## 3. Postal strikes – effect on qFIT tests conducted via Colorectal Hub (October 2022 – January 2023)

Royal Mail will be holding a series of postal strikes from now until January 2023.

Currently, when a Fecal Immunochemical Test (FIT) is requested by the Colorectal Hub (following receipt of a 2ww Lower GI referral which does not include a FIT result) the FIT request form (currently completed by the hub) and FIT test kit **are posted** to the patient to complete, after which they will return the form and completed kit to the surgery to be sent to Musgrove via internal post.

As a result of the proposed postal strikes by Royal Mail over the next 3 months, there is a risk that there will be a delay in when patients will receive, if at all, their hub-completed FIT request form and FIT test kits.   To ensure that there is not undue delay in the patient’s cancer journey, the Colorectal Hub will be temporarily changing how it processes a FIT test request for patients referred to the Lower GI 2ww pathway without a FIT test.

**From now until January 2023 the Colorectal Hub will:**

* Write to the patient to inform them that they need to conduct a FIT test and will enclose the FIT kit and hub-completed FIT request form.
* After 7 days the Hub will contact the patient via telephone to check whether the patient has received the form and kit in the post.
* If not, then the Colorectal Hub will inform the patient to go to the surgery to collect a FIT test kit from the surgery (which will come from the surgery’s store) along with a primary care completed FIT request form.   THIS FORM WILL NEED TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SURGERY – PLEASE TICK “Adult with symptoms requiring consideration of further investigation under a 2 week wait referral”.
* The Hub will also contact the surgery concerned to warn them via email that the patient will be coming to collect the FIT kit and that the surgery will need to complete a FIT request form (as above) to give to the patient.   The [attached return label](https://nhs.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=c94984b12662e72fcc56397e7&id=6b580413fb&e=0b144c8b5a) should be used.
* The patient will then return the completed FIT kit and primary care completed FIT request form back to the surgery (no change to current process) for them to be sent back to Musgrove via internal post – using the [attached label](https://nhs.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=c94984b12662e72fcc56397e7&id=4270314e9c&e=0b144c8b5a) (which is to be used just for these samples) which will need to be stuck on top of the existing return label on the FIT kit box.

**Actions for primary care**

Therefore, in summary, the only changes for primary care during this time will be the need to provide a FIT test kit to some patients from their stores and to complete a FIT request form to give to the patient.  The [attached label](https://nhs.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=c94984b12662e72fcc56397e7&id=e5e44d521f&e=0b144c8b5a) will need to be stuck on to the FIT test kit box for return to SFT on top of the existing return label.