An tSeirbhís Náisiúnta Scagthástála
National Screening Service

CervicalCheck
AN CLÁR NÁISIÚNTA SCAGTHÁSTÁLA CEIRBHEACS
THE NATIONAL CERVICAL SCREENING PROGRAMME

Cervical Screening Education Programme: Standards and Requirements

January 2023
First Edition

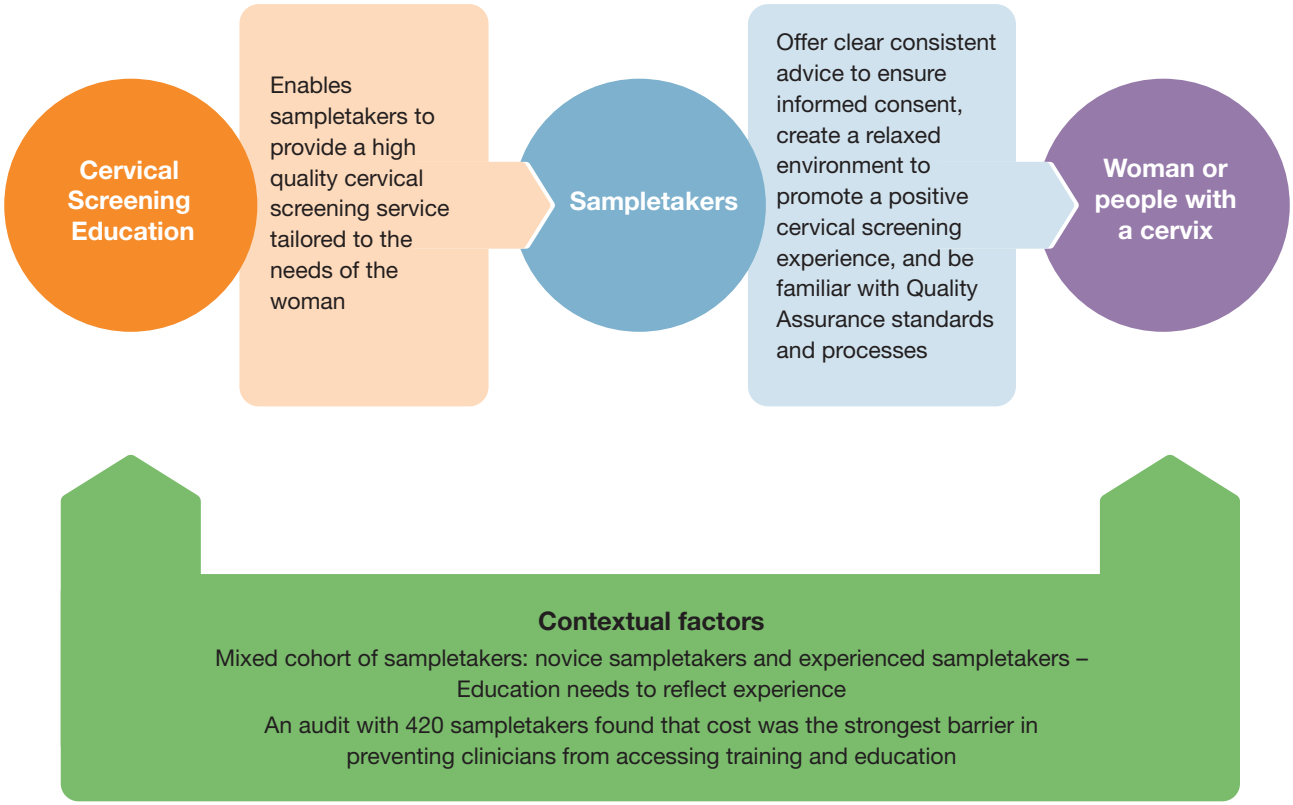
Contents

Preface

The CervicalCheck Screening Training Unit (STU) is responsible for the development, coordination, monitoring and evaluation of the education and training requirements of healthcare professionals involved in cervical screening in Ireland. Cervical screening education is critical for the provision of a quality-assured cervical screening programme. The STU currently delivers education and training for sampletakers through an academic partnership with four Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), which offers comprehensive education on both the theoretical and clinical aspects of cervical screening. The STU also delivers cervical screening education to the General Practitioners (GP) Registrar Specialist training schemes.

In 2022, the STU developed an Education Strategy that set out the vision for CervicalCheck to oversee the development, coordination, monitoring and evaluation of the education and training requirements of the personnel involved in primary cervical screening in Ireland. One of the key priorities is to develop a national Cervical Screening Education Programme to facilitate sampletakers to undertake an accredited, evidence-based cervical screening education programme, designed with the woman at the heart of the curriculum.

An integral component of this work is the development of comprehensive education standards and requirements which will ensure a consistent level of education for both novice and experienced sampletakers, so that they can provide safe, effective and person-centred care.



Introduction

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1. Introduction

This document sets out the Education Standards and Requirements for the cervical screening education programme which will:

1. Ensure a consistent level of education so that sampletakers can provide safe, effective, person-centred care
2. Provide guidance on the responsibilities of the education provider, trainee sampletaker, Clinical Supervisor, Clinically Responsible Doctor or Clinical Lead, and the Clinical Trainer
3. Create flexible education pathways that will be consistent with National Screening Service policies and programme requirements, and support the safe and effective delivery of the cervical screening programme
4. Promote a culture of high quality and continuous improvement in cervical screening practice
5. Provide governance mechanisms that allow education providers to undertake self-evaluation. Programme quality assurance monitoring will be designed to aid the evaluation of education standards and requirements as part of the metric reporting structure within CervicalCheck

The purpose of the cervical screening education programme is to ensure that, upon successful completion, clinicians are equipped with the knowledge, attitudes and skills to competently deliver cervical screening in line with standards for Quality Assurance in Primary Care and other Cervical Screening Settings (HSE, 2023). The Standards and Requirements constitute an important development by CervicalCheck towards offering cervical screening education that is world class. All stakeholders need assurance that the Education Standards and Requirements will serve to protect the public through ensuring high quality education programmes with sampletakers who are deemed competent to practise safely and compassionately.

