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Cervical Screening Wales: reassurance campaign

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Purpose and Summary of Document:

In January 2022, we announced that Cervical Screening Wales (CSW) are extending the screening intervals for people aged 25 – 49 from three to five years if they test negative for HPV.

This document sets out the communications plan, using the OASIS model, to reassure all people with a cervix that cervical screening is the best way to stop cancer before it starts and that the screening test is safe and effective.

Work Plan reference: n/a

1 Background

Public Health Wales (PHW) is the national public health institute for Wales. Our purpose is to achieve a healthier future for Wales. We do this by protecting and improving health and well-being and reducing health inequalities for people in Wales. With support from our staff, partners and the people of Wales, we have developed a long term strategy covering 2018-30. It brings together seven strategic priorities which are intrinsically linked and together help us achieve our purpose: Working to Achieve a Healthier Future for Wales. You can read about these here: <https://phw.nhs.wales/about-us/our-priorities/>

The Screening Division delivers the seven national population-based screening programmes in Wales and manages the Antenatal Screening Wales clinical network.

2 Context

Infection with high-risk Human Papillomavirus (HPV) is responsible for 99.8% of cervical cancers. In recognition of this, in November 2015, the UK National Screening Committee (UKNSC) recommended the use of primary HPV screening within the Cervical Screening Wales programme as it is a better, more sensitive test.

Public Health Wales implemented the HPV primary testing into the Cervical Screening Wales programme in September 2018. Wales was the first UK nation to introduce this change.

In 2019, the UKNSC considered the results of a consultation and recommended the following cervical screening programme modifications:

- The extension of the screening interval from three to five years for women and people with a cervix aged 25-49 who test negative for HPV as part of their routine screening test.
- The implementation of two surveillance tests at 12 month intervals for women who remain HPV positive and cytology negative.

Documents relating to the UK National Screening Committee recommendation can be accessed [here](#).

The UKNSC's recommendation was discussed at the Wales Screening Committee in July 2020 with the recommendation accepted. This brought Wales in line with Scotland who implemented this change in March 2020.

To sum up:

- This change will only affect those aged 25–49 if HPV is not found in their **next routine** cervical screening sample.
- It will **not affect** those who are on treatment or early repeat pathways where their last test showed the presence of HPV.
- If HPV is found in the sample then these individuals will be followed up more closely, by either being referred directly to a hospital Colposcopy clinic if cell changes are present; or by being invited for a further test in a year's time if no cell changes are present in their sample.
- Women who do not attend for their next screening appointment will be sent reminders and invited again in three years.

Stakeholders were sent communication at the end of December 2021 about this change and a proactive press release was shared with the media for release on 4 January 2022. Social media posts were also shared on 4 January 2022.

Following the announcement, there was considerable negative feedback on the social media posts.

On 5 January 2022, in response to a large volume of negative responses on social media, Public Health Wales acknowledged that the change could have been better communicated and shared FAQs and a film of Dr Sharon Hillier, Director of Screening Services, explaining the changes. Jo's Trust and Cancer Research UK have also spoken on social media in support of the implementation of the interval change. A ministerial statement from Eluned Morgan MS, Minister for Health and Social Services, in support of the change was shared.

A change.org petition was set up on 4 January 2022 to request a reversal of the decision. It gathered over 1.2 million signatures. A Senedd petition was also created and reached 30,000 signatures before it was closed and triggered a debate in the Senedd.

At First Minister's Questions in the Senedd on 12 January 2022, the First Minister was asked questions about the implementation of the interval change and acknowledged that Public Health Wales could have communicated the changes better. At the plenary session on 19 January 2022, the petition and issue was discussed for an hour. See [item 5 in the Senedd Plenary papers](#) for a transcript of the debate.

We have taken steps to learn from the incident including holding an After Action Review. The plan below reflects these learnings.

3 Brief

In response to the need to clarify the picture, Public Health Wales agreed to run a public campaign to rebuild trust with women and people with a cervix and to explain the changes to the programme.

Our target audience for this work will be women and people with a cervix aged 25-49 in Wales. We would like to focus on women and people with a cervix from C2DEⁱ backgrounds and Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities in particular. It is widely recognised that there are inequalities in cervical screening uptake. The audience targeting approach aims to take these inequalities into consideration.

A detailed brief document was prepared to assist with procuring a communications agency to support delivery of this campaign. The key elements of the campaign are described below.

4 Communications planning model: OASIS

This strategic approach to communications will use the **OASIS** communications planning tool:

- **Objectives:** What is the communications activity intending to achieve?
- **Audience Insight:** Who is the communication activity aimed at? What is the context for insight?
- **Strategy:** What will the approach focus on? What is the strategic ideation?
- **Implementation:** How will the approach be delivered? What tactics will be used? Set out the plan
- **Scoring:** How can we monitor and measure outputs, outtakes and outcomes throughout the activity and upon evaluation?

