Scottish Cervical Screening Programme
Statistics

Glossary of terms
adenocarcinoma  A cancer that originates in glandular tissue.

borderline result  This means that cell changes have been found in the cells from the cervix but they will most likely go back to normal on their own.

call-recall  The process used to invite people for a screening test.

cervical cancer/carcinoma  Cancer of the neck (cervix) of the uterus. The tumour has spread into surrounding tissue and may involve adjacent organs (invasion). It may be detected in a pre-cancerous stage of development by a cervical screening test.

Cervical Intraepithelial Neoplasia (CIN)  Cellular changes in the cervix (neck of the womb) preceding the invasive stages of cervical cancer. The CIN grading system distinguishes three stages, CIN1, CIN2 and CIN3. The three grades of CIN relate to the thickness of the tissue covering the cervix that is affected. CIN 1 means one third of the thickness of the tissue covering the cervix has abnormal cells. CIN 3 means the full thickness of the tissue covering the cervix has abnormal cells. All these results mean that they are pre-cancerous.

cervical smear  A sample of cells scraped from the cervix of the uterus that is stained and examined under a microscope. Routine cervical smears are taken to detect precancerous and early cancerous changes in the cervix (neck of the womb).

Cervix  Neck of Uterus (womb)

cytology/cytopathology  The study of cells under a microscope.

dyskaryosis  The appearance of abnormal cells whose nuclei show the features characteristic of the earliest stage of malignancy.

Low grade dyskaryosis  Indicates mild or slight cell changes in the cervix

High grade dyskaryosis (moderate)  Indicates moderate cell changes in the cervix

High grade dyskaryosis (severe)  Indicates severe cell changes in the cervix

eligible women  Women aged 20-60 are eligible to be invited for cervical screening.

endocervical  Inside the canal of the cervix.

endocervical adenocarcinoma  A cancer that originates in glandular tissue inside the canal of the cervix.

endometrial cancers  Cancers of the uterus (womb) usually begin in the cells that make up the lining of the uterus (endometrium).

glandular abnormality  Abnormality of glandular epithelial cells

high grade cell changes  Result grouping which covers high grade dyskaryosis (moderate and severe), high grade dyskaryosis ?invasive, glandular abnormality and endocervical adenocarcinoma results

inadequate screening test  A cervical screening test which cannot be properly assessed microscopically due to poor quality or too few cells/materials This could result in a repeat test. (An inadequate test is also known as an ‘unsatisfactory’ test).
**invasive cancer**  Cancer that has spread from its site of origin.

**liquid based cytology (LBC)**  A technique for processing cervical screening tests for examination in the laboratory. A sample is collected using a special spatula device, which gently brushes cells from the neck of the cervix. The cells are rinsed directly into a small jar containing preservative fluid. This sample is then transported to the laboratory, where it is mixed and treated to remove unwanted material. A thin layer of the resulting cell suspension is deposited onto a slide and stained. The slide is then examined under the microscope. LBC reduces the rate of unsatisfactory samples and low grade test results, and therefore the need for repeat tests.

**low grade cell changes**  Result grouping which covers borderline change in squamous cells/endocervical cells and low grade dyskaryosis results

**National Services Division (NSD)**  The division of NHS National Services Scotland with responsibility for ensuring the provision of national screening programmes and specialist services on behalf of NHSScotland. Website: [www.show.scot.nhs.uk/nsd](http://www.show.scot.nhs.uk/nsd)

**NHS Quality Improvement Scotland (NHS QIS)**  Is a statutory improvement body, established as a Special Health Board in Scotland in 2003. Its role is to focus on improving the quality of patient care and the health of patients. It has a particular emphasis on the quality of care and the patient journey for vulnerable groups.

**non-attenders**  Eligible people who do not attend following an invitation for screening.

**referral**  The process whereby a patient is transferred from one professional to another, usually for specialist advice and/or treatment.

**reporting time**  The time from taking the smear test (date of exam) to producing the test result letter.

**satisfactory screening test**  A test that is of sufficient quality for the cytologist to issue a report.

**SCCRS system**  Scottish Cervical Call Recall System.

**screening**  Examination of people with no symptoms, to detect unsuspected disease.

**screening episode**  One cycle of a person’s screening events.

**SCSP**  Scottish Cervical Screening Programme.

**smear-taking**  The process of taking a cervical cell sample.

**squamous (cell) epithelium**  Epithelium is the tissue that covers the external surface of the body and lines hollow structures. Epithelial cells may be flat and scale-like (squamous), cuboidal or columnar.

**uptake rate**  The proportion of women invited to a cervical screening appointment who attend (also known as the ‘Attendance rate’)

**unsatisfactory screening test**  (see inadequate screening test)