1.1 Terminology and Definitions

Term	Description
Blended Learning	Combines traditional face-to-face classroom instruction with online learning
Clinical Supervisor	The Clinical Supervisor must be a nurse/midwife or doctor who is a competent experienced sampletaker registered with CervicalCheck. Their role is to oversee and support the trainee sampletaker in achieving the competence to provide a quality cervical screening service, in collaboration with the CervicalCheck STU during their period of clinical training
Clinical Trainer	CervicalCheck Clinical Trainer works in the STU team. They are assigned to each sampletaker trainee to support and assess the clinical aspects of the cervical screening education programme. The Clinical Trainers also offer a supportive role when quality issues are identified through monitoring of standards for quality assurance or feedback that is received via external feedbacks or complaints
Competence	The attainment of knowledge, intellectual capacities, practice skills, integrity and professional and ethical values required for safe, accountable and effective practice
Clinically Responsible Doctor (CRD)	The clinically responsible doctor is the doctor that holds the contract with CervicalCheck and holds clinical responsibility for providing a cervical screening service
Education Advisory Group (EAG)	The CervicalCheck Screening Training Unit Education Advisory Group was established to consider the different stakeholder perspectives; sampletakers, Public Health, a variety of different education providers, clinical experts in education delivery, and patient advocates (See appendix A for membership)
Sampletaker	The person taking the cervical screening sample. They must be a registered general nurse/midwife/doctor who has either completed a recognised cervical screening education programme, or has gained competence through prior training and experiential clinical practice
Novice Sampletaker	A sampletaker who is new to obtaining cervical screening samples and has never provided a cervical screening service before
Trainee Sampletaker	A registered healthcare professional undertaking a certified cervical screening education programme
Experienced Trainee Sampletaker	A sampletaker that has been in active clinical practice for a number of years with extensive clinical experience of taking cervical samples. They are nurses and doctors working under the supervision of a Clinically Responsible Doctor (CRD), or are CRDs themselves, who have chosen to undertake a recognised sampletaker training course to update their skills and consolidate their knowledge

Term	Description
Women/woman	The terms ‘woman’ and ‘women’ are used throughout this document. Those who are eligible for cervical screening also include trans men and non-binary people with a cervix
Screening Training Unit (STU)	A department within CervicalCheck which is responsible for the development, coordination, monitoring and evaluation of the education and training requirements of healthcare professionals involved in the cervical screening of eligible women and people with a cervix
The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI)	The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI) is the statutory body for the regulation of nursing and midwifery practice and has a key part in contributing to and supporting the development and continuance of role expansion for the professions

Cervical screening Education: Standards and Requirements

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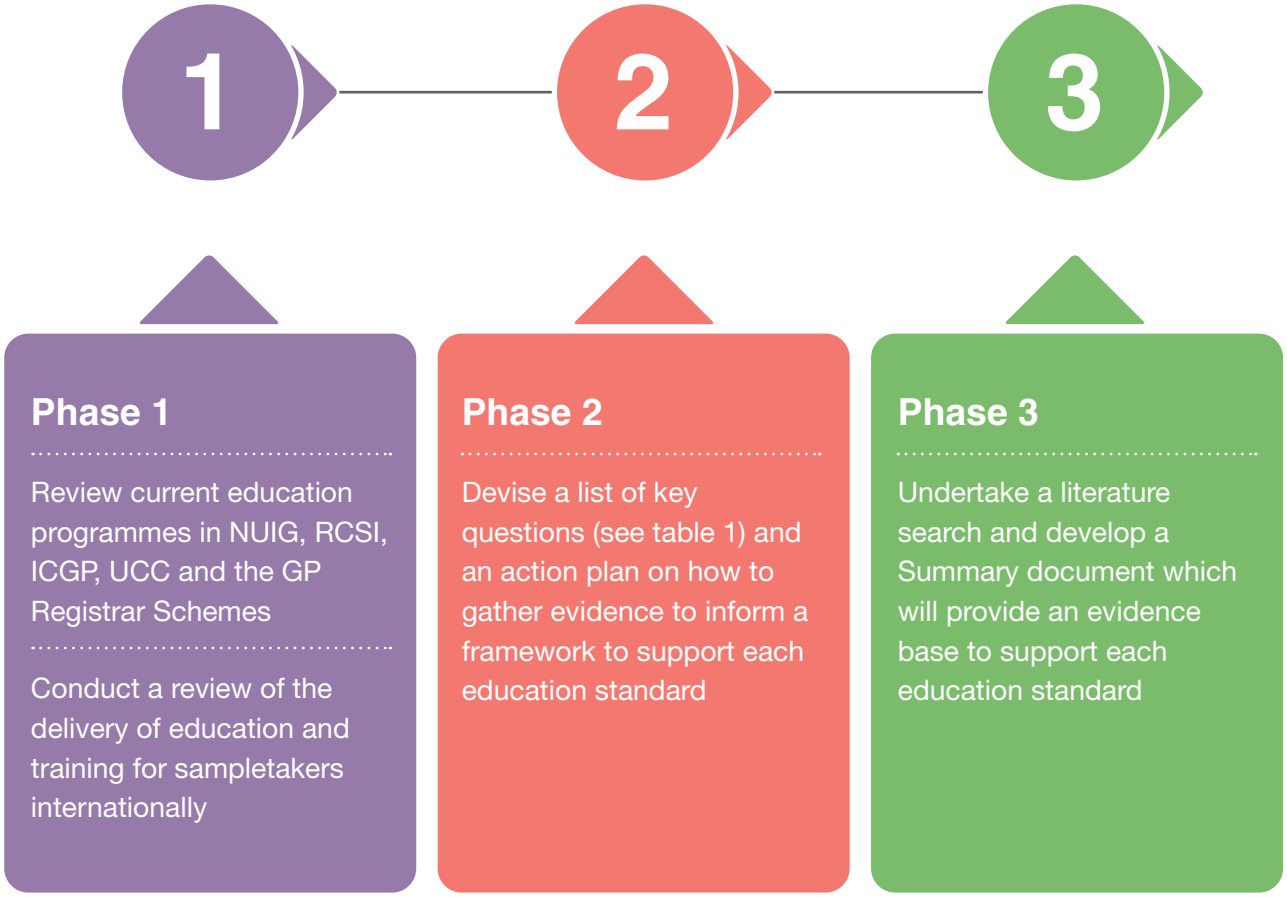
2.1 Development of Education Standards & Requirements