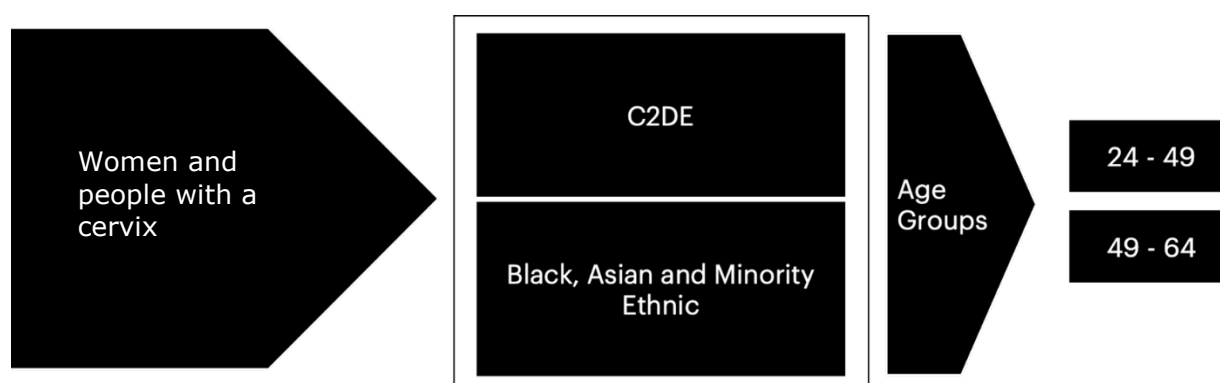
4.1 Objectives

Our objectives are to:

- Rebuild trust
- Build understanding
- Build support from screening participants, professionals, stakeholders and influencers

4.2 Audience

There are a number of audience groups categorised by age group, in order of priority for this campaign. We intend to put specific focus on Black, Asian, ethnic minority segment and those in the C2DE demographic.



- Target audience 1a: 24-49 year olds
 - Highest risk group and directly impacted by interval change
- Target audience 1b: 49-64 year olds
 - Still at risk of cervical cancer, still need to attend screening, knowledge of HPV likely to be low.
- Target audience 2: C2DE / lower socio-economic backgrounds
- Target audience 3: Black, Asian and ethnic minority backgrounds

Individuals 18 to 24 years old and 11 to 13 years old are not the target audience for this campaign. However, people in that category may see the campaign materials through our digital channels.

4.3 Strategy

By providing clear, engaging and digestible information, we will remind people that cervical screening helps to stop cancer before it starts. We will explain the changes to the programme, providing reassurance that cervical screening is safe and effective.

We will deliver a digital campaign over a six-week period to specifically address the concerns raised in January 2022.

The decision to focus on digital communications is to respond to the issue in the channels where the negative feedback arose initially.

Looking at the responses from January 2022 will inform the messaging for the campaign and give us valuable insight about the most pressing concerns from our audiences. Using this, alongside creating the campaign messages, we will update and review current information and FAQs on the CSW website.

Campaign resources will be produced in English and Welsh.

All creative assets should be developed using clear, plain language in order to enable immediate understanding and trust. Thorough testing of the messages/assets should be undertaken to mitigate against any issues around perception or misunderstandings.

Engagement with key partners such as Jo's Trust and Cancer Research UK will be important to create a united front on the safety of the interval change. They, along with targeted influencers, will carry the messages to widen the campaign reach.

Organic social media posts will go out from the PHW Facebook, Instagram and Twitter channels and be followed up by targeted social media advertising. Comments will be turned on to encourage engagement and an escalation/moderation process agreed in advance.

Although the #LoveYourCervix hashtag came under fire in January 2022 there is still significant recognition of the #LoveYourCervix branding so it is proposed that we keep it for this campaign. Further, this enables us to build in this campaign hashtag over time in future Cervical Screening Wales campaigns.

4.4 Implementation

The campaign will run over six weeks from Monday 27 June 2022.

During the first two weeks of the campaign, organic social media posts will go out from Public Health Wales' channels. Organic social media refers to all social media content that is not a paid advertisement. Insights from social media monitoring during this first phase of the campaign will be used to optimise our strategy in the weeks that follow.

From week three, paid-for social media posts will go out through Facebook and Instagram. These ads will be targeted at our specific target audiences – women and people with a cervix aged 24-49 from Black, Asian and ethnic minority communities and C2DE communities – and feature eye-catching animated content that reassures people that cervical screening is safe and effective, and builds understanding of HPV and HPV testing.

Evaluation will be embedded into the campaign. Our use of organic social media posts will be optimised from week three based on digital insights such as post reach, engagement and sentiment, and the results of A/B (comparative) testing. Ongoing evaluation will also inform which assets and channels are used for paid-for social media posts and how our digital spend is allocated in weeks five and six.

