

Improving cancer services for local people

Prevention

Quality of Life

Diagnosis

Patient Voice

NHS

North East London
Cancer Alliance

Improving uptake of cervical screening in primary care in north east London



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North East London
Cancer Alliance

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1. Cervical cancer screening

Who is eligible for screening?

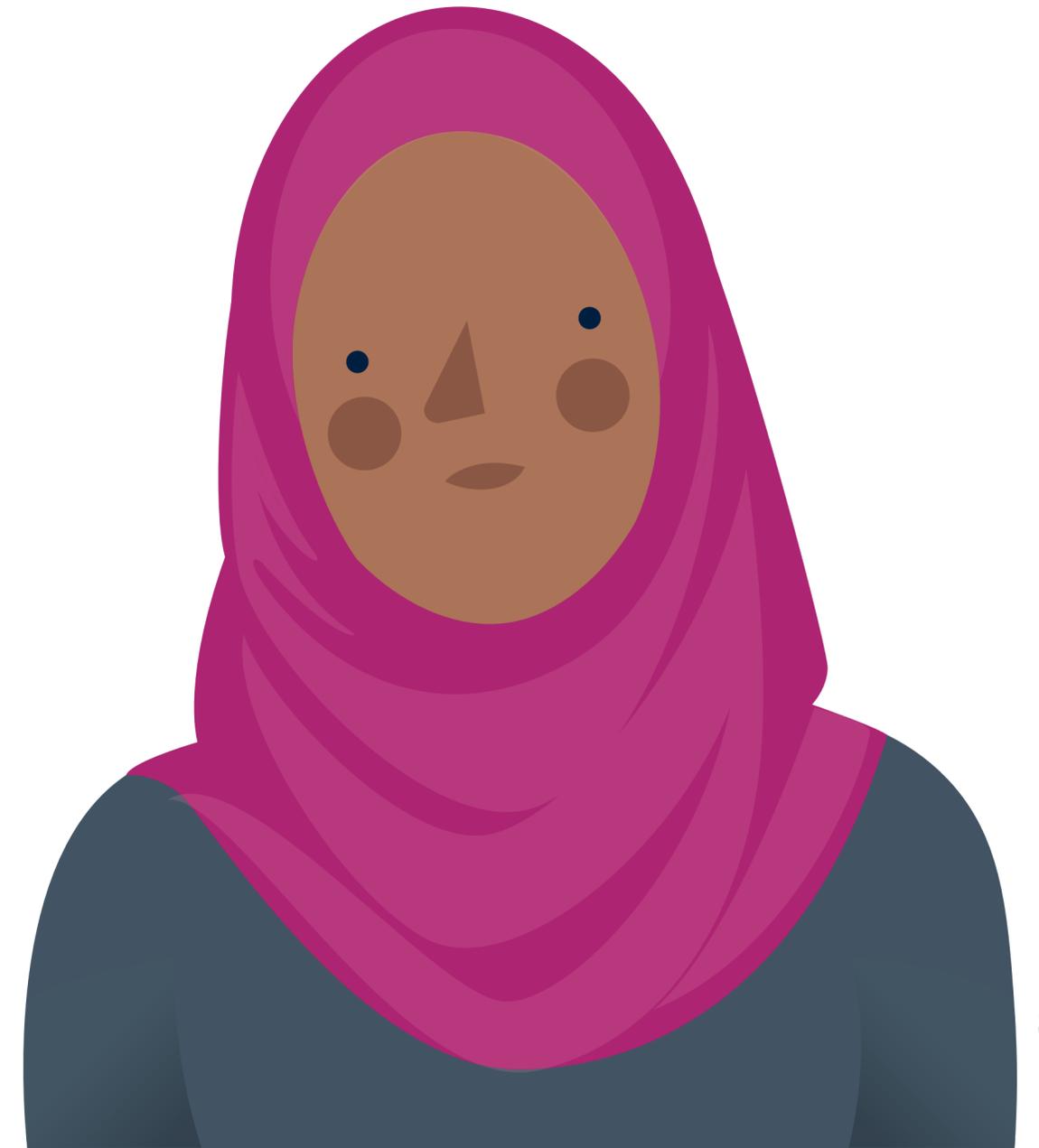
Anyone between the ages of 25 and 64 who has a cervix and was assigned female at birth.

Who is affected?

- The highest incidence is in ages 30 – 34.
- Incidence rates increase with increasing deprivation.
- Black and white women have similar prevalence, for Asian women it is slightly lower.