As part of the development phase of this project, the STU management team held meetings with the Primary Care Clinical Advisor and NSS Public Health Medicine Department and the development of the Education Standards and requirements were was divided into three phases:



Please email the STU@cervicalcheck.ie to access a copy of the Literature review and supporting literature

Summary of Cervical Screening Education Standards & Requirements

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3.0 Summary of Cervical Screening Education Standards & Requirements

Education Standards & Requirements	
1. Eligibility to undertake the cervical screening education programme	Nurses and Midwives must be registered on the General Nurse Division or Midwife Division of the NMBI Register (this does not include any other Nursing Division) Medical Practitioners must be registered with the Irish Medical Council (IMC).
2. Who can provide Cervical screening Education	Accreditation must be provided by: • Higher Education Institution (HEI) • a training department/organisation in the public/private sector i.e. CervicalCheck Education providers must seek category 1 or 2 accreditation* from the Nursing and midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI) and/or Continuous Professional Development (CPD) recognition from the Irish college of General Practitioners (ICGP) or an equivalent Medical Professional Organisation for the cervical screening education programme and clinical update modules. * NMBI may provide category 1 accreditation to a Training Department and a category 2 accreditation to a Higher Education Institute (HEI) that meets the guidelines on course submission and approval.
3. What external accreditation does the trainee sampletaker receive on completion of the Cervical Screening Education Programme?	Education providers must seek external accreditation for their cervical screening education programme and continuous professional development modules. There are two pathways to achieving certification in cervical screening education. On successful completion of the cervical screening education programme in the HEI's, 10 European Credits Transfer (ECTs) will be awarded. Cervical Screening education is also being proposed by CervicalCheck for novice and experienced sampletakers. On successful completion of this programme, trainees will be awarded Category 1 accrediation from the NMBI and recognition of learning from a Medication Professional Organisation for the cervical screening education programme for experienced sampletakers.
4. Duration of the Cervical Screening Education Programme	The duration of a cervical screening education programme is dependent on the experience level of the sampletaker but should be no shorter than 3 months for novice sampletakers and 1 month for experienced sampletakers, and must not exceed 12 months. Following any interruption in the education programme, the education provider must ensure that the trainee meets the theoretical and clinical requirements.
5. Recommended Syllabus in the Cervical Screening Education Programme	The cervical screening education programme must contain both a theoretical and clinical component. The theoretical component must include pre-reading and presentations that meet the learning outcomes of the cervical screening education programme. The clinical component requires the trainee to attend a clinical workshop, an observational colposcopy visit, undertake a self-assessment of competency, complete a Cervical Screening self-audit and a Clinical Trainer assesses clinical competency using a Cervical Screening Competency Standard Assessment (appendix C).

Education Standards & Requirements	
6. Assessments Process	Multiple choice questions must be completed at the end of the theoretical component of the cervical screening education programme. Trainees also have assessments in the clinical component in the form of a self-assessment, self-audit and a Clinical Trainer will conduct an assessment using the Clinical Screening Competency Standard Assessment (Appendix C) in order to deem the trainee clinically competent. No compensation between the theoretical and clinical component is permitted in meeting the education requirement.
7. Trainee Responsibilities	Trainees must maintain regular contact with their Clinical Supervisor to: • identify and discuss any emerging training issues or problems • discuss progress towards meeting identified training needs • review their progress throughout their unsupervised practice • prepare for final cervical screening assessment Trainees also have a responsibility to: • maintain their Trainee Workbook • complete the *Knowledge of Cervical Screening Self-Assessment of Competency form* • demonstrate competence within practice in accordance with the learning outcomes as per theoretical component of the education programme and additional resources • maintain a screening test self -audit • arrange an observational colposcopy visit if they have not had a previous colposcopy placement/visit
8. Criteria to qualify as a Clinical Supervisor	To qualify as a Clinical Supervisor the nominated Nurse/Midwife/Medical Practitioner must have completed the following: • a certified Cervical Screening Education Programme Or • Complete three e-learning modules on NSSresources.ie
9. Clinical Supervisor Responsibilities	The Clinical Supervisor must role-model a minimum of two cervical screening consultations and screening tests and supervise the sampletaker undertaking a minimum of 5 cervical screening tests, including the consultation process, to ensure informed consent has been obtained. The Clinical Supervisor must provide direct/ indirect supervison until all cervical screening competencies have been achieved.

