable loss of life with little or no time to process grief and the insurmountable yet totally necessary requirements

to test both residents and staff on a weekly basis.

Until the media really do highlight the issues in care home testing, the fact each test has a barcode and often the swab and vestibule codes don't match, or the tests are undertaken and then they are left uncollected. The time and government money wasted is a huge frustration to managers and care staff when to them time is a precious commodity best spent with their residents.

For years I have had the fortune to be a conduit to the prominent media individuals the likes of the wonderful Alison Holt, the BBC's social care correspondent and investigative journalist.

She has seen the social care Cinderella service slip, slide and struggle insurmountably and takes my 'tip offs' seriously. She is as we speak listening to, and encouraging care home managers who have been failed by a woefully lacking testing system to speak out. ♦ [caroncares01@gmail.com](mailto:caroncares01@gmail.com) 07411 947 200