

Scottish Government submission of 2 April 2024

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

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 recognises the potential benefits of self-sampling but have concluded that there is currently insufficient evidence to recommend implementation. Studies are underway to gather further evidence as well as work to assess and validate a test for HPV self-sampling in the UK, which is expected to conclude this Spring.

Despite this, the Scottish Government acknowledges the potential self-sampling has to increase uptake levels and reduce barriers to cervical screening. A working group has been convened to assess potential models and understand any required changes to the screening programme to support an initial roll-out. This work is being informed by the emerging evidence from UK and global research, including the study undertaken in Dumfries and Galloway which provided self-sampling test kits to women between 25 and 64 who had not taken up the offer of attending for cervical screening. The results of this study showed the potential benefits of self-sampling, but also underlined the need to carefully consider how any eventual roll-out is targeted.

The UK NSC is expected to review the recommendation for cervical screening this year, including self-sampling. Should a recommendation be forthcoming to introduce HPV self-sampling then the Scottish Screening Committee will advise Scottish Ministers on how to take that recommendation forward. Further information can be found at [Cervical cancer - UK National Screening Committee \(UK NSC\) - GOV.UK \(view-health-screening-recommendations.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/view-health-screening-recommendations.service.gov.uk)

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