Education Standards & Requirements	
10. (a) Clinical and professional support for trainees	The Clinical Trainer must ensure appropriate clinical supervision with a Clinical Supervisor within their clinical environment that provides a safe and competent service for women being screened or provide appropriate supervision to the trainee themselves. They must assess and tailor what support is required by the trainee sampletaker by using the CervicalCheck Checklist for planning a clinical assessment support visit (appendix D). The trainee should have completed the *Consultation in Cervical Screening Self-Assessment of Competence* before starting their supervised practice.
10. (b) Support available for Clinical Supervisors and CRDs/Clinical Leads	The Clinical Supervisor/CRD/Clinical Lead has direct access to a Clinical Trainer who is a subject expert in cervical screening. The Clinical Trainer has access to CervicalCheck Clinical Advisors in Primary Care, Colposcopy and Laboratory for any queries in cervical screening.
11. Clinical Trainer Qualifications and maintaining Competency	Clinical Trainers must demonstrate competency by taking a minimum number of 20 cervical samples per year and have undertaken a recognised cervical screening education programme or equivalent colposcopy accredited programme and have completed the three standalone modules on NSS.resources.ie. They also must attend workshops and external/additional training e.g. LGBT+, women's health study days and keep up-to-date with international research in the area of cervical screening etc.
12. Maintaining competency of sampletakers, CRDs and Clinical Leads	Active sampletakers must complete CervicalCheck Clinical updates at least once every three years. Online standalone modules are available on NSSresources.ie to help to fulfil this commitment. Sampletakers who have had a break in practice for more than three years must undertake the online update training as a minimum or complete a cervical screening education programme for experienced sampletakers.

Cervical Screening Education Standards

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4.0 Cervical Screening Education Standards

4.1 Who is eligible to undertake the education programme?

The following registered healthcare professionals are eligible to undertake the cervical screening education programme:

- **Nurses** that are registered on the General Nurse Division of the NMBI Register (this does not include any other nursing division)
- **Midwives** that are registered on the Midwife Division of the NMBI Register
- **Doctors** that are registered with the Irish Medical Council

All trainees require access to clinical practice areas where cervical samples are taken.

4.2 Who should provide Cervical Screening Education?

Accreditation must be provided by:

- a higher Education Institution
- a training organisation/depatment in the public/private sector i.e. CervicalCheck

Education providers must seek category 1 or 2 accreditation* from the Nursing and midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI) and/or Continuous Professional Development (CPD) recognition from the Irish college of General Practitioners (ICGP) or an equivalent Medical Professional Organisation for the cervical screening education programme and clinical update modules.

* NMBI may provide category 1 accreditation to a Training Department and a category 2 accreditation to a Higher Education Institute (HEI) that meets the guidelines on course submission and approval.

4.3 What external accreditation does the trainee sampletaker receive on completion of the Cervical Screening Education Programme?

There are two pathways to achieving certification in cervical screening education. On successful completion of the cervical screening education programme in the HEI's, 10 European Credits Transfer (ECTs) will be awarded.

On successful completion of the cervical screening education programme in a public or private training department, trainee sampletakers will receive category 1 accrediation fom the NMBI or recognition of learning from a Medical Professional Organisation.

Pathway 1

Cervical Screening Education Programme – HEIs

Awarded – 10 ECTs

Pathway 2

Cervical Screening Education programme – Private/Public Training Department

Category 1 accrediation – NMBI CPD recognition from a Medical Professional Organisaion

It is expected that all sampletakers undertaking the training will have access to ongoing continuous professional development. This will enable certified sampletakers to keep up-to-date with developments in the programme and ensure they maintain professional accountability, in accordance with their professional registration body.

4.4 How long should Cervical Screening Training take?

The length of the programme is determined by the education provider. The current cervical screening education programmes in Ireland, which are provided through Higher Education Institutions, are completed over an academic year with the exception of ICGP which is 16 weeks.

If not restricted by an academic calendar, completion of the CervicalCheck cervical screening education programme is dependent on the experience level of the sampletaker but should be no shorter than 3 months for novice sampletakers and 1 month for experienced sampletakers, and must not exceed 12 months.

In the case where all elements of the cervical screening education programme are not completed within 12 months of commencing the theoretical element, the sampletaker should restart the eight e-learning modules with attached multiple choice questions. Following any interruption in the education programme the education provider ensures that the trainer meets the theoretical and clinical requirements.

4.5 What are the Education Provider's roles and responsibilities?

Education providers must ensure a three-yearly self-evaluation is undertaken to maintain and encourage a culture of transparency, openness and good governance within the organisation (See self-audit evaluation Appendix B).

Education providers are responsible for ensuring they have appropriately qualified and experienced staff, and must provide the training to the standard described in this document.

Educational content, teaching, assessment and evaluation methods must meet the programme education standards as outlined in this document and those of the accrediting organisation.

4.6 Education Providers must:

- Have clear governance structures and quality systems in place which meet CervicalCheck Education Standards and requirements
- Have employee and public liability insurance
- Ensure that sampletaker trainees are registered healthcare professionals and eligible to undertake the cervical screening education programme
- Check that Clinical Supervisors meet the eligibility criteria described in this guidance and are sufficiently prepared to carry out their respective roles
- Be available to support both the trainee sampletaker and/or Clinical Supervisor to clarify any issues through various methods of communication. Please see section 6.11 on what support is available for Clinical Supervisors, CRDs and Clinical Leads
- Communicate with CervicalCheck to make sure trainee sampletakers are registered on the Cervical Screening Register
- Take full responsibility for the content of their education programmes (including accuracy and relevance of theoretical content and its provision)