Cervical screening uptake in north east London.

Uptake is below the national average in all 7 boroughs, particularly the younger cohort (25-49 year olds).



2. Inequalities in cervical screening

Uptake is lower in:

- More deprived areas.
- Women from a BAME background.
- Younger women (<35).
- Women with a learning disability or serious mental illness.
- Lesbian women, non-binary people and trans men.

Barriers include:

- Poor health understanding.
- Cultural influences.
- Fear or experience of discrimination.
- History of sexual violence/coercion/FGM.
- The screening programme only invites those registered as female with their GP and therefore misses trans men and non-binary people.



3. How to improve uptake

Specialist services

56 Dean Street offers cervical screening for trans men and non-binary people
<https://dean.st/trans-non-binary>

Tel: 020 3315 5656

My Body Back Project is available for women and trans men who have experienced sexual violence <http://www.mybodybackproject.com>

These are open to self-referral by NEL residents.

Use a different invitation

A 2015 study compared uptake after women received the standard 3rd invitation letter with 2 shorter ones, framing screening in terms of gain (lives saved) or loss (lives lost). Both were more effective than the standard letter, with the gain-framed message being slightly more effective for younger women entering the program.

Templates of these letters follow in the next two pages and can be adapted for your use.



3. How to improve uptake

Loss Frame Letter

FOR USE ON PRACTICE HEADED PAPER



North East London
Cancer Alliance

PRACTICE
HEADED
PAPER

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL
DD/MM/YYYY

Dear

Your NHS cervical screening appointment is due on or after DD/MM/YYYY, and I note that you have not yet attended for the test.

Every year over 800 people in the UK die from cervical cancer

Please call us today on (insert practice number) to book your appointment with one of our female nurses. Early morning and late evening appointments are available. (If applicable)

We can do the test any time during your monthly cycle, except when you are bleeding.

It is your choice whether or not you have cervical screening and to help you make the decision, you will have already received an information leaflet with previous invitations.

Your result will be sent to your home and to your GP. We maintain confidentiality at all times, and no one except staff involved in your care will know that you have had the test.

Please call us if you would like to discuss this further. We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely

xxxx xxxxx
Practice Nurse

NHS Number:	Test due on or after:	Date of Birth:	Last Recorded test:

3. How to improve uptake

Gain Frame Letter

FOR USE ON PRACTICE HEADED PAPER



North East London
Cancer Alliance

PRACTICE
HEADED
PAPER

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL
DD/MM/YYYY

Dear

Your NHS cervical screening appointment is due on or after DD/MM/YYYY, and I note that you have not yet attended for the test.

Cervical screening saves 4,500 lives in England every year

Please call us today on (insert practice number) to book your appointment with one of our female nurses. Early morning and late evening appointments are available. (If applicable)

We can do the test any time during your monthly cycle, except when you are bleeding.

It is your choice whether or not you have cervical screening and to help you make the decision, you will have already received an information leaflet with previous invitations.

Your result will be sent to your home and to your GP. We maintain confidentiality at all times, and no one except staff involved in your care will know that you have had the test.

Please call us if you would like to discuss this further. We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely

xxxx xxxxx
Practice Nurse

NHS Number:	Test due on or after:	Date of Birth:	Last Recorded test:

3. How to improve uptake

Review processes

CRUK have developed a template to enable practices to identify activities they could undertake. These 18 steps are outlined below.

1. Is there a cervical cancer screening protocol in place?

The following resource from gov.uk can be used to inform cervical screening protocol

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/cervical-screening-ideas-for-improving-access-and-uptake>

2. Are Prior Notification Lists (PNLs) actioned?

Setting up alerts in patient records, pre-empting the Cervical Screening Programme letter with a letter from the GP practice (can be tailored for patients groups) and details on how to book an appointment, can pre-empt with a text message and embed a video and further resources.

3. Can the practice offer pre-test appointment or phone calls to soon to be invited patients to discuss the procedure and answer any questions or concerns?

Can also embed videos in a text message to further inform patients and let them know what to be aware of and who to call for further information

[What is a cervical screening test? | Cancer Research UK \(2019\)](#)

4. Considering women with specific needs or disabilities (e.g. access, language physical/ mental disabilities) Is 'easy read' literature available and embedded in service delivery?

