Cancer Alliance Funding opportunity – Increasing uptake of Cervical Screening

Cervical screening saves around 5,000 lives each year yet uptake by eligible women across England has steadily declined and is currently at an all-time low. The South West Cancer Alliances are working with Public Health England and NHS England to reverse this trend and improve the current uptake to protect the health of local women. The average uptake in the South West is 63.6% against a target of >80% thus increasing local uptake is a key priority.

We know many practices are trying their hardest to improve uptake, but there are competing demands upon your resources and financial barriers can inhibit improvement initiatives. NHS England offered an Innovation Fund to encourage and improve MMR uptake in 2018/19 in the far South West, which showed that offering small grants to local practices to focus on a specific initiative led to substantial and sustainable improvements in uptake. The offer is now available for improvement initiatives targeting cervical screening uptake.

All practices across the South West are eligible to apply to the Cervical Screening Innovation Fund to increase the uptake of cervical screening in women aged 25 to 64. Bids are available up to a maximum of £5,000 per practice on a one off non-recurring basis. Practices are asked to consider their current uptake and submit a proposal for how they would plan to achieve an increasing trajectory towards meeting or exceeding the target of 80% across the 2019/20 financial year. The funds are non-recurring thus monies should be used to ensure that any change in practice is sustainable in the long term. Examples of evidence-based practice which supports increased uptake includes:

- Personal contact from an individual in the practice to discuss any concerns and make an appointment
- Personal invites by letter from a named GP within the practice
- Offering out of hours screening appointments
- Sending text message reminders
- Online booking of appointments
- Providing screening in settings that suit people going about their everyday work (e.g. closer to work, large employers)
- Campaigns to increase awareness

Personal contact from an individual in the practice and extended hours proved to be the two most effective solutions in the recent MMR projects.

Further information on good practice and ideas can be found here:

https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/health-professional/screening/evidence-on-increasing-cervical-screening-uptake


NHS England and NHS Improvement
Proposals should be submitted by close of play on **Friday, 12th July 2019** using the attached proforma. All bids will be evaluated by a panel to include the NHS England Public Health Commissioning Team, Public Health England and a representative from each of the South West Cancer Alliances. Please complete the attached form and send to england.swscreeningandimmns@nhs.net.

If you would like assistance in identifying your practices current uptake or to discuss potential ideas, please let us know by emailing the address shown above. The total Innovation Fund available is at least £175,000, should we receive more bids than there are funds, the panel will prioritise allocation based upon practice uptake and value for money.

We look forward to receiving your bid.

Yours sincerely

Dr Sadaf Haque,  
Cancer Clinical Lead,  
Somerset, Wiltshire  
Avon & Gloucestershire Cancer Alliance

Joe Mays,  
Cancer Clinical Lead,  
Peninsula Cancer Alliance

Julie Yates,  
Lead Consultant for Screening & Immunisation – South West,  
Public Health England

NHS England and NHS Improvement