



# WILLINGNESS TO PAY (WTP) FOR COVID-19 SALIVA TEST KITS AMONG HEALTHCARE WORKERS IN KEDAH

Rosidah Omar, Lau Shu Yee

Occupational and Environmental Health Unit, Kedah State Health Department



## INTRODUCTION

The Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic has caused significant morbidity and mortality in the world. Other than vaccination, early identification and rapid isolation remain key strategies to curb the pandemic. A saliva test kit is an important screening tool for early identification. However, the willingness to pay (WTP) for the COVID-19 testing kit remains unclear.



## OBJECTIVE

To identify the willingness to pay for the saliva test kit and to identify the factors influencing willingness to pay and financing mechanism preference for the saliva test kit

## METHODOLOGY

This is a cross-sectional study and was conducted among HCW in Kedah in 2021. The study used convenience sampling and the sample size was 621 HCWs from hospital and health clinic in Kedah. A questionnaire was adopted based on previous studies assessing willingness to pay and was distributed via online medium using Google Forms (1,2). The study variables include sociodemographic characteristics, willingness to pay for saliva test kits, and financing mechanism preference. Payment scale and open-ended method were used to collect the value for WTP.

Table 1: Financing mechanism preference for the saliva test kit

Variables		Frequency	Percentage
Individuals need to pay out of pocket for saliva test	No	374	60.2
	Yes, pay for a portion	142	22.8
	Yes, pay fully	105	16.9
Employers need to pay for saliva test	No	95	15.3
	Yes, pay for a portion	127	20.5
	Yes, pay fully	399	64.2
Governments need to pay for saliva test	No	69	11.1
	Yes, pay for a portion	134	21.6
	Yes, pay fully	418	67.3
Health insurance needs to pay for saliva test	No	103	16.6
	Yes, pay for a portion	80	12.9
	Yes, pay fully	438	70.5

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to thank everyone contribute in this study and the Kedah State Health Department for the administrative support.



**WTP RM6.75  
OR USD1.59**

## RESULTS & DISCUSSION

The study found WTP for the saliva test kit was RM6.75 or USD 1.59 which is lower as compared to the selling price of RM19 at the time of the study. The WTP was also lower than the previous study conducted in Kenya which reported a mean WTP for saliva test kit value of USD 5.59 (3). The study found four factors influencing on the WTP for saliva test kits including females, tertiary education, professional groups, and household income >RM5000. Females had higher WTP as compared to males could be due to they are more health conscious and have higher health literacy (4). Professional groups were willing to pay more for saliva test kit could be due to they had higher education and monthly income (1,5). As for the financing mechanism preference, the majority of the respondents believed that individuals did not need to pay out of pocket for the saliva test (60.2%). Instead, respondents prefer employers (64.1%), government (67.4%) and health insurance (70.4%) to pay fully for the saliva test kit (Table 1)

## CONCLUSION

The study reported WTP for saliva test kits among HCWs in Kedah was RM6.75 or USD 1.59. Factors influencing WTP include female, tertiary education, professional group, and household income. The majority of the respondents were not willing to pay out of pocket for the saliva test kit and stated it's the government, employers, and insurance companies' responsibility. The study results helped decision-maker to decide on a policy of saliva testing among HCWs and facilitate government to set appropriate market prices to ensure the affordability and accessibility of the saliva test kit

## REFERENCES

- Wang J, Lyu Y, Zhang H, Jing R, Lai X, Feng H, et al. Willingness to pay and financing preferences for COVID-19 vaccination in China. *Vaccine* [Internet]. Elsevier Ltd; 2021;39(14):1968-76. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.vaccine.2021.02.060>
- Azzeri A, Laziz NAA, Ithnin M, Jaafar H. Ability to Pay and Willingness to Pay for Covid-19 Vaccination: Are we Ready? *Malaysian J Public Heal Med*. 2021;21(1):347-55.
- Kazungu J, Mumbi A, Kilimo P, Vernon J, Barasa E, Mugo P. Level and determinants of willingness to pay for rapid COVID-19 testing delivered through private retail pharmacies in Kenya; 2021;
- Lee HY, Lee J, Kim NK. Gender Differences in Health Literacy Among Korean Adults: Do Women Have a Higher Level of Health Literacy Than Men? *Am J Mens Health*. 2015;
- Noor Aizuddin A, Sulong S, Aljunid SM. Factors influencing willingness to pay for healthcare. *BMC Public Health*. 2012;12(S2):2458.