



Leeds Cancer Programme



Transforming
cancer care
together

Faecal Immunochemical Test (FIT) In Primary Care To Exclude Colorectal Cancer in Symptomatic Patients April 2019 – February 2020



What we did:

Leeds NHS Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) secured funding to bring Faecal Immunochemical Test (FIT) into GP practices. The test is for Leeds patients without rectal bleeding who are classed as “low risk, but not no risk” of having colorectal cancer as set out in the 2015 NICE guidelines on the recognition and referral of patients with suspected cancer (NG12).

On 1st April 2019 FIT testing in GP practices for patients went live across Leeds. Leeds also provides FIT pathology services for Airedale and Harrogate localities.

This is one of many programmes of work aimed at increasing the proportion of cancers diagnosed at an early stage, and at reducing the numbers of people presenting with cancers at hospital A & E.



Why we did it

The use of FIT in symptomatic patients has been advocated by the national cancer taskforce programme. It is one of its transformation programmes to enable early diagnosis and support the delivery of the 62 day cancer standard. This ensures that those patients previously thought of as routine, following a positive FIT test can be referred on a two week-wait cancer pathway. This offers the following benefits:

- Increased patient test completion due to its user-easier design
- Reliable test which provides greater accuracy than the previous faecal occult blood test (FOBT)
- Provides better selection of patients for colonoscopy – reduced costs to the healthcare system
- Less invasive test
- Improved survival rates
- Improved GP confidence
- A positive FIT has much greater predictive value for cancer than any other two-week wait referral criteria.

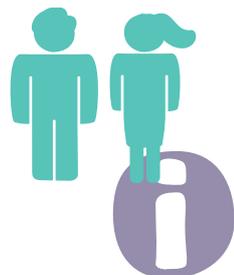


How we did it

In July 2018 Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust (LTHT) and Leeds CCG discussed the implementation of symptomatic FIT in GP practices across Leeds. A FIT Development Group was established including representation from Leeds CCG, LTHT Gastroenterology, LTHT Pathology, LTHT Colorectal Cancer Team, LTHT Lead Cancer Team and primary care.

In September 2018 Leeds CCG secured one year non-recurrent funding for the implementation of FIT in primary care to test that the pathway reduces endoscopy demand and releases LTHT capacity, as forecast within the West Yorkshire and Harrogate Cancer Alliance Business Case. This was achieved by ensuring:

- FIT test analyser sourced and installed prior to go-live date
- FIT test components (including postal envelopes with postage), assembled FIT tests and patient literature for inclusion within FIT test packs
- Issued agreed number of FIT tests to Leeds GP practices for storage
- Robust clinical and admin processes between primary care and LTHT pathology lab
- GPs notified of the test results in 7 working days from the date the sample is received
- Positive FIT results – GP to initiate two week-wait lower GI referral to Leeds for straight to test colonoscopy
- Negative FIT result – GPs to monitor symptoms and repeat FIT or consider ACE or non two week wait referral
- Comprehensive patient and GP information produced
- Attend CCG Target sessions to introduce the test to practices and to confirm pathways.



>> What was the result?

From 1st April 2019 – end 29 February 2020:

- 2,639 FIT tests requests received, increasing each month from 60 requests in April 2019 to 340 requests in February 2020.
- 299 positive FIT test results
- 47 cases of cancer - 2.2% conversion of all patients tested (487 rejected requests)

Assumption can be made that a negative FIT test has saved a patient an invasive endoscopy (colonoscopy or flexible sigmoidoscopy) as first test and released capacity (in the region of 1853 based on negative test results to date).

Of the positive FIT tests and through further investigations conducted there have been 47 colorectal cancers diagnosed.



Statistics and facts:

Number of requests	*2,152
Positive FIT	299 (13.9%)
Negative FIT	1853 (86.1%)
Number of cancers	47
% of total FIT tests requested result in a CRC	2.2%
Positive FIT resulting in cancer	15.7%

* Total referrals minus 487 rejected requests