4.6.2 Education Providers should

- have a Policy, Procedure, Protocol, Guideline (PPPG) or Work Instruction (WI) that:
  - provides a clear process for developing, reviewing, updating and evaluating educational resources
  - details how to manage and report trainee performance
  - outlines how to respond to any training issues (action taken and/or escalation as necessary)
  - details when and how to provide feedback to trainees, Clinical Supervisors, Clinically Responsible Doctors (CRD) and teaching staff
  - describes how to store and maintain training records within the management system
  - details the induction of CervicalCheck Clinical Trainers and screening of Clinical Supervisors to ensure an appropriate level of supervision
  - outlines how to collect, evaluate and use feedback from trainees and clinical trainers
  - communicates education and training outcomes to all relevant stakeholders
- have an IT classroom management system in place, to provide e-learning and assessments
- the classroom facility to facilitate workshops and face-to-face presentations is appropriate in terms of lighting, heating, ventilation, seating etc.
- the delivery of the programme is suitable for accommodating the number of programme attendees, course format, frequency, and duration
- there are sufficient training resources (pelvic models, cervical sampling equipment) available for the trainee cohort
- course equipment is functional, safe, checked and maintained to provide training to the standards and requirements described in this document.

4.6.3 The Clinical Component

4.6.3.1 The clinical component should include at a minimum:

- A 3-hour face-to face clinical workshop*
- The Clinical trainee observing the sampletaking of at least 2 cervical samples
- Taking at least 5 cervical samples directly supervised by the Clinical Supervisor and completion of the self-assessment of competency in the cervical screening consultations assessment before starting unsupervised practice
- Completion of a Screening Test self-audit to assess cervical sample technique
- Clinical Trainers must assess the trainee using the Clinical Screening Competency Standard Assessment framework to deem competency in cervical screening (Appendix C)
- Submission of a completed Clinical Trainer workbook
- Attend a observational colposcopy visit during their cervical screening training

*The Clinical workshop must contain:

- Role modelling the cervical screening consultation –Overview of the principles of screening, benefits, harms and limitations of cervical screening
- Role modelling and sampletaking on a pelvic mannequin
- Troubleshooting practical problems when taking screening tests
- Correctly completing the cervical screening form
- Correctly completing the colposcopy referral form

4.7 Cervical Screening Education Programme – Syllabus/Indicative content for novice sampletakers

This section presents the standards and requirements for the education content in the cervical screening education programme.

Cervical sample taking is one element of a complex screening pathway. A cervical screening test is a consultation and clinical examination.

A cervical sampletaker must have the required level of knowledge and understanding of the CervicalCheck programme, and clinical skill, to safeguard the woman.

Therefore, the cervical screening education programme must contain both a theoretical and clinical component which meetings the learning outcomes of the cervical screening education programme.

A novice sampletaker is a clinician new to obtaining cervical screening samples and has never provided a cervical screening service before

The theoretical component of the cervical screening education programme is intensive, and trainees are expected to undertake some self-directed pre-course reading (appendix E).

The education programme is delivered via a blended learning model, with a combination of online resourcing and a bichronous delivery of face-to-face classroom teaching and a practical skills workshop.

This allows flexibility in completing the programme combining online aspects with in-classroom experience to allow an accessible engaging learning style.

The theoretical component must meet all of the learning outcomes of the cervical screening education programme and cover all the competencies outlined in the Clinical Screening Competency Standard Assessment and all topic areas described in this document.

4.7.1 Theoretical component must contain at a minimum

- Presentations and supporting documentation that meet the learning outcomes of the cervical screening education programme (approximately 16 hours)

4.8 Learning Outcomes of the Cervical Screening Education Programme

On successful completion of the education programme, the trainee sampletaker must be able to:

- Critically discuss the principles of screening and demonstrate their knowledge of the National Cervical Screening Programme policy
- Demonstrate their knowledge of CervicalCheck and provide information on the benefits and limitations of cervical screening in order for women to make an informed choice about participating in the screening programme
- Describe accurately the anatomy and physiology of the female reproductive organs
- Describe the epidemiology and disease processes associated with cervical cancer
- Demonstrate competence in the consultation process, being cognitive of barriers to screening in low coverage population groups and ensuring an informed consent was obtained
- Demonstrate competence in the taking of a cervical screening sample and ability to trouble shoot practical problems
- Demonstrate the ability to document the findings on history and examination and accurately completing the cervical screening form whilst ensuring informed consent
- Demonstrate the ability to correctly complete the cervical screening form ensuring all demographics and data are inputted
- Appropriate dispatch of cervical screening samples
- Interpret laboratory cervical screening test results accurately and apply screening recommendations as appropriate to each situation
- Describe accurately the consultation process needed for women in the communication of cervical screening test results and be able to give advice on the next step of their management
- Instigate appropriate onward referral to colposcopy of screen-positive women or those suspected of having cervical cancer and ensure correct use of the colposcopy referral form
- Provide evidence of failsafe procedures

4.9 Cervical Screening Education for experienced sampletakers

Experienced sampletakers may wish to complete a recognised CervicalCheck cervical screening education programme which is tailored to met the needs of an experienced sampletaker.

This programme includes:

1. The MCQs for e-learning modules
2. Completion of a Screening Test self-audit to assess cervical sample technique and a Knowledge of Cervical Screening Self-Assessment of Competency
    - Clinical Trainers must assess the trainee using the Clinical Screening Competency Standard Assessment framework to deem competency in cervical screening (Appendix C)
    - An observational colposcopy visit

This requirement would also apply to an experienced sampletaker coming from another country who wishes to register with CervicalCheck.

4.10 Assessment

The cervical screening education programme contains both theoretical and clinical summative assessments to ensure the learning outcomes of the cervical screening education programme are met. Assessments are based on a variety of strategies which are aligned to the subject area, clinical setting and expected learning outcomes and competencies.

