



Public Health
England



NHS England South West
The Sedgemoor Centre
Priory Road
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30 August 2018

Dear Practice Managers, NHS Trust leads for Colposcopy and GUM/CaSH services

Important Changes to Cervical Sample Taker Register

We are writing to inform you of important changes to the way Cervical Sample Taker information is to be stored and accessed. All records are being moved onto a web-based single regional database. Fundamentally this will enable you as Practice Manager/Team Manager to be able to monitor which healthcare professionals within the practice are trained sample takers and to identify which sample takers require update training so this can be completed in a timely manner. It will also allow you to mark sample takers that have left the Practice to ensure the information held is up to date and accurate. This is in line with the Commissioners Responsibilities for provision of a Cervical Sample Taker Register in [Guidance for acceptance of cervical screening samples 2017](#)

Practice/Team managers will be responsible for ensuring update training is completed in a timely manner and for uploading a relevant certificate of attendance. Failure to do this will trigger the system to send the sample taker a letter to indicate that their training has now expired and create a 'red flag' alert. Any cervical samples taken during this time may be reported as inadequate by the receiving laboratory. The system requires access via an N3 connection and for each sample taker to have an active NHS email address, because the system will automatically send a reminder letter to the sample taker 6 months prior to update training being required and again at 1 month. Failure to complete this training and/or update the database will trigger the system to send the sample taker a letter to indicate that their training has now expired and to create a 'red flag' alert. Any samples taken by a sample taker with expired training may be reported as inadequate by the receiving laboratory. As per the guidance for update training in [Guidance for training of cervical sample takers 2016](#)

The required update training will need to be completed before any further samples are taken and a certificate of attendance uploaded on the system as evidence. Where the sample taker has been out of clinical practice for a long period, additional training and/or supervision may be required and in some instances it may be necessary for a sample taker to completely retrain. It is therefore very important to ensure regular sample takers attend an update, either face to face or online, within the mandatory 3 year period. Please note the 3 yearly update is only mandatory for Nursing and other non-GMC registered sample takers. Only training that has provided by accredited cervical cytology training provider will be acceptable.

The Cytology Laboratories will have read-only access to the register, making it easier to identify sample takers and allow for codes to be more portable across the South West. This will become increasingly important as the Cervical Screening Programme moves over to HPV Primary Screening and the number of laboratories providing cervical screening is reduced in line with the national programme changes.

The changes to the register will be rolled out as a phased approach, with all sample takers working in the South West, including BANES, Bristol, Cornwall, Devon, Gloucestershire, North Somerset, Somerset, South Gloucestershire, Swindon and Wiltshire being included before the end of 2018.

The NHS England Commissioning Team, South West along with the software provider – South Central & West Commissioning Support Unit (CSU), will retain overall oversight of the system, which is GDPR compliant.

Once all the data has been migrated and we are happy with the system's functionality, Practice Managers (or a delegated responsible practice staff member) will be invited to undertake an initial validation of the information held for the practice. There will be a period of 4 weeks allocated to allow practices to undertake this validation.

We envisage this new system will make everyone's lives easier, and provide better outcomes for the women being screened, by ensuring that all cervical sample takers are appropriately trained and that all have an individual sample taker code to reduce the number of samples being reported as inadequate by the laboratories.

Yours sincerely,



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