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TWO NEW VIDEOS ON THE NORTHERN IRELAND CANCER SCREENING WEBSITE!

What happens at Breast Screening? and, What happens at Cervical Screening?

Two new videos that show women what to expect when they attend for breast screening and for cervical screening have been produced by the Public Health Agency and are now available to view on the Northern Ireland Cancer Screening Programmes website at www.cancerscreening.hscni.net Each video lasts approximately 5 minutes and aims to demystify screening.

The videos are aimed at women who are attending for the first time or who have never attended for screening before. For breast screening uptake is lower in the 50 to 53 age group and for cervical in the 25 to 29 age group.

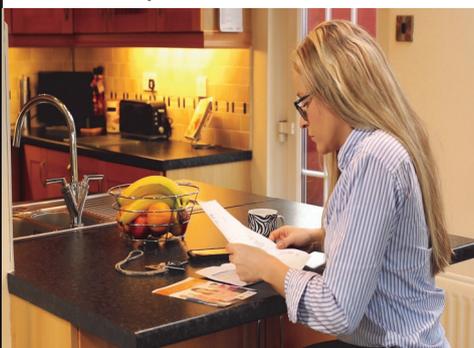
The breast screening video was publicly launched for Breast Cancer Awareness month in October 2014. The cervical screening video will be formally launched to coincide with Cervical Cancer Prevention week on 25th-31st January 2015.

Both videos cover the complete screening journey. The breast screening video shows a woman receiving her invitation, attending one of the 7 new digital mobiles for her mammogram, the mammogram being read, receiving her results and attending the assessment clinic.

The cervical screening video shows a woman receiving her invitation, attending her GP practice for the smear test, the sample being processed in the laboratory, receiving her results and attending the colposcopy clinic.

It is hoped the videos will not only promote informed choice but also reassure women who are called back for further tests or treatment.

Both videos are available in British sign language, Irish sign language and with subtitles.



We would encourage all GP practices to include a link on their own website to the Northern Ireland Cancer Screening Programmes website **and/or** direct links to the videos, as it contains very useful information on the three cancer screening programmes.

<http://www.cancerscreening.hscni.net>

Surveillance Screening for Women at Higher Risk of Breast Cancer

This programme for women, provided regionally at Antrim Hospital, has been running for over a year now.

In order to be eligible for the programme women must have a specific genetic mutation (BRCA1, BRCA2, TP53 or Ataxia Telangiectasia) or have had supradiaphragmatic radiotherapy before the age of 30 (usually for Hodgkin's disease). Most women will be offered surveillance screening annually. Women are offered mammography, MRI, or both; depending on their age and the reason for their higher risk. MRI is better in younger women and mammography better in older women.

QARC would like to express its sincere thanks to all the GP practices and GPs in Northern Ireland who provided us with information on women at higher risk. This has allowed us, in collaboration with Trusts and others, to identify over 500 women at higher risk in Northern Ireland. All of these women will be invited during 2014/15.

As from 1 April 2014 new referrals into the service will only be accepted, by the Breast Screening Unit in Antrim Area Hospital, from the following groups of secondary care clinicians:

1. Consultant geneticists;
2. Consultant oncologists;
3. Associate specialists with responsibility for providing breast cancer family history clinics; and
4. Consultant breast surgeons.



If primary care clinicians are aware of women who may be eligible, they should refer such women to an appropriate secondary care clinic.

However, QARC staff are happy to discuss any queries that GPs may have about potentially eligible women and they can be contacted on (02890)-279-381 or by emailing claire.armstrong@hscni.net or adrian.mairs@hscni.net.

The new referral protocol and referral form (which must be completed by the referring clinician) can be found at <http://www.cancerscreening.hscni.net/2159.htm>.

Dr Adrian Mairs, Quality Assurance Director, NI Breast Screening Programme

Northern Health and Social Care Trust, Antrim Area Hospital, Breast Screening Unit Inspection

On 29th April 2014, the Northern Health and Social Care Trust, Antrim Area Hospital, Breast Screening Unit had an inspection of Compliance With the Ionising Radiation (Medical Exposure) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2000 and the Ionising Radiation (Medical Exposure) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010, carried out by the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority.

The inspection was a resounding success. It was the first time an RQIA report had no requirements or recommendations to make as a result of the inspection.

The Inspection team commended the staff and management of the unit for their commitment and enthusiasm to ensuring that NHSCT Breast Screening Unit is operating a breast screening programme within the legislative framework and maintaining optimal standards of practice for patients. The Inspection Team also acknowledged the excellent standard of Employer's procedures and supporting documentation that had been developed and suggested this be shared with other screening units as an element of good practice.

