

Amazon is discussing how its employee health tech could assist coronavirus response

March 12 2020, by Benjamin Romano and Sandi Doughton



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Amazon is discussing with local public health leaders how its Amazon Care infrastructure—a medical system that was launched this year for employees in the Seattle area—can be used to support coronavirus response, a spokesperson confirmed Wednesday.

Amazon made Amazon Care available to Seattle-area employees in February. The spokesperson said the application of the service being discussed would extend beyond Amazon employees.

Amazon Care offers on-demand consultations—either text chat or video—with medical professionals through an app. It can also dispatch nurses to employees' homes for in-person exams, tests or treatment.

Another aspect of the service, called Care Courier, could be particularly relevant as [public health officials](#) and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation consider home test kits for COVID-19. Amazon's website says, "Your Care Courier can deliver Amazon Care prescribed medications to you at your home or office."

Scott Dowell, leader of the Gates Foundation's coronavirus response, said the goal is to have [home](#) test kits delivered within two hours of being requested.

People receiving a kit would swab their noses and repackage the swabs, which would then be picked up and delivered to a lab for analysis. The project is expected to launch initially in the Seattle area, then possibly roll out nationwide, Dowell said.

"The swab pickup needs to go large scale," he said. "We are working with Amazon on the delivery of the kits" and with Amazon and possibly FedEx on pickup. "We're trying to work with companies that can do this on a nationwide scale."

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