

Text reminders in cervical cancer screening in London – Project Relaunch

Following a successful pilot of cervical screening text reminders in London between September 2018 and March 2019, the project will now be relaunched in January 2020.

Practice sign-up

Practices are invited to sign-up to the relaunched text reminder project by following this link www.pcm.nhs.uk/londoncervicalscreening

What was the impact of the text reminder pilot across London?

Between 1 September 2018 and 14 March 2019:

- 97% of practices in London signed up to the project, with 80% signing up within the first 6 weeks
- Mobile phone numbers were extracted for 88% of women
- messages were successfully sent to 75% of these women (the most common reason for non-delivery of the text message was incorrect phone number)

For women who received a text reminder, uptake at 18 weeks was higher by¹:

- 4.8% in all age groups
- 4.8% in women aged 25 to 49
- 5.9% in women aged 50 to 64

This translates to an extra 13,400 women being screened at 18 weeks over this six-month period. Appendix 1 shows the increase in uptake at 18 weeks by CCG.

The average time between invitation and screening was 54 days for women who received an invitation letter and a text reminder and 71 days for women who only received an invitation letter. See Appendix 2 for the number of days between invitation and screening by CCG.

Project relaunch

NHS England/Improvement (London Region) has worked with technology provider, iPLATO, to make technical improvements to the process by which mobile phone numbers are accessed from GP clinical systems to optimise the data minimisation process. The relaunch of the project has been delayed for a variety of reasons including the transfer of cervical screening call recall service from Capita/Primary Care Support Services to the NHS Cervical Screening Administration Service. The success of the project resulted in a large increase in samples sent to London cytology laboratories. It was therefore necessary to reduce the large backlog of samples and

¹ The change in attendance/uptake at 18 weeks was calculated using July 2017 to February 2018 as a baseline for comparison. The national statistics report on coverage which is defined as proportion of women in the resident population [eligible](#) for cervical screening aged 25 to 64 years at end of period reported who were screened adequately within the previous 3.5/5.5 years

ensure the smooth transition from cytology to HPV Primary Screening within the NHS cervical screening programme in London before re-introducing text reminders.²

If my practice signed-up previously, do we have to do so again?

Yes. All practices will have to sign-up again to participate in this project. Part of the process will entail signing a revised data-sharing agreement with NHS England/Improvement. This is because technical improvements have been made to the design of the project to improve the data syncing of demographic data from GP clinical systems and minimise the data processing required to deliver this project.

How will the text-message reminders work?

The NHS Cervical Screening Administrative Service (CSAS),³ will send the NHS numbers of women invited to cervical screening to the text provider, iPLATO, on a weekly basis. Once you sign up to the initiative, iPLATO will use the NHS number, age and gender of patients invited to screening to identify and extract the patients' mobile telephone number from your clinical system.⁴ iPLATO will automatically send a reminder text message to the woman two and a half weeks (12 working days) after the invitation letter is sent (see Appendix 3).

The text message will read:

"GP SURGERY NAME>: Your cervical screening test is due. Call <GP number> to book. Info at <[NHS choices](#)> Privacy notice: <[Link to privacy notice](#)> Contact your GP to opt out of texts"

Is there anything else that the practice needs to do?

By participating in this project, the practice will be confirming that it has given patients the correct and fair processing information about the proposed use of the patients' mobile telephone numbers and that the practice has sought appropriate consent for their use, as per General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). iPLATO will work together with the practice to ensure that the most up to date consent status is processed.

What should I do if my patient contacts me asking to opt-out of receiving this text message?

The invitation letter that is sent to women includes the following statement:

If you have registered your mobile phone number with your GP, you may receive a text reminder to schedule your screening appointment. Please make sure your mobile

² From 2 December 2019, HPV testing will replace cytology as the primary screening test in the cervical screening programme London.

³ On 1 August 2019, the call-recall service for cervical screening transferred from Primary Care Support England (PCSE, provided by Capita) to the NHS Cervical Screening Administration Services provided by the NHS North of England Commissioning Support Unit

⁴ More detail available in the Data Sharing Agreement accessed via the microsite

phone number is up to date with your GP. To opt out of text reminders, please discuss this with your GP.

If the patient wants to opt-out from receiving such reminders for cervical cancer screening, explain to them that cervical screening reminders are sent only every three or five years, and that opting out of this service could apply to all text messages from your practice.

