

Mast Group wins Medilink Partnership Award for pioneering role in bowel cancer screening

Mast Group has been recognised for its contribution to bowel cancer screening at the Medilink North of England Healthcare Business Awards 2026

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- [Mast Group](#) has been recognised for its contribution to bowel cancer screening after receiving the Primary / Social Care Partnership Award at the Medilink North of England Healthcare Business Awards 2026, held on 30th April at Cutlers' Hall, Sheffield.



Mast Group FIT patient test kit

When almost [7 million](#) people across England completed a bowel cancer screening test last year, the diagnostic products at the heart of the programme were supplied by Mast Group, the Merseyside-based company that has spent two decades championing, validating and delivering FIT diagnostic products and instruments across Europe.

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This recognition reflects not only innovation, but the power of collaboration in making essential diagnostic services more accessible.”

Iain McElarney, Mast Group

Mast Group's involvement in bowel cancer screening is a story of confidence as much as commerce. When the company began their faecal immunochemical testing (FIT) journey in 2005, bowel cancer screening across Europe relied predominantly on an older testing technology. Working with clinical, biochemical and in vitro diagnostic experts globally, Mast set out to underpin the introduction

of FIT testing in clinical pathways across national screening programmes, enabling the introduction of European guidelines by building the evidence base, engaging health systems and demonstrating superior sensitivity to previous methods.

Pilot projects in the early 2010s helped establish the clinical foundations across Europe, followed by pilot projects within the NHS England bowel cancer screening programme that laid the

groundwork for national adoption. Over those years, Mast delivered not just the diagnostic expertise, but the operational knowledge required to make FIT available to high-volume, centralised cancer screening programmes.

Today, Mast Group supports bowel cancer screening programmes in 11 territories across the UK and Europe. Mast has been the FIT diagnostics supplier to the NHS England Bowel Cancer Screening Programme (BCSP) since 2019, ensuring continuity of supply to a programme that has caught 70,000 cancers since its introduction. Beyond the screening programme, Mast also supports the symptomatic testing pathway, providing FIT diagnostic products to laboratories processing tests for patients presenting with bowel symptoms in primary care, a growing area of clinical demand across the United Kingdom.

Mr Iain McElarney, Innovation Manager, Mast Group commented: "Winning the Medilink Primary / Social Care Partnership Award means a great deal to everyone at Mast Group. When we started working on FIT in 2005, we had to convince health systems across Europe that FIT testing was worth doing as there were no guidelines and no established programmes using FIT.

We believed in the science, we did the work by building the evidence base from the ground up in partnership with Eiken Chemical Co. Ltd and with the extensive support of national experts. Two decades on, FIT testing has saved tens of thousands of lives across Europe. Mast Group is proud to have played a central role in making that happen.

This recognition reflects not only innovation, but the power of collaboration in making essential diagnostic services more accessible. At Mast Group, our commitment has always gone beyond supplying a product—we strive to support integrated care and ensure that bowel cancer testing is available to everyone."

Innovation has been central to Mast's work throughout. The award-winning [MAST® FIT aid](#), was developed in close collaboration with NHS England, the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB), Thomas Pocklington Trust, and Parkinson's UK. Designed to enable people with visual impairment or manual dexterity challenges to complete their bowel cancer screening test independently, with privacy and dignity, the MAST® FIT aid incorporates a sample-guiding channel, a stabilising stand, and instructions available in large print, braille, audio CD and digital formats.

Philippa Bevan
Accelerate Associates
philippa@accelerate-associates.co.uk
Visit us on social media:
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