**Faecal Immunochemical Test (FIT): Information for Patients**

You are reading this because your doctor has asked you to take a Faecal Immunochemical Test (FIT).

**Why is a FIT done?**

A FIT is a test that looks for the presence of blood in your poo. Sometimes, bleeding within your stomach or bowels is so small that it isn’t visible in your poo. This test can detect this smaller amount of blood.

Your doctor has ordered this test for you as part of the investigation of your current symptoms. A FIT will help them decide the next steps.

The Bowel Screening programme also uses FIT, but this is a different test than the one that your doctor is asking you to complete. Even if you have had a screening test very recently, or you have had a negative screening result at any time, it is important that you still do this separate FIT.

**What will happen now?**

You will be sent a pack in the post directly to your home. Once you have collected your poo sample, you will send it directly to the laboratory.

Once you receive your pack please check that it contains:

* FIT test kit - It is really important that you write the **date that you collect your poo sample** on the label on the pot that you put it in. If the date is not included the laboratory might not be able to use your sample.
* Request form (this should have been completed by the doctor that asked you to do this test. If this has not been done, please contact: *insert details of either GP practice or secondary care service*)
* Instruction sheet
* Addressed and pre-paid return envelope

If any of the above is missing, please contact: *insert details of lab or GP surgery*

Once you receive your pack, please read the instruction sheet, collect your poo sample and post it back as soon as possible. **Do not do the test when you are menstruating** (having your period). Wait until it has finished and then do the test.

**How soon can I expect the results?**

Your doctor should receive the results of the test within 1 week from the date that your sample is received by the laboratory. If you have not heard from your doctor within 1 week please contact them.

**What do the results mean?**

* If the result is **positive**

There are lots of possible causes for a positive test result and further investigations may need to be done to find out what is causing this bleeding. A positive result doesn’t necessarily mean that you have cancer but if it is cancer, finding it at an earlier stage means that it is easier to treat successfully. Your doctor will refer you for further investigations.

* If the result is **negative**

A negative test result means that it is unlikely that you have bowel cancer, but your doctor will need to consider your result as well as the symptoms that you are experiencing to decide on the next steps. If you are not referred for further investigations but your symptoms persist it is really important that you go back to your doctor who might refer you for further investigations or for specialist advice.

**I have a question, who do I ask?**

*Insert details of either Health Board team/GP practice.*