

# HPV self-sampling: understanding and facilitating patient choice

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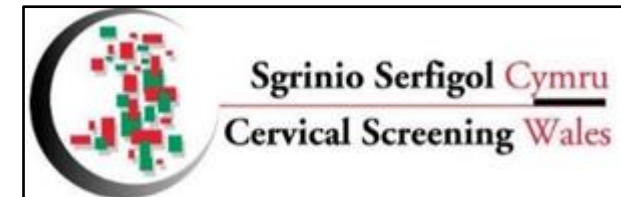
# Project Background

- The Human Papillomavirus (HPV) is known to cause most cases of cervical cancer.
- HPV testing is the primary test as part of routine cervical (smear) tests, which are offered every 5 years to eligible people in Wales.
- Attendance at routine screening has declined over recent years, with Hywel Dda University Health Board (HDUHB) having the lowest attendance rates in Wales.
- HPV self-sampling at home, could be a way to increase uptake of screening, and help prioritise those at greatest need of investigation and treatment.



# Aims and Approach

- This project was a collaboration between HDUHB, Life Sciences Hub Wales (LSHW), Public Health Wales (PHW) and Cervical Screening Wales (CSW)
- The main aim of the project was to survey eligible people in HDUHB about their understanding of HPV, their attendance at cervical screening, and their view of HPV self-sampling.
- We used a mixed methods approach to impact assessment,
  - CIVICA software to survey eligible people,
  - a qualitative thematic analysis
  - and cost-benefit analysis.



# Survey Outcomes

- 4623 people, aged 25-64 years completed the online survey with 64% of respondents choosing a HPV self-sample at home if given a choice.
- Convenience and comfort were reasons most commonly cited for taking a HPV self-taken test at home.
- Lack of confidence to self-administer the test was the most common reason for not choosing the HPV self-taken sample.
- Survey results highlighted there remains confusion about the link between HPV and cervical cancer, as well as HPV testing as part of cervical screening.

***“As a wheelchair user, it would be a lot easier to test at home for me, also I would not need to have someone take me to the GP and help me with my clothing.”***

***“I would be happy to self-test for HPV but I would still want a smear test despite a negative HPV test. I do not find the HPV test adequate”***

# Project Impact

- Introducing HPV self-sampling in Hywel Dda has the potential to create resource savings of around £650,000 per year for the NHS.
- Introduction of HPV self-sampling has the potential to create time savings for patients who opt for self-sampling over in-clinic sampling (valued at approximately £2 million per year).
- It also has the potential to lead to an improvement in health for those patients who would otherwise not have been tested, and where HPV is detected, and cervical cell changes are identified, monitored, and treated when required.



# Conclusion and Next Steps

- HPV self-sampling is an acceptable alternative to in-person screening and could offer significant cost-savings to the NHS.
- Further education is needed however, across society, to better understand HPV, the link with cervical cancer and how self-sampling could support screening choices.
- Collaborate with CSW to integrate survey findings around knowledge and understanding of HPV, into current campaigns.
- Work with CSW and PHW to pilot HPV self-sampling in HDUHB.
- Work with PHW to create accessible online shared decision aids to support HPV self-sampling.
- Collaborate UK wide to progress work to integrate HPV self-sampling into the UK national screening programme.