Our Confidentiality Policy

The identification of the cervical screening eligible participants will be conducted by NHS CSAS, who are acting on behalf of NHSE (data controllers). The contract between NHSE and the text provider covers confidentiality and ensures the protection of your patients' data, in accordance with General Data Protection Regulations (2018) and NHS Cancer Screening Programme policies.

Yours sincerely

Dr Josephine Ruwende
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NHS England/Improvement (London Region)

Further information on cervical screening

- Primary Care Good Practice Screening Guide
<https://www.healthy london.org/resource/good-practice-screening-guide-breast-cervical-bowel/>
- Jo's Cervical Cancer Trust
<https://www.jostrust.org.uk/>
- NHS
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/cervical-screening/>
- Public Health England
<https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/resources/campaigns/85-cervical-screening-campaign/overview>

Contact information

- cervicalscreening@iplato.net
- NHS England screening-submissions.london@nhs.net

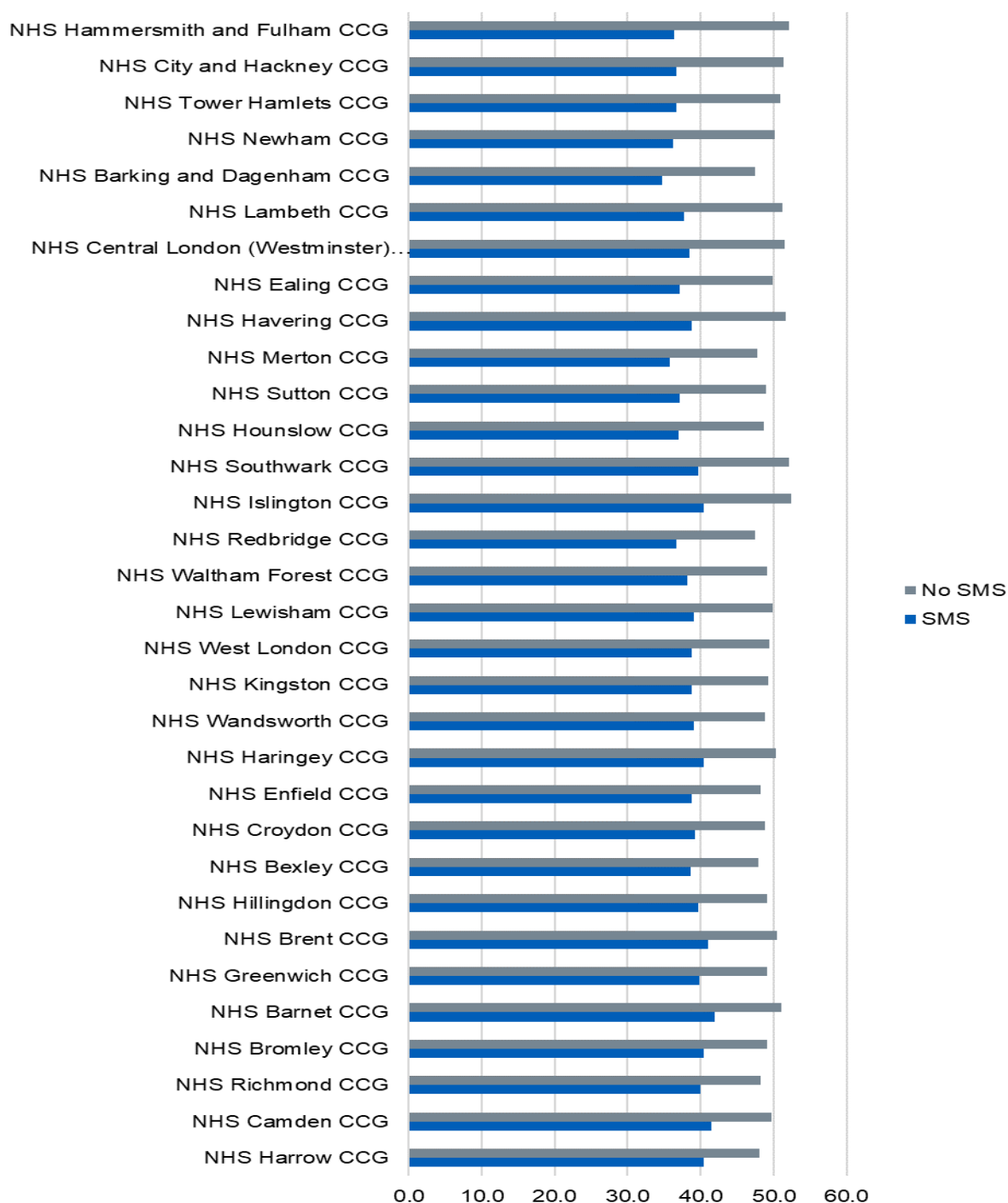
Appendix 1: Change in cervical screening uptake at 18 weeks by CCG

