

UHB Lower GI Urgent Cancer Referral

FIT Positive Pathway

The **FIT Positive Pathway** is for patients with a FIT test result of **≥10 µgHb/g**, indicating the need for urgent evaluation for possible lower gastrointestinal (LGI) cancer or other conditions.

Criteria and Outcomes

1. Bright Red Rectal Bleeding (≥2 Episodes Within 4 Weeks):

- **Symptoms:**
 - Bright red rectal bleeding occurring two or more times within a four-week period.
 - May or may not include abdominal pain.
- **Action:**
 - **2WW Colonoscopy.**
- **Outcome:**
 - Early investigation for potential cancer or other significant lower GI pathology.
 - **Endoscopist to take responsibility as to whether the patient is to be further investigated or discharged back to GP.**

2. Dark Red Rectal Bleeding (≥2 Episodes Within 4 Weeks):

- **Symptoms:**
 - Dark red rectal bleeding occurring two or more times within a four-week period.
 - May or may not include abdominal pain.
- **Action:**
 - **2WW Colonoscopy.**
- **Outcome:**

- Identification of potential bleeding sources, including polyps or cancer.
- **Endoscopist to take responsibility as to whether the patient is to be further investigated or discharged back to GP.**

3. Change in Bowel Habit (± Abdominal Pain):

- **Symptoms:**
 - Persistent changes in bowel habit, such as frequency, consistency, or appearance.
 - May or may not include abdominal pain.
- **Action:**
 - **2WW Colonoscopy.**
- **Outcome:**
 - Timely evaluation of symptoms for early detection of significant pathology.
 - **Endoscopist to take responsibility as to whether the patient is to be further investigated or discharged back to GP.**

4. Over 16 Years Old With Rectal or Anal Ulceration/Mass or Abdominal Mass:

- **Symptoms:**
 - A visible or palpable ulceration or mass in the rectal, anal, or abdominal area.
- **Action:**
 - **Rapid Access Colorectal Clinic.**
- **Outcome:**
 - Expedited referral to colorectal specialists for comprehensive evaluation.

5. Over 40 Years Old With Unexplained Iron Deficiency Anaemia (Ferritin <15):

- **Symptoms:**
 - Unexplained iron deficiency anemia.
 - Laboratory criteria:
 - Men: Hb <130 g/L.
 - Women: Hb <115 g/L.
- **Action:**

- **Gastroscopy and Colonoscopy.**
- **Outcome:**
 - Identification of underlying causes, including occult bleeding or cancer.
 - **Endoscopist to take responsibility as to whether the patient is to be further investigated or discharged back to GP.**

6. Over 80 Years Old (Any Symptoms):

- **Symptoms:**
 - Any symptoms indicative of potential lower GI pathology.
- **Action:**
 - **Rapid Access Colorectal Clinic.**
- **Outcome:**
 - Comprehensive evaluation for age-specific risks and comorbidities.

7. Unexplained Weight Loss (10% or More ± Abdominal Pain):

- **Symptoms:**
 - Significant unexplained weight loss (10% or more of body weight).
 - May or may not include abdominal pain.
- **Action:**
 - **Rapid Access Gastro Clinic.**
- **Outcome:**
 - Evaluation for potential malignancies or other serious GI conditions.

8. Patients With Mobility Problems (WHO Performance Score 3 or 4):

- **Symptoms:**
 - Restricted mobility with a performance score of 3 or 4, complicating traditional diagnostic approaches.
- **Action:**
 - **Rapid Access Colorectal Clinic.**
- **Outcome:**
 - Tailored diagnostic and treatment plans to accommodate mobility limitations.

Key Notes for FIT Positive Referrals:

1. Ensure Proper Referral:

- a. Use the appropriate referral form and include all required information.

2. Safety Netting:

- a. Follow up on referrals to ensure timely completion and monitor patients for worsening symptoms.

Summary of Outcomes:

1. Rectal Bleeding (Bright or Dark):

2WW Colonoscopy and endoscopist-led decision on further investigation or discharge.

2. Change in Bowel Habit:

2WW Colonoscopy and endoscopist-led decision.

3. Ulceration/Mass:

Rapid Access Colorectal Clinic for comprehensive evaluation.

4. Iron Deficiency Anaemia:

Gastroscopy and Colonoscopy with endoscopist-led decision.

5. Over 80 (Any Symptoms):

Rapid Access Colorectal Clinic.

6. Unexplained Weight Loss:

Rapid Access Gastro Clinic.

7. Mobility Problems:

Rapid Access Colorectal Clinic for tailored management.

FIT Negative Pathway

The **FIT Negative Pathway** is designed to manage patients with symptoms concerning for lower gastrointestinal (LGI) conditions but with a FIT test result of **<10 µgHb/g**. This pathway ensures that patients with significant symptoms are not missed even if their FIT test is negative.

Criteria and Outcomes

1. ≥50 Years Old with Persistent Change in Bowel Habit (≥6 Weeks):

- **Symptoms:**
 - Looser or more frequent stools lasting for 6 weeks or more.
 - May include abdominal pain.
- **Action:**
 - **GP Direct Access to Urgent Colonoscopy.**
- **Outcome:**
 - Early diagnosis of any underlying pathology such as polyps, cancer, or other gastrointestinal conditions.

2. ≥40 Years Old with Rectal Bleeding:

- **Symptoms:**
 - Two or more episodes of rectal bleeding within a ≥4-week period.
 - May include abdominal pain.
- **Action:**
 - **GP Direct Access to Urgent Flexible Sigmoidoscopy.**
- **Outcome:**
 - Examination of the lower colon to identify causes like hemorrhoids, polyps, or cancer.

3. ≥40 Years Old with Ferritin ≤45 µg/L and Anaemia:

- **Criteria for Anaemia:**
 - **Men:** Hb <130 g/L.
 - **Non-Menstruating Women:** Hb <115 g/L.
- **Action:**
 - **LGI 2WW Referral.**
- **Additional Vetting:**
 - Cases are reviewed by IDA clinicians who determine:

- **Direct access to endoscopy**, CT, or capsule endoscopy, as appropriate.
- **Outcome:**
 - Thorough investigation to identify the source of anemia and rule out significant pathology.

Key Notes for FIT Negative Referrals:

1. **FIT Negative Referral Form:**
 - a. Ensure the correct form is completed for GP-led actions.
2. **Direct Access Testing:**
 - a. GPs have the ability to directly refer for flexible sigmoidoscopy or colonoscopy based on symptom presentation.
3. **Patient Monitoring:**
 - a. Patients with negative FIT tests but persistent or worsening symptoms should be safety-netted and reassessed if their condition changes.

Patient Safety Netting in Primary Care

For patients with **negative FIT results** but concerning symptoms, safety netting is critical:

- Document all actions and advice.
- Follow up on symptoms if they persist, worsen, or new symptoms appear.
- Ensure patients know when to seek further help.

Summary of Outcomes:

1. **≥50 Years Old with Change in Bowel Habit:**
Urgent colonoscopy for early detection of pathology.
2. **≥40 Years Old with Rectal Bleeding:**
Urgent flexible sigmoidoscopy to examine the lower colon.
3. **≥40 Years Old with Ferritin ≤45 µg/L and Anaemia:**
LGI 2WW referral with clinician vetting for additional tests.