FAQs for Primary Care

National Cervical Screening Programme (NCSP)
Population-based Register Review

Health New Zealand
Te Whatu Ora

Question	Answer
Do we need to recall patients?	No change is required to current recall practice. Primary care providers remain responsible for inviting women to screen. Providers should continue routine invitation, recall, and follow-up for cervical screening in line with current NCSP guidance and established local processes. The NCSP Register supports national screening records and is moving towards a more centralised invitation and recall process over time. If a participant is concerned they may have missed out on screening, and they are aged 25 to 69, they can call the local NCSP Register team on 0800 729 729.
What should providers tell participants who are concerned about the review?	Providers can advise participants that cervical screening remains important and safe, and that regular screening and HPV immunisation remain the best protection against cervical cancer. The review was commissioned by Health NZ as part of its commitment to quality, safety, and continuous improvement. An Action Plan is in place and improvements are being implemented. If a participant is concerned about their screening pathway, providers should check the participant's screening history and follow current NCSP guidance or contact the NCSP Register team for support. Participant information remains secure, and the review did not identify a data breach.
Were any people harmed because of issues identified in the Register?	The NCSP Register review identified the possibility of undetected harm. Health NZ is examining the clinical implications of any delays that may have occurred, including whether any delay may have contributed to a delayed diagnosis. This work includes a detailed clinical case review process.
What steps has Health NZ taken to ensure safety?	In response to the initial recommendations, Health NZ invested approximately $1.4m to support urgent assessment, clinical safety assurance, and early remediation activity. Health NZ is continuing quality assurance and remediation work through the Action Plan to strengthen participant safety, system performance, monitoring, and data quality.

Is the data provided to PHOs via the Cervical Screening Summary report accurate?	Data held within the Cervical Screening Summary report is sourced from information held on the NCSP Register. Some participants have a blank status while their information is reviewed by NCSP Clinicians. If you think information provided is incorrect, please contact your local NCSP Register team on 0800 729 729 or email screening@health.govt.nz
Are there any changes to eligibility, screening intervals, or clinical guidelines?	No. There are no changes to current eligibility, screening intervals, clinical guidance, or reporting requirements arising directly from the review findings. Providers should continue to follow current NCSP guidance and established clinical pathways.
What should providers do if a participant thinks they may be overdue for screening, or have missed a notification?	Providers should check the participant's screening history, confirm whether screening is due based on current NCSP guidance, and support the participant to screen if they are eligible and due. If the provider is unsure or identifies a participant pathway concern, they should contact the local NCSP Register team on 0800 729 729.
Will participants be contacted directly by Health NZ if follow-up is needed?	Where follow-up is required through NCSP processes, participants may be contacted through existing programme communication and support pathways. Primary care providers should continue routine invitation, recall, result communication, and follow-up in line with current NCSP guidance and local processes. If providers are concerned about a participant's pathway status, they should contact the local NCSP Register team on 0800 729 729.
Do providers need to change any current screening or follow-up processes?	No. Providers should continue standard screening and follow-up processes in accordance with current NCSP guidance. There are no changes to current clinical guidance or reporting requirements arising directly from the review findings.
What should I do if I identify a participant screening pathway issue?	Providers should follow current NCSP guidance and established local clinical pathways. If a participant pathway concern is identified, contact the local NCSP Register team on 0800 729 729 for support and continue to use existing NCSP escalation processes where needed.
Who should providers contact if they have questions?	Providers should contact their local NCSP Register team on 0800 729 729. For broader programme questions that cannot be addressed through existing guidance or local escalation processes, providers can seek support through established NCSP communication channels.
Can providers continue to rely on information held in the Register?	Yes. The Register continues to support delivery of the National Cervical Screening Programme and remains the national source of information for screening pathway management. Health NZ is actively progressing recommendations to further strengthen system performance, monitoring, and data quality through the Action Plan.

Is participant information secure?	Yes. Information held within the Register remains secure. The review did not identify a data breach. Protecting participant information remains a priority for Health NZ.
How will providers be kept informed?	Health NZ is engaging with key stakeholders, sector partners, and staff about the review findings and implementation of the recommendations. Updates will continue to be provided through established NCSP communication channels.