

26 May 2023

Tēnā koutou

Laboratory Update: HPV Primary Screening from 26 July 2023 – Edition 1

In December 2022, Anatomic Pathology Service Te Toka Tumai (APS) was successful in receiving a National Cervical Screening Programme (NCSP) contract for the provision of Laboratory Services to support the delivery of HPV Primary Screening for the greater Auckland region. The HPV Primary Screening programme will be implemented on 26 July 2023, where participants will be invited into the programme and the laboratory will commence the HPV primary screening service on samples taken on and from this date.

APS is pleased to confirm that there will be **no change to your laboratory service provider or to the collection of samples from your practice**. The cytology department which has provided the community cervical cytology service for more than 30 years (including the past eight years as APS), will continue to provide the HPV primary screening service and the triage cytology service i.e. the same team, the same service but a different primary screening test.

The changes and what you need to know:

The laboratory will perform an **HPV primary screening test** on any **one** of the following specimen types:

- **Vaginal swab (self-collected or clinician-collected)**
 - HPV test only.
- **Liquid based cytology (LBC), ThinPrep** – no change to the collection of this specimen type (a speculum examination **clinician-collected cervical smear**).
 - The primary test will be an HPV test however this sample can be used for further testing under the ***Clinical Practice Guidelines for Cervical Screening Aotearoa NZ 2023***.

Test options for LBC (ThinPrep) include:

- HPV + cytology if required (HPV detected specimens require triage cytology).
- HPV + cytology (co testing).
- Cytology only.

Consumables

- Consumables such as FLOQ Swabs and instruction sheets will be issued to all referrers in the weeks leading up to the implementation of the new programme.
- An updated supply order form will be issued to practices.
- ThinPrep can be ordered as per the current process.

Practices are excellent at managing consumable supplies and monitoring ThinPrep vial expiry dates, and the laboratory wants to continue to work with you to manage this process.

There are some updates available on the NCSP and NSU websites with helpful information regarding the upcoming change, if you have not already seen them:

NCSP Sector Update – April 2023: [\[link\]](#)

NSU – links to Goodfellow Unit webinar presentation and FAQs [\[link\]](#)

Further editions will be distributed in the coming weeks to discuss:

- The NCSP laboratory policy for processing leaking and low volume LBC collected samples for HPV testing;
- Invalid and unsuitable specimens;
- Collection and transportation requirements; and
- Update on dry or wet swab collection.

We appreciate your ongoing support.

Ngā mihi nui,

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