High level campaign timelines

Start date	End date	Activity
29 June 2022	3 July 2022	<p>Campaign launch:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organic social media posts: Facebook, Twitter and Instagram • Social media monitoring and community moderation • Stakeholder toolkit distributed to partners
4 July 2022	10 July 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organic and paid social media posts: Facebook, Twitter and Instagram • Social media monitoring and community moderation • Ongoing evaluation of organic social media content
11 July 2022	24 July 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted, paid-for social media ads: Facebook, Instagram and TikTok • Organic social media posts: Facebook, Twitter and Instagram • Social media monitoring and community moderation • Evaluation of paid-for social media content
25 July 2022	7 August 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted social media ads: channels used will be informed by performance of ads in weeks three and four • Organic social media posts: Facebook, Twitter and Instagram • Social media monitoring and community moderation

4.5 Scoring (evaluation)

The campaign will be evaluated using the Government Communication Service (GCS) framework which includes:

- Inputs
 - E.g. the number of hours worked, the budget, the number of press releases sent
- Outputs
 - E.g. the coverage across different media, number of stakeholders engaged, number of influencers engaged, video views, social reach
- Out-takes
 - E.g. opportunities to see (OTS), number of downloads, engagement rates, click through rate
- Outcomes
 - E.g. increase in web visits, increase in positive sentiment, increase in key C2DE and BAME areas of Wales
- Impacts
 - People who previously objected to the change talk positively about it.

5 Stakeholder engagement

The table below is a high-level summary of stakeholder engagement activity. The purpose of this stakeholder engagement plan is to ensure that key partners have the opportunity to review and feedback on the material ahead of launch. Ahead of the launch, we want to ensure that both partners and stakeholders are informed of the activity plan and materials.

Date	Action	Owner
1 February 2022	Engage with Third sector partners including Jo's Trust, Cancer Research UK to inform them of the campaign plan	Louise Dunk
20 May 2022	Initial audience testing (Cowshed and Public Health Wales Communications team)	Jo Black
Thursday 9 June 2022	Share draft storyboards for stakeholder and user feedback: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public Information Group - Jo's Trust/CRUK comms - Welsh Government comms - Heather Rammesur- Mardsen, Screening Engagement Team - Rebecca Fogarty, PHW Engagement lead - Lead nurse specialist Hayley Sillett 	Katie Walbeoff Sam Humphrey Leah Morantz Leah Morantz Leah Morantz Sam Humphrey
Friday 10 June 2022	Advise PHW Executive team of timings of the campaign via Forward Look	Leah Morantz
Wednesday 15 June 2022	Screening Division review and approval of storyboards and implementation plan	Leah Morantz Sharon Hillier
Thursday 16 June 2022	Share revised storyboards for stakeholder and user feedback: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Welsh Government policy colleagues (for information) - Welsh Government comms - Jo's Trust/CRUK comms 	Sharon Hillier Leah Morantz Sam Humphrey
Thursday 16 June and Friday 17 June	Additional user group testing	Cowshed

Monday 20 June 2022	Incorporate testing feedback into materials for signoff by Screening Division	Cowshed
Friday 17 June 2022 and Friday 24 June 2022	Inform NHS Heads of Communications of upcoming campaign at the weekly Heads of Comms meeting	Dan Owens
Monday 20 June 2022	Screening Division signoff	Lisa Henry
Tuesday 21 June 2022	Go/NO GO Executive approval meeting with Meng Khaw	Leah Morantz/ Sharon Hillier
Tuesday 21 June 2022	Briefing note to Tracey Cooper	Meng Khaw/ Leah Morantz
Monday 27 June 2022	Letter to MS/MPs from Tracey Cooper informing them of the campaign	Leah Morantz
Wednesday 29 June 2022 11:00 a.m.	Issue comms pack with link to video and copy of storyboards for information to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PHW Executive team and Board - Public Information Group - Jo's Trust/CRUK comms - Welsh Government comms (Becky Tune) - Welsh Government policy colleagues - NHS Wales Heads of Communication - Heather Rammesur-Marsden, Screening Engagement Team - Rebecca Fogarty, PHW Engagement lead - Lead nurse specialist Hayley Sillett - Five nations Screening Leads - Sample takers via Screening Link person in GPs - Screening internal team including SLT and CSAD - Directors of Public Health - Community Health Councils 	Leah Morantz Lisa Henry Sam Humphrey Sam Humphrey Sharon Hillier Sam Humphrey Sam Humphrey Sam Humphrey Sam Humphrey Lisa Henry Lisa Henry Lisa Henry Sharon Hillier Sharon Hillier
Wednesday 29 June 2022	Inform Public Health Wales staff via intranet and Staff Facebook	Sam Humphrey/Laura Overton
29 June 2022	Public Campaign launch – twitter, Facebook, Instagram	Sam Humphrey

6 Budget

The agency budget for this campaign is £20,000 + VAT. This is for the development of the creative concepts, implementation plan, production of the communications assets. Following a robust procurement process, Cowshed have been appointed to support the development and delivery of the campaign.

The Public Health Wales Communications Team will oversee the end to end process, ensuring appropriate governance and approval. In addition, the Communications team will provide in-house press office support and social media moderation.

ⁱ C2DE is the social grade category that includes skilled manual workers, semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers, state pensioners, casual and lowest grade workers, unemployed with state benefits only. Social Grade is the 'common currency' social classification (the 'ABC1' system) used by the advertising industry and employed throughout marketing, advertising and market research. [Social Grade | Advertising & Market Research | Census Data \(mrs.org.uk\)](https://www.mrs.org.uk/social-grade)