Dear Partner

Since our last E-newsletter in September 2014, the Steering Committee for the Renewal Implementation Project (SCRIP) has been established and work has progressed on the five key activities of the endorsed Interim Implementation Plan.

- MBS changes
- Registers
- Workforce and Practice Change
- Quality and Safety
- Communications and Information

Please note, until changes to the NCSP are implemented it is business as usual, women should continue to have two yearly Pap tests in line with current policy.

Steering Committee for the Renewal Implementation Project (SCRIP)

The SCRIP is an independent, expert committee that is guiding the transition of the Renewal from evidence to practice. SCRIP provides advice to the Standing Committee on Screening (SCoS), which has oversight of the Renewal of the National Cervical Screening Program (NCSP).

SCRIP has met three times since it was established in October 2014. Key priorities and issues for implementation have been identified, the draft NCSP policy is being reviewed and detailed project planning is underway.

MBS changes

Information has been provided by HPV test sponsors to inform the development of the MBS Item descriptors and quality assurance.

On 25 November 2014, the Department held a consultation with key representatives from the Pathology Sector to seek advice on the MBS item descriptors, quality control, fees, transition and workforce issues.

Registers

The Commonwealth and state and territory governments have had discussions regarding improved register functions for a renewed cervical screening program. Further discussions will be held in January 2015.
Workforce and Practice Change

A workforce and practice change consultation with participants from the public and private sector, and state and territory governments was held on 10 November 2014.

- Key points of discussion included: the impact of the proposed changes on the cytology, colposcopy and test collector workforce, register implications, workforce training, and practice change.

Pathology workforce and practice change was also discussed at the pathology sector meeting on 25 November 2014.

Clinical Guidelines

The development of the clinical management guidelines for the follow up of women with positive screening results will commence in early 2015.

Quality and Safety

The Quality and Safety Monitoring Committee (QSMC), chaired by Professor David Roder, held its inaugural meeting on 13 November 2014. This committee provides advice to the Standing Committee on Screening on quality and safety for the NCSP and will continue to monitor the safety of the 2005 National Health and Medical Research Council’s (NHMRC) Guidelines “Screening to prevent cervical cancer: guidelines for the management of asymptomatic women with screen detected abnormalities”.

- Key points of discussion included: quality issues and safety monitoring requirements for the proposed cervical screening pathway and the development of a quality framework for the NCSP.

The National Pathology Accreditation Advisory Committee (NPAAC) has agreed to commence a process to review the requirements and performance measures for cytology and develop performance measures for HPV testing through its standard processes. This will commence in early 2015.

Communications and Information

A communications and information consultation with participants from state and territory governments, non-government bodies and the private sector was held by teleconference on 27 October 2014.

- Key points of discussion included: development of a communications strategy, timing and content of communications messaging for health professionals and for consumers, and a transition plan for current screeners.

Next steps

Following the development of a detailed project implementation plan, it is anticipated that funding and policy decisions regarding the proposed renewed program will be considered by the Australian Health Ministers’ Advisory Council. Pending the outcome of these decisions, changes to the NCSP will not be implemented prior to 2016.
More information

Further information on the Renewal can be found at cancerscreening.gov.au and you are welcome to contact us at CervicalRenewal@health.gov.au if you have any queries.

The newsletters aim to update our Partners regarding the progress of the Renewal. If you do not wish to receive the E-newsletter, please let us know and we will remove you from our mailing list. You are welcome to share this information with your colleagues.

We wish you a safe and happy holiday season.

Kind regards

Cervical Renewal Secretariat