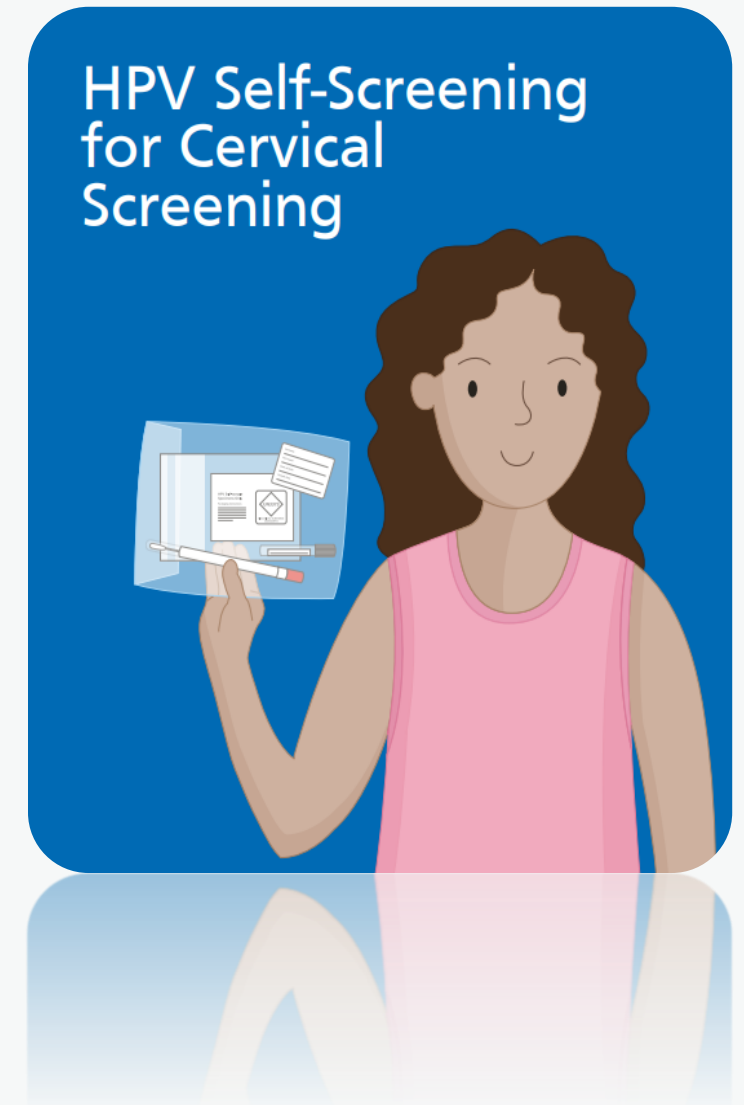


NHS London SelfScreen Opportunistic HPV Self-Sampling: Communications toolkit for primary care

Autumn 2025

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What is cervical self-screening?

The cervical self-screening test is offered to women and people with a cervix who have never, or do not regularly attend cervical screening. Individuals take their own sample from the vagina using a swab (like a long cotton bud) and this is tested for HPV which can lead to cervical cancer.

Please Note: In London, HPV cervical self-screening is offered opportunistically in primary care. HPV self-sampling will be rolled out across **England** from early 2026.

Aims

The aim of this communications toolkit is to support participating GP practices to:

- **identify and invite eligible patients** to access and utilise the London HPV cervical self-screening pathway
- **signpost patients** to communication assets to support them to make an informed decision, and safely and effectively complete a self-sample.



Cervical self-screening inclusion and exclusion criteria

Inclusion criteria for HPV cervical self-screening:

Any woman or person with a cervix at least 6 months overdue screening who is:

- registered with a London GP participating in the pathway
- aged 24.5 years to 64 years or aged 65+ and not screened since age 60; and
- who have yet to meet the criteria to be ceased from the programme.

Exclusion criteria for HPV cervical self-screening:

- has no cervix
- has had a cervical screening result in the last 3.5 years for those aged 25-49, and 5.5 years in those aged 50-64
- has been told that they need to do cervical screening again earlier than usual (early recall)
- has been told they need a further colposcopy having already had a colposcopy, or that they may need more colposcopies rather than returning to the normal screening pathway (test-of-cure pathway)
- known to be pregnant
- less than three months after giving birth
- new to cervical screening in England (to be eligible for this pathway it must be at least six months since they became eligible for cervical screening in England)
- ceased/suspended.