Multiple choice questions must be completed at the end of each of the eight modules. Well written MCQs will enable the demonstration of acquired learning outcomes, through testing the acquisition and recall of facts. Trainees also have assessments in the clinical component in the form of a self-assessments, self-audit and a Clinical Trainer will conduct an assessment using the Clinical Screening Competency Standard Assessment (Appendix C) in order to deem the trainee clinical competent. This approach to assessing clinical practice promotes critical reflection and confirms readiness for professional practice to provide a quality assured cervical screening service.

4.11 Clinical and professional support for trainees

The clinical component of the Cervical Screening Education Programme is a trainee-directed responsibility and recognises the trainee as being a health professional requiring support for the acquisition of new skills.

The trainee should be familiar with the roles and responsibilities of the trainee sampletaker, Clinical Supervisor and the Clinical Trainer.

The trainee identifies learning requirements with their Clinical Trainer and ensures that they have appropriate clinical supervision with a Clinical Supervisor within their clinical environment that provides a safe and competent service for women being screened.

Trainees must have completed the Consultation in Cervical Screening Self-assessment of competency and have direct access to a Clinical Supervisor who is on site at the time they are taking cervical samples during unsupervised practice.

4.12 Responsibilities of the Trainee

The responsibilities of the trainee include:

- must maintain regular contact with their Clinical Supervisor to:
  - identify and discuss any emerging training issues or problems
  - discuss progress towards meeting identified training needs
  - review their progress throughout their unsupervised practice
  - prepare for the final cervical screening assessment
- Maintain their Trainee Workbook. It must be kept in a safe place (digital or paper copy) and used by trainees as a record and guide to their learning and be available to their Clinical Supervisor and Clinical Trainer as required
- Observe at least two full cervical screening consultations
- Complete five supervised full person-centered cervical screening consultations
- Complete the Knowledge of Cervical Screening Self-Assessment of Competency
- Demonstrate competence within practice in accordance with the learning outcomes as per theoretical component of the education programme and additional resources , Units 1-8 of the Cervical Screening Education Programme
- Maintain a screening test self -audit -The trainee must review their first 20 unsupervised cervical samples and discuss the results with their Clinical Supervisor. If the self-audit identifies any rejected samples, including those inadequate for cytology, the trainee should discuss this with the Clinical Supervisor and clinical trainer. Both parties must agree on an action plan.
- The Trainee must arrange an observational colposcopy visit if they have not had a previous colposcopy placement/visit

4.13 Who can be a Clinical Supervisor?

It is the responsibility of the Clinically Responsible Doctor (CRD) to be the Clinical Supervisor or delegate this role to another suitably qualified sampletaker. The Clinical Supervisor must be a registered general nurse/midwife or doctor who is registered as a sampletaker with CervicalCheck and is actively taking screening tests in the trainee sampletaker's clinical area or designated clinical area.

If a trainee sampletaker has no Clinical Supervisor within their clinical area, the STU will develop a learning and support plan and the CervicalCheck Clinical Trainer will assume the role of Clinical Supervisor for the period of the sampletaker's training and will role model and supervise cervical screening consultations.

To qualify as a Clinical Supervisor the nominated nurse/midwife/doctor must have completed the following educational CPD modules:

1. A certified CervicalCheck Screening Education Programme

or

2. Three e-learning modules on NSSresources.ie

4.14 Role and responsibilities of the Clinical Supervisor

The responsibilities of the Clinical Supervisor will be determined by the level of experience of the trainee sampletaker.

For novice sampletakers, the minimum supervision requires:

- The Clinical Supervisor to role-model a minimum of two cervical screening consultations and screening tests
- The Clinical Supervisor must supervise the sampletaker taking a minimum of five consultations and cervical screening tests including the consultation process to ensure informed consent has been obtained
- Assess the trainee's learning through observation and discussion and deem them competent and confident to progress to taking unsupervised screening tests
- Ensure the supervision skills worksheet is signed and complete in the clinical workbook

The Clinical Supervisor can provide indirect supervision to the sampletaker once the Clinical Supervisor deems that the sampletaker has met the competency standard set out by the CervicalCheck cervical screening education programme. At this stage, the Clinical Supervisor should advise the sampletaker to contact their Clinical Trainer to arrange a clinical assessment date.

The Clinical Supervisor must maintain responsibility for indirect supervision of the sampletaker until final sign-off by the clinical trainer and successful completion of the cervical screening education programme.

The Clinical Supervisor must be available to liaise with the Clinical Trainer throughout the education and training period.

4.15 Responsibilities of the Clinical Trainer

- Assess and tailor what support is required by the trainee sampletaker using the CervicalCheck Checklist for planning a clinical assessment support visit
- Discuss the full consultation undertaken. Check to ensure the HPV consultation self-assessment of competency is completed
- Role model best practice if needed, assess sample taking and complete the Clinical Screening Competency Standard assessment
- Devise individual learning plan if follow-up visit is required
- Offer a supportive role when quality issues are identified through monitoring of standards for quality assurance or feedback received via external feedbacks or complaints. This is managed as Training requests (TIRs) or Training interventions (TIVs)
- Supports the CervicalCheck Call Centre
- Responsible for reviewing and updating education resources and support the key priorities of the STU.

