

Health PEI

TO: Physicians, Nurse Practitioners, Registered Nurses and Primary Care Staff

FROM: Dr Jason Robinson, Clinical Chemist; Anja Nied-Kutterer, Colorectal/Cervical Screening Coordinator

DATE: 2023-Jan-31

SUBJECT: New collection requirements for Fecal Immunochemical Testing (FIT)

FIT platform change for Colorectal Cancer Screening

Fecal Immunochemical Testing (FIT) is used to screen average risk patients aged 50-74 for occult hemoglobin for the purposes of expedient follow up with the Provincial Cancer program. On **April 1, 2023, Health PEI is changing to the OC Sensor Diana platform** for testing. This change will have the following impacts:

- **The collection device will change.** As of March 1, 2023, the current “Alfresa” containers will no longer be disseminated. *Patients should always be encouraged to submit as soon as possible and to refrigerate samples if transport is delayed.*
- The “OC Sensor Diana” collection containers will be disseminated on or before March 30, 2023.
- **Only one (1)** collection is required with the “OC Sensor Diana”, although the overall collection procedure does not change. The current testing interval of 1 sample every 2 years is not affected.
- The QEH Clinical Chemistry lab will **accept and report from the Alfresa container until May 30, 2023**. Specimens received after this date will be cancelled and specimens will need to be recollected.
- Updated Clinical Practice Guidelines will be coming to inform screening best practices with new single sample method.

FIT Testing outside the Colorectal Cancer Screening program

There is no clinical utility of FIT outside colorectal cancer screening. In-hospital collections are discouraged and may be canceled. FIT testing platforms are optimized, and Health Canada approved for colorectal cancer screening, and positivity cut-offs are based on local guidance in collaboration with the CCSP (Colorectal Cancer Screening Program). All other FIT test requests are considered off-label; and the QEH Clinical Chemistry service does not offer STAT or daily FIT testing. Please consider the following before requesting FIT analysis for purposes beyond colorectal cancer screening.

- FIT is not Health Canada approved for investigation of unexplained anemia
- FIT detects the presence of occult human globin protein in formed stool. Hemoglobin is digested in the small intestine and proximal bleeds may not be detected by a FIT screen for colorectal cancer
- FIT kits are approved for home collection of formed stools. Digital stool collections risk false positive results
- FIT measures occult blood and is not indicated with hematochezia, melena, diarrhea, hemorrhoids, or menstruation
- Fecal calprotectin is the recommended test for bowel inflammation
- Providing eligible patients with a “FIT kit” prior to discharge to collect at home or long-term care is encouraged