

# HPV CERVICAL SCREENING NEWSLETTER

Jan 2025

## Programme Updates

In February 2025 we will be sending screening invitations to women who were due to be invited in August and September 2025 on five-year recall. This is because our modelling for the next two years is showing that we can expect a significant increase in the number of women who will be due their cervical screening test in late 2025 and throughout 2026. We will let women know in their invite letter why we are offering them a test before their due date and ask that they book their test now. If you have any questions, please contact [info@cervicalcheck.ie](mailto:info@cervicalcheck.ie)

## Age extension update

Thank you for your support for our age extension initiative, issuing 107,000 invitations for a free HPV cervical screening test. The opportunity for those women to book an extra test has **now ended**, even if they received an invitation letter. We are evaluating the impact of this initiative and will communicate our findings in due course. From **17 February 2025**, CervicalCheck laboratories will reject samples from women aged over 66 years, and these will be returned to you unless there is a valid clinical reason for same.

## Cervical Cancer Prevention Week 2025

This Cervical Cancer Prevention Week (Monday 20 January – 26 January) we are highlighting how sample taker initiatives are making screening more accessible.



**CervicalCheck is for women and people with a cervix aged 25 to 65.**

[hse.ie/cervicalcheck](https://hse.ie/cervicalcheck)

**#CervicalCancerPreventionWeek**



The most effective action women aged 25 to 65 can take to prevent cervical cancer is to **#ChooseScreening** and come for follow-up appointments if advised. Women can go to any GP practice or clinic registered with CervicalCheck for their free screening test. Women do not need to be registered with a GP practice to request a screening test from them.

In addition to more than 4,000 healthcare professionals across the country providing CervicalCheck, screening is also being delivered in some of Ireland's 6 Sexual Assault Treatment Units (SATUs) and in Limerick Female Prison. Read more about the essential guide to free cervical screening in Ireland.

# How to submit samples to programme laboratory

Screening tests and associated cervical screening forms should be dispatched within three working days of taking the test. This is to prevent deterioration of samples and to avoid repeat tests and unnecessary delays for your patient. The table below may be helpful in processing of the samples. Ideally it is best to avoid samples being stored in practices over the weekend.

There is no obligation to post the sample using registered post or to use a courier. This is at your own discretion.

Samples taken on:	Latest day for dispatch	Suggested day for dispatch*
Monday	Thursday	Tuesday
Tuesday	Friday	Wednesday
Wednesday	Monday	Thursday
Thursday	Tuesday	Friday
Friday	Wednesday	Friday (pm)

\*to avoid samples being stored over the weekend

We would also like to notify sample takers in Laois and Offaly that from 06 February, cervical screening tests from these counties will be processed in the National Cervical Screening Laboratory (NCSL). There will be no change to your processing of samples but if you have any questions, please contact [info@cervicalcheck.ie](mailto:info@cervicalcheck.ie)

## Tips - failsafe (how to complete failsafe)

The clinically responsible doctor (contracted doctor) must make best efforts to encourage women to follow recommended actions. Where this has not been possible, follow-up information must be recorded and returned to the programme (online or by post) on receipt of a failsafe follow-up letter.

CSF-FREG-16 Rev 14 (BatchReference)

Doctorname

Doctoraddress1

Doctoraddress2

Doctoraddress3

Doctoraddress4

Doctoraddress5

system\_date

Follow-up--Repeat Screening Test Recommended

Dear Doctor

FullnameDOBDOB, residing atClientaddress, was recommended for a repeat screening test following the test taken at your practice onTestdate. The result of the test was: HPV result\_desc[for\_full\_desc] [ngt\_rmd\_full\_desc]. This repeat test is now overdue. Could you please advise on her current status?

Please use the CervicalCheck website to provide a secure and efficient response.

The Woman's CSPID and Doctor ID above provide the unique access.

has\_relevantcheck - Health professionals - Respond to failsafe request

Responding by post

The woman has attended for a screening test

If yes, laboratory

Test date

If no, please give the reason

The woman is pregnant

ECD

I have been in contact with the woman since the repeat screening test due date

If yes, date

If no, please give the reason

The woman's address has changed

If yes, new address

Doctor's Signature

Date

Doctor's stamp

CSF-FREG-17 Rev 10 (BatchReference)

Doctorname

Doctoraddress1

Doctoraddress2

Doctoraddress3

Doctoraddress4

Doctoraddress5

system\_date

Follow-up--Referral to Colposcopy Recommendation

Dear Doctor

FullnameDOBDOB, residing atClientaddress, was recommended for referral to colposcopy following the screening test taken at your practice onTestdate. The result of the test was: HPV result\_desc[for\_full\_desc] [ngt\_rmd\_full\_desc]. CervicalCheck has not been notified of her attendance at a colposcopy clinic. Could you please advise on her current status?

Please use the CervicalCheck website to provide a secure and efficient response.