<https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/cervical-cancer/getting-diagnosed/cervical-screening-for-people-learning-disability>
<https://www.jostrust.org.uk/information/cervical-screening/cervical-screening-learning-disability>

Easy Read literature is available from Jo's Trust and CRUK. Videos and pictorial letters are also useful. Jo's Trust has a variety of resources in different languages.
<https://www.jostrust.org.uk/information/videos>

5. Can the practice open up cervical screening appointments on their pre-bookable appointment automated system?

6. Can you provide a variety of appointment times during the day and in the evening?

After-hours clinics? Flexible booking times?

3. How to improve uptake

7. Does the practice regularly review non responders list via Open Exeter?

Sample takers may wish to use the Open Exeter IT system to check screening status and follow up non-responder notifications. Also use the system to download the electronic HMR 101 (cytology request) forms

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/cervical-screening-ideas-for-improving-access-and-uptake#open-exeter>

8. Patient list cleansing to ensure removal of 'ghost' patients to support the practice in identifying eligible women.

<https://pcse.england.nhs.uk/services/patient-registrations/>

9. Is a 3rd reminder letter sent with GP endorsement?

Template letter provided in this pack - see [Gain and Loss Frame letters](#)

10. Are the practice able to send recall letters on pink paper, anecdotally this can improve uptake?

11. Can the practice use texts/ phone calls as an alternative to sending third letters?

CRUK Cervical Screening Good Practice Guide has telephone and SMS scripts that can be utilised

https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/sites/default/files/engaging_primary_care_in_cervical_screening_final.pdf

12. Positive experience: Ensure women are put at ease and all their questions are answered during their appointment.

13. Are all practice staff trained so they can discuss cervical screening with patients?

Jo's Trust will be providing training for non-clinical practice staff from late April 2021.

14. Is the practice able to appoint a practice cancer screening lead to oversee and monitor activities?

Practices can appoint a screening lead, or a screening lead can work collaboratively across a PCN, depending on each individual PCN and their needs. Additional supportive resource is the PHE Screening Blog, which provides updates on the National Screening Programme

<https://phescreening.blog.gov.uk/subscribe/>

3. How to improve uptake

15. Does the practice run practice awareness campaigns (e.g. posters and leaflets in waiting rooms/ toilets)

Resources from CRUK and Jo's Trust available
<https://publications.cancerresearchuk.org/> and
<https://www.jostrust.org.uk/get-involved>.

Cervical Cancer Prevention Week ran from 18th-24th January 2021 and Cervical Screening Awareness Week runs from June 15th to June 18th 2021. Use of GP website and any associated social media can incorporate the use of these resources to promote awareness and engagement. Investigating new ways of reaching out when there are less people coming into the practice.

Targeting younger women who are approaching cervical screening (aged 23-25 years) may assist in increasing uptake and dispelling the notion that you may not need the screen if you have been vaccinated against HPV.

16. Feedback: Does the practice have a system in place for gathering patient feedback?

17. Review uptake data – regularly review cervical screening uptake data at practice meetings to evaluate impact of interventions.

Practices can look at local dashboards (if and when available), PHE Fingertips

<https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/search/cancer>

Gov.UK Cervical Screening Programme Data

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/cervical-screening-programme-data>

18. Please make sure your sample taker code is on the HMR101 Form

If the sample taker code is missing there is a chance the sample will be reported as inadequate and will need to be repeated in 3 months' time. If you are not on the sample taker register please contact Cervical Screening London at csl.cstd@nhs.net or telephone 020 7460 4851.

4. Other initiatives to increase cervical screening

Training for non-clinical practice staff

During late spring and the summer of 2021, Jo's Trust will be providing virtual training sessions for non-clinical GP practice staff across North East London to improve their awareness and understanding of cervical screening. The training is funded by the NEL Cancer Alliance and is free for practice staff.

The training sessions will focus on cervical cancer prevention, as well as how to speak with patients about screening, HPV and the vaccine. The aim will be to help improve their knowledge about the importance of cervical screening and facilitate conversations with patients.

By providing staff with the education and skills to improve their confidence when engaging with patients about screening, it is more likely that patients will be able to make an informed choice, particularly in low participating groups. This also supports requirements for the PCN DES and quality improvement for screening.

