



Primary Care & Shared Connection

Dec 2022

Cervical Screening Training & Competency

The ICB supports practices by analysing themes from Significant Events. On some occasions, themes or single events are identified that require prompt sharing to all Primary Care practices to enable learning.

Particular Interest

All Staff Practice Managers GP's Nursing AHP Clerical Other

Summary

During the pandemic, some training courses were more difficult to access. In one case, a practice nurse obtained a trainee cervical screening pin after completing cervical screening e-learning and subsequent in-house training. This was insufficient to achieve the required competency for cervical screening.

Impact

- Review of 70+ screening histories to ascertain if repeat cervical screening was required plus associated tracking and administration
- Reputational impact and experience of women who underwent screening.

Identified learning

- Smear takers, along with practice managers and clinical supervisors (nursing and medical) need to understand the training/governance around smear taking
- The training programme requirements are:
 - directed pre-course reading (approximately 3 hours)
 - initial screening (theory) learning
 - a visit to a colposcopy clinic and a cervical screening laboratory or a virtual tour and laboratory presentation (laboratory presentation must be in the theoretical course)
 - to observe the mentor taking at least 2 cervical samples
 - practical training (supervised and unsupervised clinical practice)
 - to take at least 5 cervical samples directly supervised by the mentor
 - satisfactory completion of the interim assessment before starting unsupervised practice (conducted by the mentor)
 - to take 20 acceptable cervical samples without direct supervision and no more than 25 up to the point of final assessment
 - a final clinical assessment of a minimum of 3 samples (observed by the assessor)
 - submission of the completed training record (verified by the trainee, mentor, assessor and training provider)

Suggested actions

- All relevant practice staff to familiarise themselves with training requirements (particularly mentors/assessors)
- All practices should have a cervical screening SOP which includes a robust call and recall process. NHSE have produced a good practice guide: [NHSE HLOW Cervical Practical Guide V2.pdf](#)
- Cervical cytology sample takers and administrators to have access to Open Exeter. Practices can register for open Exeter access via: [Screening Access - Primary Care Support England](#)

For further information and support contact:

- Cervical sample taker training: [Cervical screening: cervical sample taker training - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) [Education pathway - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- Cervical sample taker data base (all sample takers in your practice (including GPs) must be on here): [CSTD | Berkshire and Surrey Pathology Services \(asph.nhs.uk\)](#)
Useful resource for practices and sample takers: [Cervical Screening Programme - Berkshire & Surrey Pathology Services \(berkshireandsurreypathologyservices.nhs.uk\)](#).