4.16 Clinical Trainer Qualifications and maintaining Competency

The clinical trainer must:

- Be a registered general nurse or midwife who is experienced at providing a quality assured cervical screening service. This should be demonstrated by taking a minimum number of 20 cervical samples per year to maintain clinical competence
- Have undertaken a recognised cervical screening education programme and have completed the three standalone modules on NSS.resources.ie
- Attend STU meetings to maintain up-to-date knowledge about the CervicalCheck programme updates
- Attend workshops and external/additional training e.g. LGBT+, women's health study days and up-to-date with on international research in the area of cervical screening
- Attend CPD webinar events on cervical screening related topics
- Read the HPV Cervical Screening newsletter.

4.17 Support available for Clinical Supervisors and CRDs/Clinical Leads

CervicalCheck is committed to supporting all personnel involved in primary cervical screening in Ireland. The programme has numerous resources to support the Clinical Supervisor including:

- E-learning modules and resources on nssresources.ie
- Educational webinars on relevant topics related to cervical screening which can be accessed on the Health Professionals section of the CervicalCheck website
- HPV cervical screening newsletter published bi-monthly with CervicalCheck programme updates
- Supporting documents such as Quality assurance (cervicalcheck.ie) aimed at sampletakers in primary care to provides a framework to assist sampletakers to deliver quality assured care
- Direct access to a Clinical Trainer who is a subject expert in cervical screening.

The Clinical Trainer has access to the:

- Primary Care Coordination team that supports the CRD/Clinical Supervisor/sampletaker throughout the screening process and can address the essential aspects of the screening pathway from a quality perspective
- Colposcopy Coordinator and Laboratory Coordinator for any queries in these areas
- Clinical Advisors in Primary Care, Colposcopy and Laboratory staff who can also support complex screening queries or concerns.

4.18 Continuing Professional Development and Competency

4.18.1 Who needs to complete clinical updates and how often?

Active sampletakers are required to complete CervicalCheck Clinical update on NSSresources every three years.

Employers have an obligation to support the sampletaker to maintain their competency by providing the opportunity for ongoing professional development. All sampletakers are responsible for ensuring competency in cervical screening is maintained.

Sampletakers must:

1. Participate in a CervicalCheck clinical update at least once every three years. There are online standalone modules available on NSSresources.ie to help to fulfil this commitment.

   In addition, sampletakers may also attend CervicalCheck webinars which can be viewed on the Health professionals (cervicalcheck.ie).

4.18.2 Sampletakers that have a break in practice/service

Sampletakers who have had an interruption in their practice for more than three years must undertake the online update training as a minimum.

They might also consider:

- Completing the Cervical Screening Education Programme for experienced sampletakers.

The STU aim to ensure equal access to uniform quality assured cervical screening education and have a responsibility for implementing the Standards and Requirements and assuring that Education Providers conduct a three yearly audit.

5. References

CervicalCheck (2020) Primary care QA Standards accessed url on the 5/5/22

https://www.cervicalcheck.ie/_fileupload/QualityAssurance/Quality%20assurance%20in%20Primary%20Care%20and%20Other%20Cervical%20Screening%20Settings.pdf

HSE (2022), *Contract with Registered Medical Practitioners for the Provision of a Primary Care Based Cervical Screening Service under the National Cervical Screening Programme,* Primary care operations

Appendices

Appendix A – Membership of the Education Advisory Group

Role and function
CervicalCheck Education Manager
Primary Care Clinical Advisor, CervicalCheck
CervicalCheck Senior Training Coordinators
Representative for STU Clinical Trainer and Sampletaker
Representative for Nursing Sampletakers
Representative for GP Sampletaker/CRD / Specialist GP Training Scheme
Representative with a background in delivering a similar kinds of nursing/midwifery education encompassing both a theoretical and clinical background
A representative from NMBI and ICGP has agreed to be an invited expert if advice is being sought
Public Representatives
Sampletaker representative with experience delivering nursing education in a Higher Education Institute (including Cervical Screening Education)
Representative from General Practice Nursing Co-ordinator
Representative that is a Specialist in Public Health Medicine
Representative that is an accredited Nurse Colposcopist, sampletaker and has experience working in Nursing Education

Appendix B – Education Providers self-audit

Education providers need to operate within a quality framework	Standard Achieved	
Education providers must:	**Yes**	**No**
Have category 1 or 2 accreditation from NMBI or CPD recognition from ICGP/RCPI		
Have a clear governance structure and quality systems which meet CervicalCheck Education Standards		
Have employee and public liability insurance		
Check that sampletaker trainees are registered healthcare professionals and are eligible to undertake the cervical screening education programme		
Be available to support both the trainee sampletaker and/or Clinical Supervisor to clarify any issues through various methods of communication		
Communicate with CervicalCheck to ensure trainee sampletakers are registered on the Cervical Screening Register (CSR)		
Check that Clinical Supervisors meet the eligibility criteria described in this guidance and are sufficiently prepared to carry out their respective roles		
Take full responsibility for the content of their education programmes (including accuracy and relevance of theoretical content and its provision)		
They have an IT classroom management system in place to provide e-learning and assessments		
The classroom facility to facilitate workshops and face-to-face presentations is appropriate in terms of lighting, heating, ventilation, seating etc.		
The teaching facility is suitable for accommodating the number of course attendees, course format, frequency, and duration		
There are sufficient training resources (pelvic models, cervical sampling equipment) available for the trainee cohort		

Course equipment is functional, safe, checked and maintained to provide training to the standard described in this guidance	**Standard Achieved**	
A PPPG is available to:	**Yes**	**No**
Provide a clear process for developing, reviewing, updating and evaluating educational resources		
Detail how to manage and report trainee performance		
Outline how to respond to any training issues (action taken and/or escalation) as necessary		
Detail when and how to provide feedback to Trainees, Clinical Supervisors, Clinically Responsible Doctors (CRD) and teaching staff		
Outline how to store and maintain training records within the management system		
Detail how to induct CervicalCheck Clinical Trainers and screen Clinical Supervisors to ensure an appropriate level of supervision		
Outline how to collect, evaluate and use feedback from Trainees and Clinical Trainers to inform subsequent training courses and future programmes (management review)		
Communicate education and training outcomes to all relevant stakeholders		

