

# NHS Cervical Screening Programme

## HPV Sentinel Sites Implementation Project

### Cervical Cancer

- Over 2,200 women were diagnosed with cervical cancer in England in 2004
- Cervical cancer causes over 1000 deaths each year in the UK
- The twelfth most common cancer in women in the UK and the second most common cancer in women younger than 35

### The Cervical Screening Programme

- Aims to reduce the number of women who develop invasive cervical cancer and the number of women who die from it
- Saves approximately 4,500 lives per year in England
- Prevents up to 3,900 cases of cervical cancer per year in the UK
- Screens almost 3.5 million women in England each year
- Eligible population: all women between the ages of 25 and 64
- Screening is offered every 3 or 5 years depending on age

### HPV

- There are approximately 100 subtypes of HPV (human papilloma virus)
- Certain subtypes (high risk) are known to cause cervical cancer e.g. types 16 and 18
- HPV infection is common and in most cases transient
- Infection persists in approximately 20 to 30% of women putting them at risk of cervical intraepithelial neoplasia (CIN) and in some cases cervical cancer

### HPV Test

- Performed on the sample of cells taken at the screening appointment
- Results sent with the cytology report, including management recommendations

### HPV Triage

- Women with mild or borderline test results who have no evidence of high risk HPV infection are very unlikely to develop cervical cancer
- HPV testing women with mild or borderline test results can speed up referral to colposcopy and avoid referral when HPV is not found

See overleaf >>

## HPV Test of Cure

- Follow up of women treated for CIN currently involves annual screening for 10 years
- Women found to be HPV negative at six months following treatment and who also have no abnormal cells found in their sample can return to a three year recall period

## Sentinel Sites

- Six cytology laboratories introducing HPV triage of borderline and mild test results and HPV test of cure
- Building upon experience gained in previous NHS pilot studies

## Key issues for women to understand

- HPV is a very common infection amongst people who have ever been sexually active
- The virus is asymptomatic
- The infection may have been present and undetected for many years
- A male partner may have acquired the infection many years ago and passed it on unwittingly
- A positive HPV test should not imply infidelity or promiscuity by either partner

## Useful information

- 'HPV testing for women with a cervical screening result of borderline or mild dyskaryosis' factsheet for women (included). Also available in a number of foreign languages from the NHS Cancer Screening Programmes website, [www.cancerscreening.nhs.uk](http://www.cancerscreening.nhs.uk)
- 'HPV testing for women following treatment for CIN' factsheet for women (included)
- 'HPV triage of borderline and mild dyskaryosis and HPV test of cure' factsheet for sample takers (included)
- 'Frequently asked questions: Human Papilloma Virus' (included)
- 'HPV Triage and Test of Cure Protocol' (included)

## For more information

- Visit the NHS Cancer Screening Programmes website at [www.cancerscreening.nhs.uk](http://www.cancerscreening.nhs.uk)
- Visit the Cancerbackup website at [www.cancerbackup.org.uk](http://www.cancerbackup.org.uk) or call **0808 800 1234**