Carol McConkey, Superintendant Radiographer, Northern HSC Trust



BSO Regional cervical screening office have a new number
(028) 95-363-788



CERVICAL SCREENING PROGRAMME CALL/RECALL

Work is almost complete to ensure that all GP practices in Northern Ireland are fully signed up to the regional cervical screening call/recall system. Only seven GPs remain outside the system and these will be followed up in the coming weeks.

Once a GP is opted into the system, the BSO regional call/recall office sends out invitation and reminder letters to all women on routine recall, with the practice only having to send out a final (3rd) reminder to non-responders in order to meet their requirements for QOF.

The system is electronically linked to the cytology laboratories and next test due dates are set automatically.

The regional system provides an important failsafe role to ensure that no woman is missed from screening invitations. Practices have the opportunity to check and update who should be invited by accurately completing the Prior Notification Lists (PNLs) which are issued to them by BSO.

What is a Prior Notification list? (PNL)

- A PNL is a list of women due to be called for a cervical smear test in the next 3 months.
- PNL's are sent out by BSO Call/Recall office in DX bags to practices on a monthly basis.
- PNL pages with endorsements must be returned within one month.
Note There is no need to send back the full PNL
- Ensure any amendments to the PNL are signed off by either a GP or Practice Nurse before sending back to BSO
- The completed PNL pages with amendments must be returned to BSO Call/Recall office intact (*do not cut the sheets up into small pieces*) as pages with amendments have to be scanned.



A short guide for primary care practices on call/recall processes is available on our website at www.cancerscreening.hscni.net/2163.htm. Any queries on the regional call/recall system should be directed to Mrs. Maura Wilson, Screening Manager, BSO on (028) 95-363-788 or at maura.wilson@hscni.net.

Dr Tracy Owen, Quality Assurance Director, NI Cervical Screening Programme

Cervical Cancer Prevention Week, 25 - 31 January 2015

The 9th Cervical Cancer Prevention Week will take place on 25th-31st January 2015. Established by the European Cervical Cancer Association, the event aims to raise awareness of cervical cancer and how it can be prevented among the public, health professionals and political leaders. There is a particular focus on screening and HPV vaccination. The PHA will be launching its new patient information video during this week.



The video can be found at www.cancerscreening.hscni.net/2179.htm

If you want ideas or resources to raise awareness locally you can visit www.jostrust.org.uk

Reminder – using lubricants during cervical cytology sample collection

The cytology labs are once again reporting an apparent increase in the use of lubricants during sample collection.

Excessive use of lubricant can contaminate the sample and result in an inadequate cytology result being issued.

- Avoid using any lubricants if possible.
- If lubrication of the speculum is required, a little warm water or a small amount of a water-soluble lubricant, such as PELI Jelly should be used.
- Care should be taken not to place lubricant at the tip of the speculum.



Lubricants containing carbomer or carbopol polymers should never be used.

7 NEW BREAST SCREENING MOBILES UNITS “TAKE TO THE ROAD”

The Northern Ireland Breast Screening Programme has gone digital!



The service was recently enhanced by the launch of 7 new digital mobile screening units. These mobile units will bring digital mammography services to a wider range of locations across Northern Ireland including rural communities. The Minister for Health, Mr. Jim Wells, visited a unit at Lurgan Hospital on 15 December 2014. Here he met with QARC and Radiographers that deliver the service to the women of Southern Health & Social Care Trust Area.



Nicola Kelly, Project Manager

SMEAR TAKER PIN CODES

QOF Indicator CS004. The contractor has a policy for auditing its cervical screening service and performs an audit of inadequate cervical smears in relation to individual smear-takers at least every 2 years.

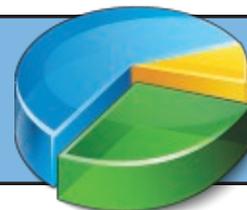
The Primary Care Advisory Group of the NI Cervical Screening Programme has been working with the cytology labs and the PHA to pilot the use of unique smear taker identifiers within the programme. Capturing accurate information on the lab request form about who actually performs the smear test, will allow us to provide practices with a breakdown of activity and performance for each member of staff and assist with auditing their inadequate smears, as required under QOF Indicator CS004.

The pilot involved four participating practices where each smear taker used a unique PIN code (NMC number for nurses) on the request form. The 100 samples have been successfully tracked through the laboratory and call/recall IT systems to ensure that the unique identifier can be traced at each stage and a summary report of performance produced for the practice.

It is hoped that we will shortly be able to move forward to introduce smear taker PIN codes on a phased basis across NI – each smear taker will need to have their PIN code pre-installed into LabCentre before they can start using this function. Once operational, practices will receive an annual audit report of cervical smears taken within their practice, including inadequate rates by individual smear taker.