Percentage of all women invited who attended screening within 18 weeks by CCG of residence

	No SMS			SMS			% difference
	All women	Women attending screening within 18 weeks	Uptake	All women	Women attending screening within 18 weeks	Uptake	
NHS Ealing CCG	5,870	1,542	26.3%	508	222	43.7%	17.4%
NHS Hammersmith and Fulham CCG	4,256	935	22.0%	140	50	35.7%	13.7%
NHS West London CCG	3,060	515	16.8%	365	109	29.9%	13.0%
NHS Greenwich CCG	1,081	278	25.7%	2,639	1,003	38.0%	12.3%
NHS Enfield CCG	1,605	463	28.8%	3,109	1,216	39.1%	10.3%
NHS Wandsworth CCG	3,406	942	27.7%	3,592	1,326	36.9%	9.3%
NHS Hillingdon CCG	3,258	972	29.8%	1,020	398	39.0%	9.2%
NHS Hounslow CCG	4,170	1,183	28.4%	536	200	37.3%	8.9%
NHS Islington CCG	1,893	431	22.8%	2,662	844	31.7%	8.9%
NHS Camden CCG	2,050	368	18.0%	3,116	834	26.8%	8.8%
NHS Barnet CCG	2,223	625	28.1%	3,940	1,454	36.9%	8.8%
NHS Lambeth CCG	5,684	1,489	26.2%	1,658	578	34.9%	8.7%
NHS Sutton CCG	1,324	490	37.0%	1,632	744	45.6%	8.6%
NHS Croydon CCG	2,925	929	31.8%	2,917	1,169	40.1%	8.3%
NHS Lewisham CCG	2,547	768	30.2%	2,641	997	37.8%	7.6%
NHS Bexley CCG	1,348	529	39.2%	1,797	822	45.7%	6.5%
NHS Haringey CCG	2,535	672	26.5%	2,653	872	32.9%	6.4%
NHS Richmond CCG	1,573	543	34.5%	1,732	707	40.8%	6.3%
NHS Kingston CCG	804	257	32.0%	1,873	715	38.2%	6.2%
NHS Central London (Westminster) CCG	4,015	721	18.0%	375	90	24.0%	6.0%
NHS Tower Hamlets CCG	2,483	535	21.5%	2,780	760	27.3%	5.8%
NHS Newham CCG	1,801	404	22.4%	3,432	968	28.2%	5.8%
NHS Havering CCG	2,586	988	38.2%	438	190	43.4%	5.2%
NHS Merton CCG	2,581	795	30.8%	1,155	415	35.9%	5.1%
NHS Waltham Forest CCG	1,525	424	27.8%	2,983	975	32.7%	4.9%
NHS Bromley CCG	2,090	789	37.8%	2,437	1,034	42.4%	4.7%
NHS Southwark CCG	3,055	779	25.5%	3,894	1,165	29.9%	4.4%
NHS Redbridge CCG	3,430	967	28.2%	820	267	32.6%	4.4%
NHS Brent CCG	4,038	1,063	26.3%	1,731	526	30.4%	4.1%
NHS Harrow CCG	2,824	853	30.2%	1,011	337	33.3%	3.1%
NHS Barking and Dagenham CCG	2,442	749	30.7%	459	150	32.7%	2.0%
NHS City and Hackney CCG	3,239	870	26.9%	1,950	545	27.9%	1.1%

Appendix 2 Time between invitation and screening by CCG

3. Mean time in days from invite to test for patients tested within 18 weeks of invite by CCG of residence



Appendix 3: Cervical screening text reminder data flow chart

Cervical Screening Flow

