Plain Language Statement

Melbourne School of Population and Global Health
Centre for Health Policy
Evaluation and Implementation Science Unit

Supporting Choice for Cervical Screening: Health Workforce interviews

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Introduction

Thank you for your interest in participating in this research project. The following few pages will provide you with further information about the project so that you can decide if you would like to take part in this research.

Please take the time to read this information carefully. You may ask questions about anything you don't understand or want to know more about.

What is this research about?

Supporting Choice for Cervical Screening is a collaborative research project that aims to generate evidence about how the choice for self-collection for cervical screening can be implemented across a range of services and settings, in ways that ensure equitable access and increased participation for people who currently experience screening barriers. Self-collection involves the collection of a lower vaginal sample, using a swab for HPV testing.

We are working with members of the healthcare workforce, and with members of priority under-screened communities, to understand their experiences and proposed solutions to improving screening access. Bringing these understandings together, we will work to jointly design, test and evaluate solutions.

In this component of the project, we want to gather evidence about what has been done, and what more could be done to create safe, accessible, and acceptable ways of offering cervical screening. We are conducting interviews with people who work in healthcare services and the pathology sector to understand

how models of screening are being delivered and can be adapted or scaled to different settings to improve the acceptability and accessibility of the National Cervical Screening Program (NCSP), especially for people who are under- and never-screened.

What will I be asked to do?

You will be asked to participate in an individual or group interview with colleagues at a mutually agreed time and place (online- Zoom/Teams, by telephone or in-person). Individual interviews will take approximately 45-60 minutes and group interviews will take up to 1.5 hours. Group interviews may be held if there are multiple staff from your health service willing to participate in an interview. As these participants may be known to you, you may choose to participate in an individual interview if you prefer. In the interview, you will be asked about:

- Professional and practice/service demographics (e.g. your role, the kind of services you offer, and the people who access your service)
- The role your service currently plays in providing or facilitating access to cervical screening for your patients/clients
- How you/your practice/organisation are implementing the National Cervical Screening Program guidelines, including recommendations on self-collection, and any barriers that have been experienced
- Barriers and enablers to offering self-collection
- Further resources, training, and education needed to support self-collection

In the consent form, you will be asked whether you or your practice/service, are interested in participating in the next phase of the research project or hearing more about it. You are welcome to discuss this further with the interviewer. Participation in future research is voluntary, and not a requirement to participate in an interview.

What are the possible benefits?

The findings from the interviews will be used to develop implementation guidance and strategies for offering the choice of self-collection to *all* eligible screening participants. This includes how models of screening could be adapted or scaled to different settings to promote equitable participation in the NCSP. Importantly, the interviews will provide insight into what is needed to ensure these models are safe and tailored to the needs of different communities. These resources may assist you or your practice in the future.

Reimbursement

If you are taking part in an interview outside of your salaried time, you will receive a $100 voucher as an acknowledgment of your time.

What are the possible risks?

The risks associated with participating in this project are minimal. We do not anticipate the questions asked will be distressing. You can skip any question you do not want to answer and end the interview at any time. If you do feel concerned or distressed discussing cervical screening, the interview will be stopped and further support will be offered. You may then choose to continue or discontinue the interview.

If you require more information or support, you can contact Beyond Blue at 1300 22 2636 or via webchat at https://www.beyondblue.org.au/support-service/chat. Further support organisations and contact numbers will be provided to you if needed.

Any identifiable information provided during the interview will be removed from the transcript for storage, analysis, and publication of data.

Do I have to take part?

No. Participation is completely voluntary. You can withdraw at any time while completing the interview. The researcher will destroy any unanalysed data from you if you decline to participate in the study after the interview.

What will this information be used for?

The interview findings will be used to inform the next stages of the Supporting Choice project. Summarised data will inform community consultations about safe and acceptable models of screening. These may then be piloted in selected primary care practices and/or health services nationally and evaluated. An implementation toolkit will then be developed that will describe how models of screening can be adapted or scaled up to different settings to support the equitable implementation of the NCSP.

Will I hear about the results of this project?

The researchers will be developing implementation guidance to support the implementation of self-collection. They also intend to publish the interview findings in academic journals and in student theses.

You may indicate that you would like to receive a summary of the interview findings by providing your email address on the consent form.

What will happen to information about me?

We take your privacy and confidentiality very seriously. The researchers will save all interview recordings, transcripts and researcher notes on a secure digital storage platform at the University of Melbourne (SharePoint) for 5 years following the publication of results. This data is only accessible to the project researchers. All interview transcripts and researcher notes will be stored separately from the recording and without identifying information. Your name and email (if provided) on the consent form will be kept in a separate file and location from your interview transcript and will only be used to contact you for the purposes you indicate on the consent form.

If you participate in an individual interview, you may review the interview transcript. If you wish to receive a copy, you will have two weeks to review the transcript and provide any feedback from the date you received it. It will be provided at the earliest possible time after transcription. To protect the confidentiality of others who participate in group interviews, transcripts will not be provided.

The interview recording may be provided to third-party service provider Otter.ai for transcription. The information captured in the interview recording will be subject to Otter.ai's Terms of Service and Privacy Policy, and information will be stored and processed by Otter.ai overseas. The researchers will delete any data from Otter.ai after the recording has been transcribed, and Otter.ai will not retain any data after the point in which data has been deleted.

You may be asked to use an online survey platform (Qualtrics) during the interview. This is accessed via a weblink or a QR code that will be provided during the interview. This will be quick and easy, and you will be guided by the interviewer. If you choose not to do this, the interviewer is able to record your responses. Qualtrics provides a security statement that ensures all data storage adheres to industry standards (click here to view the statement).

You or your practice/organisation will not be able to be identified in any publications, as only aggregate results will be presented. However, if it is appropriate to identify your organisation to present how they are

supporting cervical screening as a case study in a report or presentation, we will seek consent from you and your organisation to do this. The data may be used for related projects in the future.

Who is funding this project?

This project is being funded by the National Health and Medical Research Council.

Where can I get further information?

If you would like more information about the project, please contact Dr Tessa Saunders (Responsible Researcher for this study) via email, tessa.saunders@unimelb.edu.au.

Who can I contact if I have any concerns about the project?

This project has human research ethics approval from The University of Melbourne (2023-26114-38488-1). If you have any concerns or complaints about the conduct of this research project, which you do not wish to discuss with the research team, you should contact the Research Integrity Administrator, Office of Research Ethics and Integrity, University of Melbourne, VIC 3010. Tel: +61 3 8344 1376 or Email: research-integrity@unimelb.edu.au. All complaints will be treated confidentially. In any correspondence, please provide the name of the research team and/or the name or ethics ID number of the research project.