

Requirements for a Cervical Sample-taker, HPV Screen-taker & required learning pathways

Cervical sample-takers

In Aotearoa New Zealand, persons taking cervical screening specimens have legislated responsibilities in accordance with Part 4A of the Health Act 1956. Given the weight of these responsibilities cervical screening tests must be requested by a **'responsible clinician'** and this is a collective reference to an accredited **"cervical sample-taker."**

This is currently limited to; a registered health practitioner, such as a medical practitioner, an accredited nurse practitioner, registered nurse, with a current New Zealand practising certificate.

They must have completed cervical screening training either through:

- training as part of a medical degree or midwifery training programme; or
- an NZQA accredited course to conduct cervical screening.

It is recommended that the cervical sample taker has completed the four National Cervical Screening Programme (NCSP) learning modules Cervical Screening with HPV Testing.

To work in a professional partnership with **HPV Screen-takers** (see further below), a responsible clinician must have 12 months experience after completing cervical sample taker training.

Refer to [NCSP Policies and Standards November 2023](#) for a full comprehensive list of roles and responsibilities.

HPV screen-takers

From November 2023, nurses, and nurse practitioners (who are **not** accredited cervical sample-takers and who meet certain criteria) have been able to facilitate HPV self-testing **if they meet the following requirements below:**

- **They are either an enrolled nurse, registered nurse or nurse practitioner who:**
 1. Holds a current NZ Annual Practising Certificate.
 2. Have established and **documented** professional partnership with a **responsible clinician** (accredited **cervical sample taker**). The **responsible clinician** will be available to provide clinical support, take responsibility for results requiring follow-up or referral, and undertake follow up liquid-based cytology (LBC) sample taking.
 3. Have completed a formal assessment and agreement with the nominated responsible clinician, who will take responsibility for oversight.

4. Have completed the required four NCSP Cervical Screening with Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) Testing Training Modules. These are available at [LearnOnline](#).
5. Be familiar with the updated National Cervical Screening Programme Policies and Standards Section Three:
 - [National Cervical Screening Programme Policies and Standards Section Three: Cervical Screening Services \(PDF 1.8MB\)](#)
 - [Clinical Practice Guidelines for Cervical Screening in Aotearoa New Zealand \(PDF 2.8MB\)](#)

All HPV screen-takers working in a professional partnership with a **responsible clinician** must provide HPV self-testing with the HPI number and facility code of the responsible clinician.

Responsible clinicians must keep a written record of people they have a formal professional partnership with or who are working under their delegation. This should include the date and duration of professional partnership or delegation, review date, record of appropriate training and any exceptions or limitations. [Download the professional partnership clinical assessment for HPV screen takers \(DOCX 879KB\)](#) (this can also be found in Appendix 3: HPV Screen taker Professional Partnership assessment and agreement in the full NCSP Policies and Standards Document).

To maintain competency, HPV screen-takers must attend a cervical screening update session no less than once every two years and complete a peer-assessment every two years. Professional partnership clinical assessments should be retained and renewed every two years following required update training. For more information about professional partnerships and maintaining competency, refer to [Sections 3.1.7 and 3.1.8 \(Cervical Screening Services\)](#) of the NCSP Policies and Standards.

[For more information download the Competencies for Cervical Screening Training and Education 2023 \(DOCX 3.1MB\)](#).

References

[NCSP Policies and Standards November 2023](#)

[Cervical screening training pathways – Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora](#)

[Competencies for Cervical Screening Training and Education 2023](#)

[Friday 10 November 2023 – NCSP Update: HPV Primary Screening New Roles and Responsibilities](#)

[Clinical Practice Guidelines for Cervical Screening in Aotearoa New Zealand \(PDF 2.8MB\)](#)