

# Reviewing your Cervical Screening History

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## Introduction

We realise this is a difficult time for you and would like to offer as much support as possible. With that in mind, this leaflet has been created to provide important information about how we will be reviewing your screening history, following your cervical cancer diagnosis.

Cervical screening reduces the risk of developing cervical cancer. The process involves many different steps, all of which contribute to identifying and treating abnormal cells on the cervix. Even if all the steps have been followed correctly, a cervical cancer may still develop. However, reviewing your previous test will help identify if anything could have been done differently.

When we review your cervical screening history, we will check all previous medical investigations and test relating to cervical screening.

## What does the review involve?

We review all records connected to your screening invitations, results letters, and any previous medical investigations related to cervical screening. A group of professionals then revisit your previous tests and relevant medical notes, to ensure our screening history meets national guidance requirements.

## What will the review show?

In most cases, the review will show that the correct procedures have been followed and that you received appropriate care. Occasionally the review may find that one-or-more steps in the process have not worked as well as they should, and in doing so will highlight where improvements could be made. It should be emphasized that even if areas for improvement are identified, it does not mean that the screening was undertaken improperly.

## What happens if I want to know the results of the review?

If you want to know the results of the review, you should fill in the attached form and return it to the highlighted address.

Your hospital clinician will let you know when the outcome is available. They will then arrange to discuss the results with you.



### **What happens if I do not want to know the results of the review?**

It is completely up to you to decide whether or not you want to know the results of the review. It will not make any difference to your care.

### **What happens if I do not want to know the results of the review now, but change my mind later?**

We understand that this is a difficult time and you may not want to receive the results of the review at this time. If you later decide that you do want to know the results, please contact your hospital clinician via their secretary, who will arrange the appropriate meetings.

### **Can my family ask for the results if I do not want to know?**

Yes, but only with your written consent. Without this, we cannot give your relatives access to any details of your medical records or history.

### **Could my cancer have been found earlier?**

In most cases, the cancer will have been detected at the earliest possible stage. Yet whilst cervical screening prevents a high percentage of cervical cancers (about 75%), it cannot prevent them all.

The reason for this is that screening cannot always identify abnormal cells on a cervical-sample slide, as the person may not recognize the abnormal cells. This may happen even if they are very experienced because:

- sometimes the cells look very similar to normal cells
- there may be very few abnormal cells on the slides.

**Colposcopy** (a visual examination of the cervix) cannot always identify abnormal areas of the cervix because:

- the abnormal area might not be visible during the examination
- the abnormal area might not be taken as a sample in a biopsy
- the abnormal cells might be hidden higher up inside the cervix
- some types of abnormality are simply not easy to identify at a Colposcopy.

### **What happens to the information collected for my review?**

We collect screening information as part of an ongoing process. Your anonymised information goes towards improving the systems of the programme, by helping us discover more about how cancers develop and how they are diagnosed and treated.

## **Why should women attend for cervical screening if abnormalities are missed?**

Cervical screening substantially reduces the risk of developing cervical cancer. The cervical screening programme is estimated to save 4500 lives a year nationally and regular screening is the best way to detect early changes to the cervix.

### **More Information**

If you have any more questions about your referral or treatment please contact the colposcopy administration team on: **01302 642198**.

### **Patient Advice and Liaison Service**

The team are available to help with any concerns/complaints you may have about your experience at the Trust. Their office is in the Main Foyer (Gate 4) of Doncaster Royal Infirmary. Contact can be made either in person, by telephone or email.

### **The contact details are:**

Telephone: 01302 642764 or 0800 028 8059. Email: [dbth.pals.dbh@nhs.net](mailto:dbth.pals.dbh@nhs.net)

**Please return the signed form below to:**

Mr M Michel Consultant Gynaecologist  
Cervical Screening Programme Leader  
Gynaecology Secretary  
Bassetlaw District General Hospital  
Kilton Hill  
Worksop  
S81 OBD

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I do / do not (delete as appropriate) wish to know the results of my cervical screening history review.

If I choose not to know the review at present, I understand that I can change my mind at any time.

**Signature:**..... **Date:**.....

Name in Block Capitals:.....

Gynaecology

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