



## Media Release

27 March 2019

### **Improved Colorectal Cancer Testing For Symptomatic Patients in Leeds from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019**

General Practices across Leeds will be rolling out a new test from 1 April 2019 called FIT (Faecal Immunochemical test). This test identifies microscopic levels of blood in patient's stools and will be used to exclude bowel cancer in patients without obvious blood in the stool but who have bowel symptoms. The test is aimed at patients who are at the lower end of the risk spectrum for developing bowel cancer.

Following a GP consultation, the FIT test pack will be given to the patient who will then collect the tiny sample of stool required using the FIT kit at home. They will then return this in a pre-paid envelope to the Leeds Pathology Department at St James's University Hospital. The result of the test will be sent to the patients GP within seven days. The GP will then inform the patient of the results and the next steps. If positive the patient will be referred for a colonoscopy to exclude bowel cancer.

The newly implemented test benefits from:

- Requires a single stool sample (previous stool tests for blood required 3 samples)
- FIT Sample collection devices are easier to use
- FIT specifically measures human haemoglobin (Hb) rather than any other blood in the diet and is therefore more accurate than previous types of test

- FIT has a high negative predictive value – a negative result makes colorectal cancer unlikely
- No need for dietary recitations before using the test
- Clear instructions for ease of completion
- Completed in the patients home, without the need of a hospital visit.

Leeds Teaching Hospital NHS Trust Consultant Rick Saunders:

“FIT testing has significant advantages for patients and is more accurate than previous stool tests. It is an important development in our efforts to exclude bowel cancer in symptomatic patients”

Colorectal cancer is Leeds’ second most diagnosed cancer and the earlier it is identified generally the better the outcomes for patients. The implementation of FIT is part of many initiatives being rolled out through the Leeds Cancer Programme. The Programme is a partnership between Macmillan Cancer Support, the NHS in Leeds and Leeds City Council to transform cancer services across the city. Through its dynamic and ambitious strategy, it is committed to delivering the best outcomes for all in Leeds through world class cancer services shaped by patients, carers and the wider public.

For more information please visit: [www.leedscancerprogramme.org.uk/fittest](http://www.leedscancerprogramme.org.uk/fittest)

## **ENDS**

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