### Supplementary Table 1 – Baseline demographic and clinical characteristics of testing in the study population\*

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|  | Send-away RT-PCRs(n=55) | Early on-site RT-PCRs (n= 49) | Established on-site PCRs (n=116) | P-value |
| Age – yr, median (IQR)  | 63.6 (43-74) | 58 (36-73) | 65 (42-80) | 0.419 |
| Male sex – no. (%)  | 33 (60) | 25 (51) | 61(53) | 0.587 |
| Overseas Travel1 – no. (%) | 15 (27) | 5 (4) | 2 (4) | <0.001 |
| ICU2 – no. (%) | 17 (31) | 11 (22) | 10 (9) | <0.001 |
| Mechanical ventilation2 – no. (%) | 5 (9) | 5 (10) | 2 (2) | 0.024 |
| **Treating team**General Medicine – no. (%)Respiratory – no. (%)Infectious Diseases – no. (%)Other medical unit – no. (%)Surgical unit – no. (%)Paediatric unit – no. (%)Psychiatry – no. (%) | 35 (63.6)4 (7.3)4 (7.3)5 (9.1)2 (3.6)5 (9.1)0 | 25 (51.0)7 (14.3)4 (8.2)9 (18.4)04 (8.2)0 | 53 (45.7)6 (5.2)1 (0.9)27 (23.3)13 (11.2)13 (11.2)3 (2.6) |  |
| **Final diagnoses**Other respiratory virus – no. (%)Pneumonia – no. (%)Exacerbation of airways disease – no. (%)Urinary tract infection – no. (%)Cardiac disease – no. (%)Fever of unknown origin – no. (%)Other known infection – no. (%)Unknown or other diagnosis – no. (%) | 15 (27.3)21 (38.2)6 (10.9)2 (3.6)2 (3.6)2 (3.6)5 (9.1)2 (3.6) | 7 (14.3)18 (36.7)5 (10.2)1 (2.0)3 (6.1)3 (6.1)2 (4.1)10 (20.4) | 25 (21.6)25 (21.6)12 (10.3)4 (3.4)7 (6.0)20 (17.2)10 (8.6)13 (11.2) |  |
| \*Patients with multiple tests were included in the group of their first recorded test for demographic purposes. Differences in sample numbers occurred as 21 patients had two or more RT-PCRs performed in the study period (two RT-PCRs n=20, three RT-PCRs n=1); and four patients had two separate isolation periods1Overseas travel taken in the last 14 days prior to admission2ICU admission or mechanical ventilation at any time during the index admission. |