

HPV CERVICAL SCREENING NEWSLETTER

Nov 2025

Message from the new CervicalCheck Programme Manager

I would like to thank you and your team for your ongoing support for the CervicalCheck screening programme in 2025.

I have joined CervicalCheck after working in the HSE's National Women and Infants Health Programme for 7 years in areas including maternity, gynaecology and fertility. I am committed to bringing my experience and knowledge in the area of women's health to CervicalCheck.

I look forward to working together with you in 2026 and (if it's not too early) wish you all a healthy and happy Christmas.



CervicalCheck Programme Manager
Mary-Jo Biggs

World Cervical Cancer Elimination Day - thank you!

On 17 November, the world will mark the first official World Cervical Cancer Elimination Day. It serves as a strong reminder that cervical cancer is preventable and treatable - and can be eliminated. Ireland is on track to eliminate cervical cancer by 2040 - this is testament to the work of everyone involved in cervical screening. Thank you for the work you do every day to support women to choose screening.

We've created a toolkit for everyone involved in Ireland's effort to eliminate cervical cancer. It includes ready-to-use factsheets, social media graphics and messages, and a printable poster for your surgery. You can access the [toolkit here](#).



Impact of seasonal post

Please post your December cervical screening samples by **Friday 19 December** to ensure timely delivery.

When scheduling screening appointments, please be mindful of the extra time samples may take to reach laboratories over the festive period. Normal postage will resume from **Monday 29 December**.

CervicalCheck Screening Training Unit wins 2025 Irish Healthcare Award for “superb educational development with a positive impact”

Congratulations to our CervicalCheck Screening Training Unit (STU), which this month won the Irish Healthcare Award for Nursing and Midwifery Project of the Year. The award recognised their innovative work to build a resilient, responsive and future-focused cervical screening education model.



Results of validation exercise of registered contact holders

Over the past 18 months we have completed a validation exercise to verify the details of registered contract holders, clinics, and the sample takers operating under their governance, in Primary Care settings. We contacted approximately 1,950 registered contract holders, and have updated our records and our public list of sample takers on the website with the latest information. As a result of this work:

- 325 HPs were registered at the same practice under a different clinically responsible doctor (CRD)
- 149 HPs now registered as CRDs
- 161 HPs now in a different practice
- 316 GP registrars validated to ensure they were registered with the correct contract holder.

We've recently seen an increase in cervical screening samples submitted by unverified sample takers. This is mostly due to simple administrative issues, such as transcription errors or sample takers moving between practices without updating their details with us.

To support robust governance arrangements within the national cervical screening programme, please let the Administration Team know at admin@cervicalcheck.ie if you or any sample takers under your governance move premises, change contract holder, resign or retire.

Colposcopy appointments now available on HSE Health App

The HSE HealthApp is a secure way to get general HSE information, find health services, and keep and find your personal health information.

The App also has details of upcoming hospital appointments, including appointments at 13 of the 15 hospital clinics that provide colposcopy services for CervicalCheck. These appointments are now also being sent through the App to registered users. We will provide further updates as additional service information and further features related to cervical screening are rolled out. Find out how to download the [HSE Health App here](#).



Clinical guidance on the use of lubricants, moisturisers and vaginal oestrogen in cervical screening

We have published [new clinical guidance on the use of lubricants, moisturisers and vaginal oestrogen in cervical screening](#).

Vaginal moisturisers are recommended as first-line treatment for Genito-Urinary Syndrome of the Menopause (GSM). However, some of these moisturisers contain a substance called carbomer, which can interfere with the HPV testing process. We recommend that all carbomer-containing products are not used for at least 48 hours before taking a cervical screening test.

Some lubricants also contain carbomer and are not recommended for use during cervical screening. Please check with your pharmacist/supplier that the lubricant used in your clinic is carbomer-free. Some commonly used products such as Optilube or ComfiGel contain carbomer and should not be used for cervical screening

It is best to advise women not to use any vaginal preparations (lubricants, moisturisers or oestrogen products) for 48 hours before their test.

Some recent blogs...

Click on the links below to read some of our recent blogs:

- [Get the right care if you have symptoms that might be caused by cervical cancer](#)
- [How a chatbot could help women in underserved communities decide about cervical screening](#)



Operational updates & reminders – cervical screening

Colposcopy referral

In certain circumstances, further to a referral to colposcopy being triaged, it may be determined that it is more appropriate for the patient to be reviewed and managed elsewhere. In such circumstances, colposcopy services have been requested to make the onward referrals in parallel to informing the referring GP and patient that such an onward referral has been made.

Please note that when a referral to colposcopy is incomplete, such that it cannot be triaged, the relevant colposcopy clinic will communicate with you to provide the additional information required so as to enable acceptance of the referral.

Correct postage stamps

We have seen an increase in cervical screening sample transport boxes delivered to programme laboratories without postage stamps. The cost of posting samples to the laboratories is included in your fee per test. It is not a free post service. It is your responsibility to ensure that postage is appropriate for the size of the transport box to avoid delays and/or non-delivery of samples.

Vial labels double barrel names

Labels on sample vials document the demographic details required and must include the full name of the person attending for the test. Please ensure that the full name of the person is visible on the label and matches the name on the form. If the person has a double-barrel surname, it may be easier to write the name directly on the vial rather than affixing a label with an incomplete name.

Cost of follow up GP appointments and prescription following colposcopy discharge

If patients who has been recently discharged from a CervicalCheck colposcopy clinic have symptoms and request an appointment, please advise them that these appointments and any associated prescriptions will incur a fee.

