

**DON'T
IGNORE IT**

Cervical Screening
Stakeholder toolkit

#dontignoreit



Overview

A new Detect Cancer Early Cervical Screening campaign will launch on **11 October 2021** to urge those eligible for cervical screening (smear test) not to ignore their invite.

The campaign has been designed to raise awareness of the benefits of cervical screening, and highlight that a smear test can stop cervical cancer before it starts.

You can view the TV advert [here](#).



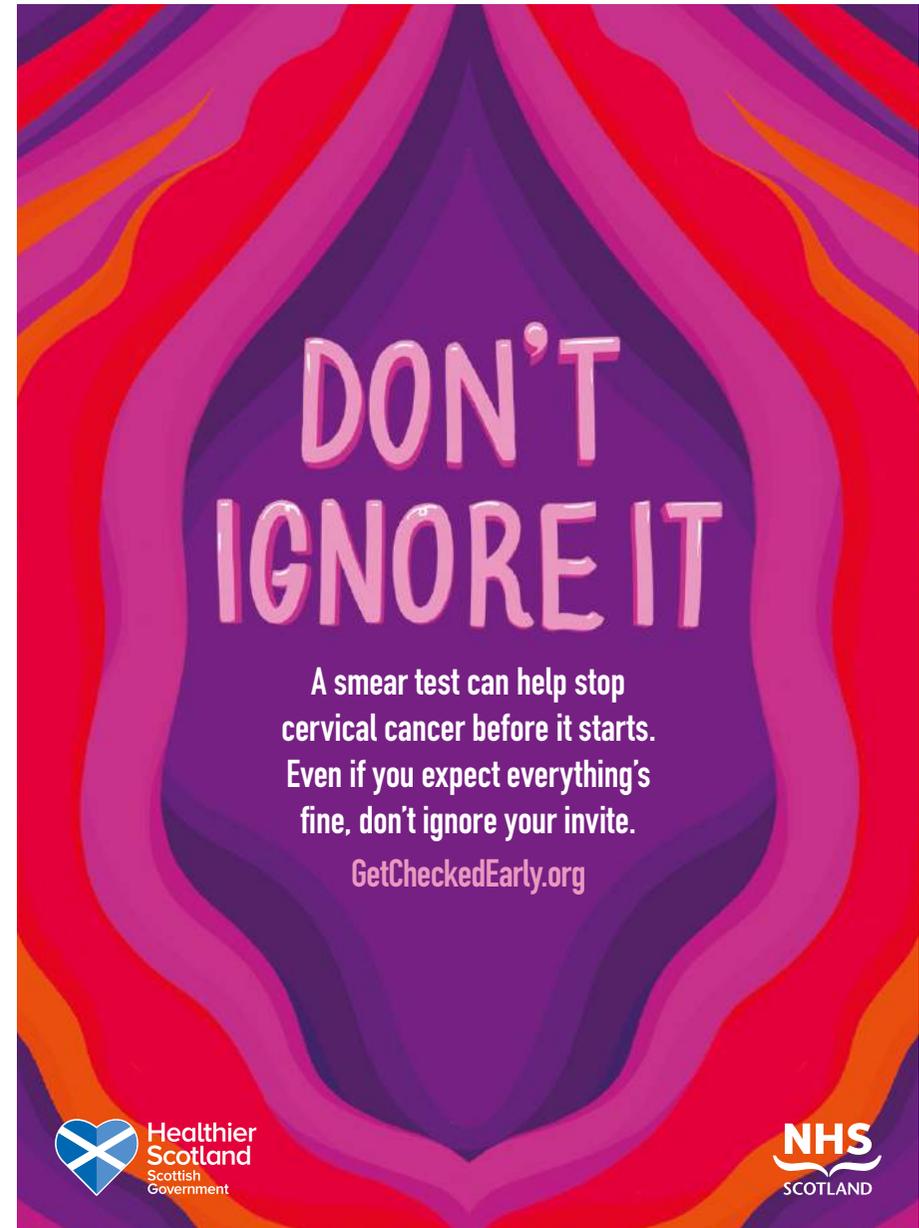
The challenge

The campaign has been developed in response to a continued decline in the uptake of cervical screening in Scotland.

Insight shows those eligible don't think cervical cancer will happen to them, and barriers to attending screening still exist, such as embarrassment, complacency and worry.

The creative resonated with the target audience as it was felt to be straight talking, honest and compelling – providing a wake up call that could help nudge people to attend.

Campaign materials will direct people to getcheckedearly.org where they'll find more information on cervical screening and tips around the appointment itself.



Media strategy

The campaign will comprise a new TV advert (30") and digital (Pay Per Click, paid social, display advertising), and PR which will run for four weeks.

