

October 2019

Dear Doctor,

Re: National Cervical Screening Program reminders

The National Cervical Screening Program (NCSP) is now almost two years old and most women should have received or will receive an invitation from the NCSR to have a CST in the two-year transitional phase of the program prior to December 2019.

All women screened before December 2019

Women who have not yet had a routine CST since the new screening test was implemented (December 2017) should be encouraged to participate in the screening program before December 2019. Women who have chosen not to participate in cervical cancer screening during the last two years may only receive an invitation from the NCSR to screen in five years' time during the next screening cycle. This is effectively seven years since their last Pap test in the old program, potentially placing these women at increased risk for a significant cervical abnormality.

On the other hand, there are women who have already participated and screened as LOW RISK in the NCSP who are unknowingly re-presenting for their "two-yearly Pap test". It is important to be aware of the new Medicare guidelines for asymptomatic patients.

Medicare guidelines

Medicare only allows for one routine CST to be billed for a patient in a 57 month period.

Any additional CST that is routine, or screening in asymptomatic patients without any reason for early repeat screening within this timeframe, or a CST in an asymptomatic patient who is under 24 years and 9 months of age, will receive an out-of-pocket fee for this service.

It is this therefore imperative that any clinical symptoms be stated on the referral to ensure that the appropriate co-test and Medicare rebate are applied to the sample vial. No retrospective amendment of the clinical symptoms will be accepted. This is to avoid any inconvenience to the woman who may otherwise receive a bill or who may have to undergo repeat sampling or a specialist referral, as per the guidelines.

Contacting the National Cervical Screening Register (NCSR)

An NCSR user portal is anticipated to be available mid-2020 for referrers to access a woman's screening history. In the interim, this history can be obtained from the NCSR on:

Phone 1800 627 701

Fax 1800 627 702

Website www.ncsr.gov.au

For further information, please visit our website www.mps.com.au and follow the links to the CST.

Kind regards,



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