Appendix C: Clinical Screening Competency Standard Assessment

Clinical Screening Competency Standard Assessment			Trainee:		
			MCRN/NMBI Number:		
These are the Standards and associated quality criteria that need to be met in order to be deemed clinically competent in cervical screening	Standard Achieved First Visit Date:		Standard Achieved Second Visit Date:		Comment
	Yes	No	Yes	No	
Communication Skills					
Check eligibility	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Establishing rapport	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Purpose of test explained	☐	☐	☐	☐	
HPV explained	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Procedure explained	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Possible outcomes/results	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Benefits and limitations of the test	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Informed consent obtained	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Encourage woman to update own info	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Discuss call and recall	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Access documents through website	☐	☐	☐	☐	
• Guidance Notes	☐	☐	☐	☐	
• Quality Assurance Standards	☐	☐	☐	☐	
• Forms	☐	☐	☐	☐	
• Referenced Documents	☐	☐	☐	☐	
• Programme reports	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Environment/Preparation of Client					
Meeting any physical needs	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Coping with the unexpected (if applicable)	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Maintaining privacy/dignity	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Taking the screening test					
Appropriate use of lubrication	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Correct insertion and removal of speculum	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Recognition and assessment of cervix	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Sampling technique	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Sample transfer to vial	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Infection control	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Dispatch to laboratory within 3 days	☐	☐	☐	☐	

Record Keeping					
Unique identifiers clearly labelled on vial	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Accurate recording of:	☐	☐	☐	☐	
• Sampletaker Registration number	☐	☐	☐	☐	
• CRD Registration number	☐	☐	☐	☐	
• CSPID	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Correct completion of cervical screening form:	☐	☐	☐	☐	
• Tick-box data	☐	☐	☐	☐	
• Screening/Treatment history (if available)	☐	☐	☐	☐	
• Woman's signature	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Issues to consider during cervical assessment (not an exhaustive list):	☐	☐	☐	☐	
• Speculum size used and recorded if relevant	☐	☐	☐	☐	
• Position of cervix (and of woman)	☐	☐	☐	☐	
• Cervix visualised - describe appearance	☐	☐	☐	☐	
• Bleeding on contact	☐	☐	☐	☐	
• Abnormal cervical discharge	☐	☐	☐	☐	
• Physiological changes	☐	☐	☐	☐	
• Eversion/ectopy	☐	☐	☐	☐	
• Post-menopausal changes	☐	☐	☐	☐	
• Cervical anomalies	☐	☐	☐	☐	
• Any other comments	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Clearly demonstrates knowledge of practice management areas – maintains log of screening tests taken, results received, onward referral where indicated, and management of failsafe letters.	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Clear understanding of how and when to refer to colposcopy	☐	☐	☐	☐	

CervicalCheck Programme Knowledge	
This is to certify that _____ has achieved competency standard in the CervicalCheck Clinical Screening Competency Standard Assessment.	
Clinical Trainer	**Date**
Signed:	Click or tap to enter a date.

Appendix D: Checklist for planning a Clinical Assessment / Support visit

Checklist for planning a Clinical Assessment/Support Visit		
Name of Trainee:		
Course intake:		
Date of Assessment:		
Name of Clinical Trainer:		
Criteria	**Discussed/ Not discussed**	**Comment**
Check level of supervision the student has in the surgery and by whom Clinical Supervisor's Name:		
Ascertain the level of experience the student - novice or experienced		
Advise trainee to complete the Trainee Workbook • Cervical Screening Knowledge-Self Assessment • Supervision Skills Worksheet • Screening Test Self Audit		
Check familiarity with the CC and NSS resources website and advise accordingly		
Does the trainee know how to access the following? • HPV eLearning module • HPV Cervical Screening FAQs for Healthcare Professionals • Video: Explaining the HPV Cervical Screening Result • Video: Initial Consultation • Taking a quality Screening Test • Cervical Screening test: Guidelines and forms		
Discuss with the trainees • The importance of ensuring women are eligible prior to any screening appointment being booked • How to check online eligibility • Is a cervical screening log maintained? • Are they aware of the management of sample dispatch and result management within their practice?		

Advise on the number of women required for the clinical assessment/support visit and ensure CRD or clinical supervisor is present on the day of the visit.		
Check if the CRD/sampletakers and non-medical staff working in the healthcare setting require a training intervention/update session.		
Has the trainee engaged with college and fulfilled all the relevant college requirement?		
Check that the trainee knows to give the *Information Sheet on Cervical Screening* to every woman attending for a screening test.		
Is the trainee aware of how to adequately document clinical findings (consent gained, benefits, limitations and results explained, information sheet given and need to return to GP if develops gynae symptoms between screening tests, etc.)		
Trainee is aware of how to order screening supplies and information leaflets		

Appendix E – Pre-course reading

- ✓ Cervical Screening Form – Conversation Bubbles
- ✓ Cervical Screening Form
- ✓ Contact Details Quest
- ✓ Contact Details Coombe
- ✓ Cervical Screening Results and Recommendations Table
- ✓ Desktop Guide for Sample takers
- ✓ HPV Primary Screening – Eligibility Framework
- ✓ HPV Primary Screening Algorithm
- ✓ Sample Letters
- ✓ Screenlink Document
- ✓ Cervical Screening Education Programme – Clinical Trainee Workbook

An tSeirbhís Náisiúnta Scagthástála
National Screening Service

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