



Screening: cervical screening (25 to 49 years)

NICE indicator

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www.nice.org.uk/indicators/ind176

Indicator

The proportion of patients eligible for cervical screening and aged 25 to 49 years at end of period reported whose notes record that an adequate cervical screening test has been performed in the previous 3.5 years.

Indicator type

General practice indicator suitable for use in the Quality and Outcomes Framework.

This document does not represent formal NICE guidance. For a full list of NICE indicators, see our [menu of indicators](#)

To find out how to use indicators and how we develop them, see our [NICE indicator process guide](#)

Rationale

A cervical screening test is a way of detecting abnormal cells on the cervix. Detecting and removing abnormal cervical cells can prevent cervical cancer. Cervical screening aims to reduce the number of people who develop cervical cancer and the number who die from it. Cervical cancer often has no symptoms in its early stages. In 2015 to 2017 there were approximately 3200 new cases in the UK every year (see [Cancer Research cervical cancer statistics 2017](#)), and around 24% of cervical cancer cases are detected by screening (see the [National Cancer Intelligence Network's Routes to diagnosis 2015](#)). Target uptake is 80% national coverage. The first invitation for cervical screening is sent when an individual reaches 24.5 years of age. People are recalled every 3 years until they turn 50 when the recall interval changes to every 5 years. This indicator aims to improve uptake of cervical screening and ensure it is performed at the appropriate intervals according to a person's age.

Source guidance

[NHS population screening: reporting data definitions. Public Health England \(2020\)](#)

[Cervical screening standards valid for data collected from 1 April 2018. Public Health England \(2019\)](#)

Specification

Numerator: The number of patients in the denominator whose notes record that an adequate cervical screening test has been performed in the preceding 3.5 years.

Denominator: The number of patients eligible for cervical screening aged 25 to 49 years.

Calculation: Numerator divided by the denominator, multiplied by 100.

Exclusions: Patients without a cervix. Patients who have not responded to three invitations to screening.

Minimum population: The indicator would be appropriate to assess performance at individual general practice level.

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