Demographic details & change of details

The demographics details provided on cervical screening forms are used to:

- Match the test to the correct profile on the Cervical Screening Register, the secure national database, which holds the demographics details and cervical screening history of people who attend for cervical screening.
- Send the result letter to the person named at the address on the form.

For these reasons, it is essential that:

- All of the demographic details on the form are completed correctly.
- The person's address is up-to-date and complete on the form.

Approximately 35% of addresses in the Republic of Ireland are not unique so please include the person's Eircode on the form. Please ensure that the person attending for the test checks their details and their address.

Upcoming vial expiry dates

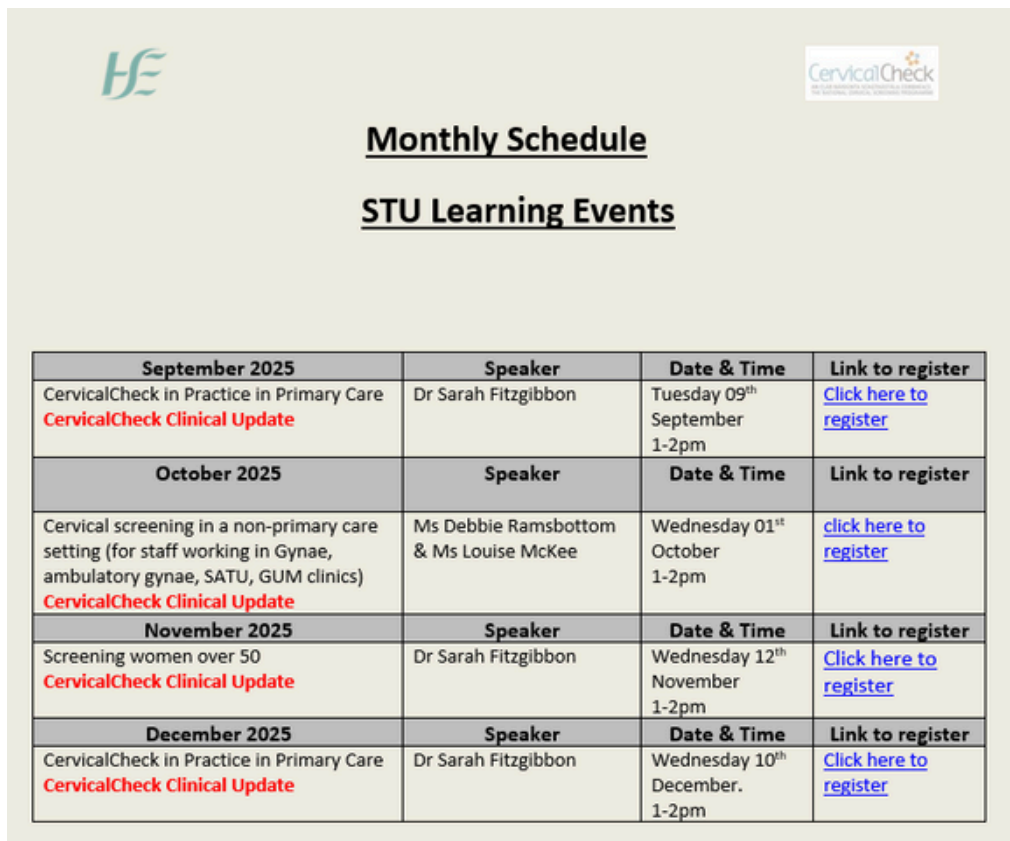
To help avoid any disruption for women and to ensure that their samples are processed smoothly, please check your stock of vials regularly, especially as expiry dates approach (see table below). Using valid vials means women can receive their results without delay, and avoids extra work for your team.

We can't pay for tests submitted in expired vials. These samples are destroyed and tests must be re-taken after 3 calendar months. Please note the upcoming 2026 vial batch expiry dates:

Product	Lot Number	Expiry Date
Vial	4045BA	14/02/2026
Vial	4109BA	18/04/2026

Schedule of learning events: Sept - Dec 2025

We are continuing our lunchtime webinars into autumn 2025. Get [more information](#) about Sept - Dec dates and topics. You can also watch recordings of [previous webinars](#).



The graphic contains the HSE logo, the CervicalCheck logo, and the title 'Monthly Schedule STU Learning Events'. Below the title is a table with the following data:

Month	Speaker	Date & Time	Link to register
September 2025 CervicalCheck in Practice in Primary Care CervicalCheck Clinical Update	Dr Sarah Fitzgibbon	Tuesday 09 th September 1-2pm	Click here to register
October 2025 Cervical screening in a non-primary care setting (for staff working in Gynae, ambulatory gynae, SATU, GUM clinics) CervicalCheck Clinical Update	Ms Debbie Ramsbottom & Ms Louise McKee	Wednesday 01 st October 1-2pm	click here to register
November 2025 Screening women over 50 CervicalCheck Clinical Update	Dr Sarah Fitzgibbon	Wednesday 12 th November 1-2pm	Click here to register
December 2025 CervicalCheck in Practice in Primary Care CervicalCheck Clinical Update	Dr Sarah Fitzgibbon	Wednesday 10 th December. 1-2pm	Click here to register

Contact us

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Primary Care Coordinator

Email: primarycarecoordinator@cervicalcheck.ie
Telephone: 061 406 547 or 061 406 567

Access queries

Email: 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