We would encourage GPs to support non-clinical staff in attending the training. The course will be advertised via the training hubs. For more information about the training, please contact Adriana MacNaughton at adriana.macnaughton@jostrust.org.uk



5. Resources

Education and training

Cervical screening Training and Education

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/cervical-screening-education-and-training>

Sample taker training

www.lnctc.org.uk/courses

Screening data

Cervical screening programme stats - Dash boards by CCGs

<https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/cervical-screening-programme/cervical-screening-programme-coverage-statistics-management-information>

Improving uptake and access

Improving Screening Uptake

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/cervical-screening-ideas-for-improving-access-and-uptake>

Jo's Cervical Cancer Trust—Information for Primary Care

<https://www.jostrust.org.uk/professionals/cervical-screening>

Reducing Barriers to Screening for LGBTQ People

<https://phescreeing.blog.gov.uk/2020/01/08/reducing-barriers-screening-lgbt/>

Addressing screening inequalities

<https://phescreeing.blog.gov.uk/2019/03/15/addressing-inequalities-in-lgbt-cancer-screening-coverage/>

Loss/gain frame letter trial

<http://www.enhertscg.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/primarycare/CPP/2.5%20k.%20Cervical%20screening%20information.pdf>

Cancer Research UK engaging primary care in cervical screening good practice guide

https://www.eastlondonhcp.nhs.uk/downloads/aboutus/North%20East%20London%20Cancer%20Alliance/engaging_primary_care_in_cervical_screening_final.pdf

Royal College of Nursing guide to cervical screening

https://www.eastlondonhcp.nhs.uk/downloads/aboutus/North%20East%20London%20Cancer%20Alliance/RCN_CervicalScreeningandCancerGuidance_2020.pdf

5. Resources

Information to share with patients

Cervical screening: helping you decide

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cervical-screening-description-in-brief/cervical-screening-helping-you-decide--2>

Facts on Cervical Screening

<https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/health-professional/cancer-statistics/statistics-by-cancer-type/cervical-cancer#heading-Zero>

About cervical screening

<https://www.jostrust.org.uk/information/cervical-screening>

What to expect

<https://www.jostrust.org.uk/information/cervical-screening/what-happens-during-cervical-screening>

Screening for people with a learning disability (CRUK)

[Cervical screening for women with learning disabilities | Cervical cancer | Cancer Research UK](#)

Screening for people with a learning disability (Jo's Trust)

[Cervical Screening When You Have a Learning Disability | Jo's Cervical Cancer Trust \(jostrust.org.uk\)](#)

What to expect (for women with a learning disability)

[What happens when I go for cervical screening \(a smear test\)? - YouTube](#)

Easy read information

[CSP05_an_easy_guide_to_cervical_screening.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

What is cervical screening (different language versions)

<https://www.jostrust.org.uk/information/videos>

For women who experience vulval pain

<http://www.vulvalpainsociety.org/vps/images/pdf/Smears%20without%20Tears%20leaflet%20March%202015.pdf>

Screening for LGBTQ+ People

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nhs-population-screening-information-for-transgender-people/nhs-population-screening-information-for-trans-people#cervical-screening>

Screening advice for trans and non-binary people

<https://www.jostrust.org.uk/information/cervical-screening/trans-non-binary>

5. Resources



Information to share with patients (cont.)

56 Dean Street

<https://dean.st/health-amp-wellbeing/trans-men-non-binary-cervical-smears/>

More information about No Barriers

<https://rmpartners.nhs.uk/no-barriers-cervical-screening-for-trans-and-non-binary-people/>

No Barriers video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EWJniB7Q4oQ&t=3s>

My Body Back

<http://www.mybodybackproject.com>

For people who have experienced sexual violence

<https://www.jostrust.org.uk/information/cervical-screening/cervical-screening-after-sexual-violence>

6. Contacts



North East London
Cancer Alliance

Cervical Screening London Helplines

General queries

csl.queries@nhs.net
Tel: 020 7460 4851

Sample taker code enquiries

csl.cstd@nhs.net
Tel: 020 7460 4851

I.T. Department (T-Quest Queries)

helpdesk@tdlpathology.com
Tel: 020 7307 7365

Transport/ Courier Queries (Sample Collection)

couriers@tdlpathology.com
cc: csl.queries@nhs.net
Tel: 020 7307 7373

Link for GP Supplies (vials, brushes and sample bags)

https://pathologyforms.formstack.com/forms/hpv_surgery_supplies

Specialist services

56 Dean Street (No Barriers)

56deanstreet@chelwest.nhs.uk
Tel: 020 3315 5656

More information on the NEL Cancer Alliance

Web: <https://www.eastlondonhcp.nhs.uk/aboutus/north-east-london-cancer-alliance.htm>



For any communications queries please email p.thomas6@nhs.net