

# Top Tips for Healthcare Professionals

Improving access to cervical screening for patients with learning disabilities



South West Collaborative Commissioning Hub

- ✓ **Promote**
  - Offer a pre-screening call between patient and sample taker or trusted point of contact in your surgery (you could offer for an advocate to be involved too)
  - Promote screening at the annual health check
  - Consider health promotion materials for the waiting room (posters, TV screens, etc.)
- ✓ **Familiarise**
  - Offer a visit in advance to see the room, view equipment and meet the sample taker
  - Discuss any reasonable adjustments, if appropriate
- ✓ **Adjust**
  - Offer for the patient to be accompanied by a family member, friend or support worker and clarify their role (do they want them in the room during the test or not?)
  - Consider other reasonable adjustments (listening to music, using headphones, etc.)
  - Offer double appointments or extended access for working patients and/or advocates
- ✓ **Record**
  - Record what worked to help the patient have their sample taken so that it can be repeated at the next screening appointment
  - Add this information to the reasonable adjustments digital flag

**Consider how best to communicate with your patient to meet their communication needs, using appropriate supporting information**

## Leaflets:

[Easy read invitation letter](#),  
[Easy read leaflet](#),  
[Translated leaflets](#)

## Videos:

[English](#), [Urdu](#),  
[Punjabi](#), [Polish](#),  
[British Sign Language](#)

## Template text:

You are due a cervical screening test. This video and leaflet explain what this is:

[\[insert links here\]](#)

Please contact our surgery for an appointment. If you want to speak to the person doing the test before your appointment, let us know.

You can bring a friend, relative or carer to and into the appointment. You can have a longer appointment.

We look forward to seeing you soon.

**Consider contacting the community learning disability team for extra support or advice**

These tips are based on national and regional guidance, feedback from primary care teams involved in projects across the South West to improve screening uptake, and insights from local learning disability leads

**Information is correct as of April 2026**

**Sources:** 1.Cornwall Screening Liaison Nurse Team for Adults with Learning Disabilities & NHSE South West Vaccination & Screening Team [Cervical Screening in Primary Care: Supporting People with Learning Disabilities](#) 2.Gov.uk [Cervical screening: information leaflets](#). 3.NHS South West [Cervical Screening, YouTube playlist](#). 4.West Yorkshire Health & Care Partnership [West Yorkshire and Harrogate Cancer Alliance, YouTube playlist](#)