Identifying and inviting eligible patients

NHS London, in collaboration with Cervical Screening Management System (CSMS), have developed the following to support practices to identify eligible patients:

- **CSMS 'non responder' report:** this report contains individuals who have not responded to their most recent cervical screening invitation and are now more than 6 months overdue or have been ceased due to age but were non-responders at the time of ceasing and are still under 65 years old and so remain eligible for their final screening test.
- **EMIS* flag / clinical template:** to alert staff of patient's eligibility at point of contact.

Further details and instructions can be found in the [Primary Care Professional Guidance](#).

Communication assets

NHS London have developed the following communication assets* to enable practices to support their eligible patients to make an informed decision to participate in the pathway, and to safely and effectively take a self-sample:

- **Patient information leaflet**: a plain English guide for women and people with a cervix aged 25 to 64. This can be shared as a link or printed off in practice and given to patients to take home.
- **Patient collection instructions leaflet**: a step-by-step written instruction guide. A hard copy of this guide will be in the grab bags for patients to access.
- **Patient instruction video**: a step-by-step animated instruction video.
- **Patient communications assets poster**: a one pager, with QR codes, that can be printed off and left in clinic rooms to support clinicians to easily signpost patients to the above communications assets electronically via a smartphone/tablet.
- **A3 SelfScreen poster**: an A3 poster that can be displayed in common areas within the practice to raise the profile of the pathway and empower patients to seek further information if interested. Printed copies of this poster will be sent to participating practices via the CSL lab.

Please Note:

All patient facing assets have versions available in the following languages:

- Albanian Tosk
- Arabic
- Bengali
- Chinese Simplified
- Chinese Traditional
- Farsi
- French European
- Gujarati
- Gurmukhi (Punjabi)
- Hindi
- Polish
- Portuguese Brazilian
- Portuguese Iberian
- Romanian
- Somali
- Spanish Iberian
- Spanish Latin American
- Turkish
- Ukrainian
- Urdu Naskh

* All communication assets have alternate language versions available online via the links provided above

HPV cervical self-screening: General messages

- **There are lots of reasons why people may find going for cervical screening uncomfortable or distressing.**
- **NHS England wants to make cervical screening easier** by introducing innovations like **cervical self-screening**, alongside the current cervical screening programme, to help protect more people from cervical cancer – a highly preventable cancer.
- **If you usually come forward for your cervical screening when invited, we recommend that you continue to do so.** A sample taken by a health care professional at your GP surgery or sexual health clinic is still the best way to detect HPV and any cell changes that over time could lead to developing cervical cancer.
- We don't yet have the evidence to show that switching to self-testing from regular clinician-taken sampling is as effective at preventing cervical cancer. **But for those who would otherwise not come forward for screening at all, self-testing is the next best option.**
- In this cervical self-screening pathway, **you may be eligible for self-screening if your GP practice is participating in this initiative, and you are at least 6 months overdue your cervical screening.**
- If you are eligible, you will be offered the opportunity to self-screen when you attend your GP practice. The GP practice may also reach out to you and invite you.
- If you are eligible, you will always have the choice between self-screening or a speculum screening to be completed by a nurse or doctor. You can also request assistance to take the self-screen, if you require it. You can speak to your GP or nurse about your cervical screening options.
- **Cervical self-screening may be an easier option** for people who have never or rarely attended cervical screening. Self-screening aims to remove barriers which can stop people going for screening.
- If you usually come forward for your cervical screening when invited, we recommend that you continue to do so. A sample taken by a health care professional at your GP surgery or sexual health clinic is still the best way to detect HPV and any cell changes that over time could lead to developing cervical cancer.

Further information

To find out more about the NHS London HPV cervical self-screening for cervical screening pathway visit:

[NHS England — London » Cervical screening resources](#)



For further information or assistance please contact the NHS London Cervical Self-Screening Team via:
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