

PE2088/C: Help eliminate cervical cancer through improved and at home HPV testing

Scottish Government written submission, 12 July 2024

As previously advised, the Scottish Government, along with the other UK Nations, relies on advice from the UK National Screening Committee (UK NSC), an independent expert advisory group which informs decisions taken across the UK on screening programmes. The UK NSC is expected to make a recommendation on the use of self-sampling within the cervical screening programme later this year, or early in 2025.

The working group that was established as part of the scoping work for a business case for cervical self-sampling stands ready to resume this work upon a positive recommendation from the UK NSC.

The Scottish Government remains committed to reducing inequalities in both access to and uptake of all of the national screening programmes, including cervical screening, and acknowledges that more work is required to improve in these areas. As part of this work, we commit £1 million annually to tackle inequalities within the cancer screening programmes, and in July 2023, published the Scottish Equity in Screening Strategy with Screening Oversight and Assurance Scotland, providing direction and focus to tackling screening inequalities.

Further to this, we continue to explore other avenues alongside self-sampling, that may improve uptake of the cervical screening programme, including the consideration of better use of digital technology or more personalised communications with eligible participants.

Public Health Capabilities