In addition, a radio partnership with Bauer, and out of home advertising (posters in shopping centres and changing rooms) will run for two weeks.



Overarching messages

- Even if you expect everything's fine, don't ignore your smear test invite.
- Two people die from cervical cancer every day but a smear test can help stop it before it starts.¹
- In Scotland, cervical screening is offered to anyone with a cervix aged between 25 and 64.
- Visit [getcheckedearly.org](https://www.getcheckedearly.org) for more information.

Screening messages

- The test should take no more than five minutes and could save your life.
- The smear test now screens for HPV, which causes 99% of cervical cancers but has no symptoms.
- HPV testing is a more effective test - that's why if no HPV is found it's safe to wait five years between tests.
- It's important to still attend regular screening even if you've had your HPV vaccine. Although the vaccine offers good protection, it does not protect against all types of HPV and will not protect against any HPV infections picked up before the vaccine.
- HPV is actually very common. Four out of five people in Scotland will have HPV at some point in their lives. It'll usually be cleared by the body itself in time.
- For more information on the test visit [nhsinform.scot/cervicalscreening](https://www.nhsinform.scot/cervicalscreening).

¹ Source: Cancer Research UK (2016–2018)

How you can support

We would be delighted to have your support with this important campaign, and there are a number of ways in which you can help:

- Encourage people to visit the **campaign website** by using the suggested editorial copy in this toolkit in newsletters and/or on intranets.
- Share campaign assets, including the TV advert, across your own social channels – suggested social posts are provided in the toolkit and we'd encourage you to use the campaign hashtag **#dontignoreit**
- Like and follow the **wee c Facebook page** and share posts where appropriate.
- Let us know if you're aware of anyone who has been treated for cervical cancer, or has been recalled due to HPV and cell changes being found, who would be happy to share their experiences as part of the campaign.



You can download campaign assets from WeTransfer **here**, Dropbox **here** or the campaign website **here**. Links include the 30" ad, 15" ad, social graphics and campaign posters.

Social media posts

● Even if you expect everything is fine, don't ignore your smear test invite. It can help stop cervical cancer before it starts. Find out more: getcheckedearly.org

● Two people die in the UK every day from cervical cancer. A smear test could save your life, so don't ignore your invite. Find out more: getcheckedearly.org

● Cervical screening is offered to anyone with a cervix aged between 25 and 64 in Scotland. It's a five-minute test that can help stop cervical cancer before it starts. Don't ignore your invite. Find out more: getcheckedearly.org

● There are lots of things you can do to make a smear test easier for you. Wearing a skirt, booking a double appointment to give you more time, or asking for a smaller speculum are some of the things you could try. Find out more about cervical screening: getcheckedearly.org

● Your smear test is now even more effective as it screens for HPV which causes 99% of cervical cancers but has no symptoms. Find out more about the test at getcheckedearly.org



Editorial

Don't Ignore Your Smear Invite

The benefits of going for a smear test are being highlighted as part of a new campaign to encourage those eligible not to ignore their next invitation.

With uptake of smear tests declining amongst those eligible, the Scottish Government's Cervical Screening campaign is urging those invited to attend, even if they expect everything is fine.

In Scotland, cervical screening is offered to anyone with a cervix aged between 25 and 64. The five-minute test saves lives as it can help stop cervical cancer before it starts. The test is even more effective now as it screens for HPV which causes 99% of cervical cancers but has no symptoms.

The campaign also aims to help reassure those who put off going for the test, highlighting the things they

can try to make the test easier. These include wearing a skirt, lying in a different position, asking for a GP or nurse of a particular gender, or talking through any concerns at the appointment, so the person doing the test can offer the right support.

Practice Nurse Mary Horne, NHS Lothian said:

"I've done hundreds, if not thousands, of smear tests during my career so far. It can be a nervous time for some so I do what I can to put them at ease and always remind them that there's no such thing as a silly question.

Afterwards, most people – especially those who have gone for first time - are surprised by how quickly it's all over. It takes just minutes, and could stop cancer before it starts."



Contact

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Useful links

- Campaign website
www.getcheckearly.org
- Campaign landing page
www.getcheckedearly.org/cervical-cancer
- NHS Inform
www.nhsinform.scot/cervicalscreening
- Alternative formats and translations:
nhsinform.scot/otherformatscervical
- Jo's Cervical Cancer Trust
www.jostrust.org.uk
- Tips for talking to patients about HPV and lots of other useful resources for sample takers
www.jostrust.org.uk/toolkit
- Cervical screening toolkit for professionals -
www.healthscotland.scot/publications/cervical-screening-toolkit