

# The UK might be in lockdown, but it's business as usual for Cervical Screening



## Should I continue to take cervical samples during current UK restrictions?

Absolutely, cervical cancer will not wait for the Covid crisis to pass! The NHS is open for business and so is CSL. It is vitally important that women continue to be screened during the current lockdown period due to end in early December.

Invitation letters will be sent out as normal so when women contact you for an appointment, or to query whether they should be screened, please encourage them to book and come in ASAP.

Covid is certainly a significant focus for us all at the moment, but there is no doubt we will see significant increases in other healthcare issues like cervical cancer if women postpone or cancel their important routine health checks.

## Please remember to discuss with women what to expect if they test positive for HPV

Women who present for cervical screening need information about what happens next. Not just if their HPV result is negative, but especially about what to expect if their HPV result is positive and an abnormality is detected on the liquid based cytology slide.

Through the process of direct referral, CSL sends notifications to colposcopy units in cases where colposcopy is required. Women may become unnecessarily anxious if subsequent contact from colposcopy service staff is unexpected.

Jo's Trust provides great user-friendly resources that women can access when they return home. Together with a reassuring discussion held at the screening appointment, this should help to allay any fears and ensure women present for appropriate treatment and follow up.

The Jo's Trust website can be accessed at [www.jostrust.org.uk](http://www.jostrust.org.uk)

## CSL has now taken over administration of the sample taker database

Part of the transition to CSL involved the transfer of the sample taker database administration. This process is now well underway so please use the following email to contact the database team [csl.cstd@nhs.net](mailto:csl.cstd@nhs.net). The accompanying update to CSL key contacts also reflects this change so please replace your existing key contacts sheet.

## Do not instruct patients to ring CSL for results

### **Please do not give CSL contact details to patients.**

We cannot provide any information on results over the phone or by email. Our only option is to refer the patients back to their GP practice, which is frustrating for all involved.

If you require information on results then surgeries should contact CSL using the contact details on the accompanying updated key contacts sheet.

## Are you compromising patient care by sending non-CSL samples in purple CSL transport bags?

We continue to get non-CSL samples packed in CSL purple transport bags, sometimes 100 per week!

This practice has serious ramifications for your patients. CSL transport is designed for ThinPrep vials only which are stable for many weeks. Other samples are not, meaning they require rapid transport to their appropriate referral laboratory.

Many samples are unsuitable for processing by the time they are discovered in the CSL bags requiring the specimens to be recollected, causing considerable unnecessary stress to the patient and embarrassment to the practice.

The risk of the samples being lost also increases if they are not correctly forwarded to the testing laboratory.

### **The sending of non-CSL samples to CSL must cease immediately to reduce risk to patient care.**

**Please ensure every staff member of your practice, including locum and part time staff are aware of this.**

It certainly will not reflect well on your practice if samples are lost or require recollection due to staff not following clear and repeated packaging guidance.





## Will you be sent a letter identifying your practice as not using t-Quest order comms?

We have been working closely with NHSE/I to identify practices either not connected to CSL tQuest or not using tQuest consistently.

A report showing active tQuest usage across each individual practice is now generated and reviewed regularly to monitor order comms uptake for CSL. Letters will soon be issued to those practices who show no usage or inconsistent usage of CSL tQuest.

If you receive a letter please action it immediately by following the connection information in Sample Taker Update 4 and in the accompanying user guides (Emis and SystemOne) which remain available on the CSL website [www.hslpathology.com/csl](http://www.hslpathology.com/csl).

Should you have any difficulty please contact the CSL IT team at [helpdesk@tdlpathology.com](mailto:helpdesk@tdlpathology.com) or by phoning 020 7307 7365.

## Have you heard about the YouScreen trial?

In another initiative to break down barriers to cervical screening, CSL is excited to be providing the laboratory HPV testing to support a trial of self-sampled HPV tests. The trial is the first of its kind in England and is being offered across GP practices in the five boroughs of Camden, Islington, Barnet, Newham and Tower Hamlets in North East and North Central London.

Because the HPV test looks for the presence of the HPV virus in the genital tract, unlike cytology, it is not necessary to visualise the cervix to get a valid sample. Women in the pilot areas will be offered HPV vaginal self-sampling using a swab and illustrative instructions on how to take the sample.

If the HPV test is negative, the woman will be advised to return for screening at the routine period according to her age. If the HPV test is positive, the woman will need a clinician-collected sample referred via the routine screening pathway with a repeat HPV test and cytology slide preparation and assessment if this clinician-collected HPV test is positive. Colposcopy referral will take place as per current guidelines.

The trial aims to increase recruitment in women who are six months or more overdue for their routine test. Kits for this trial will be mailed out or offered opportunistically if women contact participating surgeries for other health needs.

There is an excellent YouTube video explaining the trial available at <https://youtu.be/xLEhpKTiXIO>.

We will keep you updated on the results of this exciting trial which, not only has significant benefits in the Covid environment, but has the potential to completely change the way cervical screening is carried out in the future!

## CSL recognised by prestigious RCPATH achievement award

On November 19, 2020, CSL was recognised in the category of 'Contribution to Speciality' in this year's RCPATH Achievement Awards.

This is indeed a great honour and CSL are thrilled that the exemplary efforts of all the staff and cervical screening stakeholders have been acknowledged.

Fantastic news as we approach the service's first birthday on December 2, 2020.

Thanks everyone for your support!

**STAY ALERT – CONTROL THE VIRUS – SAVE LIVES**

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