

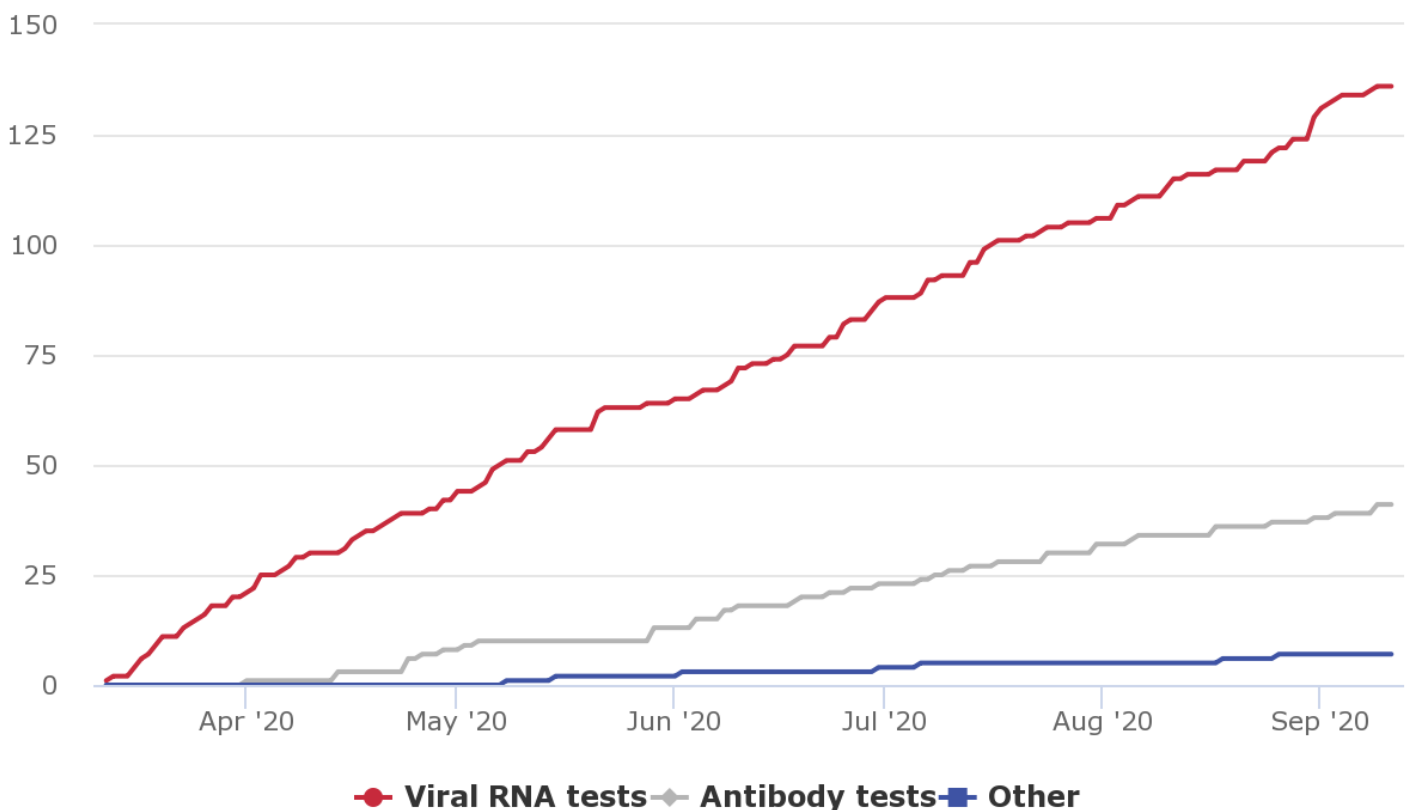
More pooled Covid-19 testing as labs struggle to meet demand



[Elizabeth Cairns](#)

The Covid-19 testing bottlenecks in both the US and the UK have become increasingly pressing. One step the US FDA has taken is allowing [pooled testing of samples](#), and this effort had just been stepped up. Verily, owned by the same parent company as Google, has received emergency use authorisation for its new molecular Covid-19 test to be used with up to 12 pooled upper respiratory specimens. Previously the most samples that could be mixed together for testing was five, [with LabCorp's test](#). Verily is specifically aiming its testing programme at helping people return to school and work, though it warns that pooling samples is only really useful when the expected rate of positive detection is less than 10%. In areas where this is the case, the technique requires only around a quarter to half as many tests as individual testing would. Verily will have to ensure its Clia-certified lab can keep up with demand: Quest Diagnostics, one of the earlier providers of pooled testing, [lost a contract with the state of Florida](#) two weeks ago after major delays to thousands of test results.

EUAs granted to Covid-19 tests



Emergency use authorisation. Commercial tests only; cumulative figures. Source: FDA.

Note: "Other" includes four antigen tests, two home sampling kits and one IL-6 test.

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