

10 Tips to Improve Cervical Screening Uptake in General Practice

<p>1. Send personalised 3rd letter for 'non-responders'</p> <p><i>Sending a personalised letter from the practice to women who have not responded to the two invites from the call/recall office can encourage attendance and also is a requirement before exception reporting for QOF.</i></p>	<p>2. Support for women with learning and physical disabilities</p> <p><i>Cross check PNL with practice register to identify women who may need additional support to attend for their screening. Additional support can be given to practices for women with LD from the Community Learning Disability Teams.</i></p>
<p>3. Screen Prompts and Alerts</p> <p><i>Adding an alert to the patient record enables medical and nursing staff to discuss further when women attend for other reasons. E.g. appt for contraception, post-natal checks, medicine reviews, annual health checks. Have reminder letters on reception giving them out when the woman attends the surgery. This avoids embarrassment from being overheard.</i></p>	<p>4. Offering screening when women who are overdue for their smear present for any reason, i.e. opportunistic screening</p> <p><i>Regularly check non-attenders and follow up with telephone calls offering advice and support or the opportunity to come to the surgery to discuss the procedure further and reduce any fears or embarrassment</i></p>
<p>5. Text message reminders</p> <p><i>Consider sending text message reminders a day before the appointment.</i></p>	<p>6. Promotion</p> <p><i>Have a practice campaign. Promotional materials can be sourced from Jo's Trust, MacMillan or NHSCSP free of charge for GP practices.</i></p>
<p>7. Data Cleansing</p> <p><i>Regular list validation and list 'cleansing' to ensure removal of 'ghost' patients.</i></p>	<p>8. Audit & Evaluate your service</p> <p><i>Previous experience is important when women are deciding whether to make an appointment. They will also tell their family and friends if their experience was negative.</i></p>
<p>9. Access</p> <p><i>Providing a variety of appointment times during the day and in the evening provides more flexibility for woman. Make sure appointments are not made too far in advance as they are more likely to forget.</i></p>	<p>10. Pre – appointments</p> <p><i>Offer women who have never been screened an obligation-free pre- smear appointment to discuss the procedure and answer any questions or concerns.</i></p>