1. **Title**
Cervical Screening Standards

2. **Healthcare Improvement Scotland standards and indicators**

Healthcare Improvement Scotland (HIS) is the national health and social care improvement organisation for Scotland and part of NHSScotland. It provides the expertise and resources to co-produce health and social care standards which are developed, informed and shaped by with those who commission, deliver and use services.

The role of standards is to:
- provide a statement(s) of an expected level of service which demonstrates delivery of person-centred, safe and effective healthcare
- promote understanding, comparison and improvement of care, and
- support national consistency and/or local improvement.

3. **Clinical need**

Cervical screening is an effective method of reducing the incidence and mortality of cervical cancer. Screening includes a test that involves checking cells in the cervix (neck of the womb) and a Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) test, where appropriate. The test is designed to pick up any changes in cells at an early stage so that they can be simply and effectively monitored or treated. Without treatment, the cells can sometimes develop into cervical cancer.

Cervical screening is routinely offered to women aged between 25 and 64 years. Women on non-routine screening (where screening results have shown changes that require further investigation/follow-up) are invited up to age 70 years.
Cervical screening saves around 5,000 lives in the UK every year and prevents 8 out of 10 cervical cancers from developing.¹

The National Services Division (NSD) provides national coordination for the Scottish Cervical Screening Programme. HIS supports NHSScotland’s screening programmes through developing new and, where appropriate, revising existing standards. The Cervical Screening Standards were published in 2002. A request to revise the Cervical Screening Standards was received from the Scottish Government and NSD in summer 2017. The revision was accepted on to the work programme in August 2017 and it was agreed that standards would be developed rather than quality indicators.

4. The scope of the standards

4.1 Population that will be covered

- Women aged between 25 and 64 years.
- Women on non-routine screening (where screening results have shown changes that require further investigation/follow-up) up to age 70 years.

4.2 Healthcare and/or social care setting

- All cervical screening services in Scotland, where directly provided by an NHS board or secured on behalf of an NHS board.

4.3 Areas for standards development

a. Areas that will be covered:

- Leadership and governance
- Information and support on cervical screening
- Call-recall
- Attendance and uptake
- Screening processes (including sample taking)
- Laboratory processes
- Colposcopy (including treatment of stage 1a1)

The following areas will be woven throughout the whole standards document: failsafe, audit, quality assurance, education and training, referral for colposcopy, and inequalities.

b. Areas that will not be covered:

- treatment for cervical cancer greater than stage 1a1

¹. www.nsd.scot.nhs.uk/services/screening/cervicalscreens/index.html
5. Related development sources

5.1 Key sources
- NHS National Services Scotland – Cervical Screening Programme.

5.2 Related Healthcare Improvement Scotland Standards or Indicators

6. Timelines
The cervical screening standards are due for completion by April 2019.

7. Proposed development group specialists
The proposed specialists to be represented during the cervical screening standards’ development process are:

- Biomedical scientist
- Call-recall manager
- Cervical screening NHS board coordinator (Consultant/Specialist in Public Health)
- Colposcopist
- Consultant Oncologist
- Consultant pathologist/Cytopathologist
- Data specialist
- Epidemiologist
- General Practitioner
- HIS Quality Assurance Directorate representative
- Medical director
- Microbiologist/Virologist
- Patient representative/public partner
- Practice nurse
- Scottish Government representative
- Sexual and reproductive health representative, and
- Third sector representative

Specialist or technical input will be sought from NHSScotland representatives as appropriate. Where a specialist cannot be represented on the development group, there will be opportunities for engagement through consultation or peer review.
8. **Contact us**

For any enquiries please contact:

- Fiona Wardell, Standards and Indicators Team Lead
- Karen Grant, Project Officer

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For more information about HIS, visit our website:
[www.healthcareimprovementscotland.org](http://www.healthcareimprovementscotland.org)