The Woman's CSPID and Doctor ID above provide the unique access.

has\_relevantcheck - Health professionals - Respond to failsafe request

Yes, the woman has been referred to a colposcopy clinic

Colposcopy clinic

Date of referral

Additional information

If pregnant, ECD

I have been in contact with the woman for follow up

If yes, date

If no, please give the reason

The woman's address has changed

If yes, new address

Doctor's Signature

Date

Doctor's stamp

The practice must contact the woman, when required, to obtain the necessary information for completion of the failsafe. Every reasonable effort (at least two recorded efforts, one in writing) must be made.

The information received from the returned failsafes is used to update the woman's record on the cervical screening register and to ensure that she is followed up appropriately by the programme.

## New resources for sample takers

We are delighted to announce the launch of new educational resources which will support sample takers in delivering a high quality assured cervical screening service.

1. Clinical reference chart for visual inspection of the cervix: This resource is a guide for sample takers to help them identify different cervical appearances.
2. Steps to ensure the provision of a quality assured cervical screening service: An Infogram for primary care which highlights the steps needed to deliver a high-quality cervical screening service.
3. Step by Step Guide for non-primary care settings which provides clear guidance on delivering a high-quality cervical screening service in non-primary care settings such as Gynae/ GUM/SATU clinics.

### **Reminder: electronic referral between GP practice management systems and colposcopy clinics nationally**

Direct electronic referral from practice management systems to hospital colposcopy units via Healthlink is now available only for practices referring to:

- University Hospital Kerry
- North East Regional Hospital Louth
- Rotunda Hospital Dublin
- Wexford General Hospital

Please do not use paper referrals for these units only. Electronic referral can prevent delays for screening participants, ensure a robust referral process, and optimise use of resources. For all other units, please continue to use the pre-populated colposcopy referral form which is posted to you.

You must attach the cervical screening test result to the electronic referral. This information is required by the colposcopy unit to triage the referral and issue an appointment within agreed waiting times. If there is no result attached, it will cause delays in the referral process.

Electronic referral will be implemented across all colposcopy units. We will provide further updates in the coming months.

### **Vials delivered to designated laboratory without cervical screening forms**

Several test vials have been delivered to the designated laboratory without cervical screening forms over the last 3 months. Samples delivered without forms cannot be processed as it is impossible to uniquely identify a woman based on the information on the sample vial. These samples are currently held in the programme laboratory until expiry in the hope that the practice or clinic that submitted them will make contact.

Please inform staff members in your practice/clinic that they must ensure that there is a signed cervical screening form for each sample submitted to the laboratory before dispatch of the samples.

## Vial expiration

Please note the upcoming 2024 vial batch expiry dates, as follows:

Product	Lot Number	Expiry Date
Vial	3039BA	08/02/2025
Vial	3172AA	21/06/2025

These vials should be reviewed as expiry dates near. Payment will not issue for tests submitted to the programme laboratory in expired vials. Samples may also have to be destroyed and tests repeated. The vial ID sticker must be placed by the requesting sample taker on the cervical screening form.

Please also be aware that when the expiry date on the new purple Hologic vial (silver text) is covered with an addressograph label, it cannot be read. If the expiry date is obscured by a patient label, the manufacturers' lot numbers are an alternative way to confirm the expiry date. If neither the expiry date nor the lot number are visible (obscured by a label), the sample will be destroyed.

## Schedule of learning events: Jan - Jun 2025

We are continuing our lunchtime webinars into spring 2025. For more information about January - June dates and topics, please [see here](#). You can watch back on the recordings of previous webinars available [here](#).

February 2025	Speaker	Date & Time	Link to register
Clinical Information on the HPV Vaccination	Dr Eimear Hayes & Dr Alice Quinn, Senior Medical Officers, National Immunisation Office	Tuesday 25th February 2025 1-2pm	<a href="#">Click here to register</a>
March 2025	Speaker	Date & Time	Link to register
Enhancing Cervical Screening: Cervical Visual Assessment Guide" <b>CervicalCheck Clinical Update</b>	Prof Noirin Russell, CervicalCheck Clinical Director	Wednesday 12 <sup>th</sup> March 2025 1-2pm	<a href="#">Click here to register</a>
May 2025	Speaker	Date & Time	Link to register
Screening women over 50 <b>CervicalCheck Clinical Update</b>	Dr Sarah Fitzgibbon, Primary care advisor	Tuesday 13 <sup>th</sup> May 2025 1-2pm	<a href="#">Click here to register</a>
June 2025	Speaker	Date & Time	Link to register
Cervical Screening Troubleshooting: Tackling Common Challenges in Primary Care	Dr Rachael Comer Ms Laura Tobin Dr Sarah Fitzgibbon, Primary care advisor	Tuesday 10 <sup>th</sup> June 2025 1-2pm	<a href="#">Click here to register</a>

## Contact us

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### Access queries

Email: [access@cervicalcheck.ie](mailto:access@cervicalcheck.ie)



Keeping up with the latest social media trends, we have joined Bluesky, in addition to X (@NSShse) and LinkedIn. If you've joined Bluesky, make sure to follow us: @nsshse.

#choosescreening