Dr Tracy Owen, Quality Assurance Director, NI Cervical Screening Programme

Coming Soon: Report on Uptake/Coverage of the Breast, Bowel and Cervical Screening Programmes for your GP Practice



The Quality Assurance Reference Centre (QARC), PHA is planning to introduce a report to each practice that will show individual uptake figures for the Breast and Bowel Cancer Screening Programmes and coverage for the Cervical Screening Programme. Data will be provided at Trust and regional level to allow you to review uptake compared with your peers.

This data will be provided for information only. However, the QARC would be happy to have a consultation with the practice to discuss promoting informed choice and accessibility to the three cancer screening programmes.

A report will be issued to GP practices in Belfast as a pilot in the New Year. QARC plans to issue reports to all GP practices later in 2015.

Colin McMullan, Screening Programmes Manager

Bowel Screening Teaser Letters

QARC has undertaken a pilot of “teaser letters” as part of the bowel screening invitation process for some participants. A teaser letter was issued to all people in the Belfast and Southern Trust areas who were due to receive their screening invitation in February 2014. The teaser letter was issued two weeks in advance of the screening invitation and advised that the test kit will be with them soon and encouraged them to complete and return it. The letter also gave a brief outline of the screening process and advised of the incidence of bowel cancer in Northern Ireland and how it can be treated if detected early.

Initial analysis of uptake in the Belfast and Southern Trust was positive. Uptake in February 2014 was 55.4% for Belfast Trust, and 51% for the Southern Trust. This compares to 46.5% and 47.2% respectively for the same period in 2013.

It is not possible to conclude that the increase in uptake was solely down to the teaser letters. Other initiatives to improve uptake of bowel screening were on-going at the time, for example the media campaign and also local promotional initiatives in Belfast. The teaser letters did, however, undoubtedly have an impact. A second pilot is being run for participants in the Belfast and Southern Trust localities who received their screening invitations in November 2014. There is no media campaign running at present so the pilot will give a clearer indication of the impact of teaser letters.

Colin McMullan, Screening Programmes Manager

CERVICAL SCREENING DATA VISITS 2013-2014



Visits are underway to the four Northern Ireland Cervical Cytology laboratories to look at statistical data gathered during the financial year 2013-2014. The information when compiled will form part of the Northern Ireland Annual Statistical report 2013-2014.

Data visits are also in progress, to look at the first set of colposcopy data. The visits will cover data at Regional, Trust and individual clinic levels.

It should be noted that colposcopy data for 2013-2014 is incomplete, as not all Trusts participated for the complete year. However all Trusts are now able to supply performance and quality data to the system, and able to produce quarterly reports.

Kenneth McInnes, NI QARC Information Officer

Bowel Screening Focus Groups

QARC is looking at ways to promote informed choice of screening programmes with a view to increase uptake. In February 2014 a series of Focus Groups were held with people who had been offered bowel screening but declined to take part. Three groups were held, two in Belfast and one in Armagh. Two of the groups were with males and one was with females. This reflected the areas and demographics of bowel screening uptake as it is lowest in the Belfast and Southern Trust areas and lower amongst males than females. Discussion was along the following themes:

- Knowledge of prevalence of cancer
- Knowledge of bowel cancer
- Attitudes towards screening
- Awareness of screening for bowel cancer
- Reasons for non-participation in the bowel screening programme
- Encouraging participation in screening

A lot of valuable information was received from the participants. Some of it was confirmation of expected reasons for not participating in screening, for example:

- Because of the nature of the test
- Fear of cancer and not wanting to know
- They felt healthy and so had no reason to do the test

Other reasons for non-participation were given that offered new insights to QARC for planning promotion of screening and other interventions to improve uptake. Key findings included:

- Lack of knowledge of the prevalence of bowel cancer
- Limited knowledge of the success rate of treatment
- Surprise that over 50% of participants were completing the test because no-one ever spoke about it
- Lack of understanding of how to complete the test
- Unsure if the invitation was from a trusted source
- More likely to respond if the invitation was from their GP
- Media campaign would be helpful to promote the programme

The information received was very useful and has informed future planning of promotional events and review of the patient information leaflets. QARC is going to facilitate Focus Groups for Cervical and Breast Cancer later in 2014. This time groups will be held with attenders of screening as well as non-attenders.

Colin McMullan, Screening Programmes Manager

Colposcopy Conference Friday 24th April 2015

The 2015 Cervical Screening Colposcopy conference will be hosted by the Western Health & Social Care Trust. The meeting is earmarked for South West Acute Hospital in Enniskillen. Please make a note in your diary!

Produced by QARC for Health Professionals in NI Cancer Screening Programmes

Winter 2014

If you would like to submit a news item, or would like to publish the results of an audit in **Screening Matters**, please contact Ken McInnes on 02890 311611 or write to Public Health Agency QARC, Ormeau Baths Office, 18 Ormeau Avenue, Belfast BT2 8HS. For further information and back issues, please visit our website at: www.cancerscreening.hscni.net.

 Public Health Agency



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