

Using text messages to improve screening uptake – Dos & Don'ts

For the Breast, Cervical and Bowel Cancer Screening Programmes

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Cervical Cancer Screening

- Who is eligible
- Text messaging dos & don'ts
- Helpful guidance



Cervical Cancer Screening Eligibility Information

- When people are invited:

Under 25	Up to 6 months before 25 th birthday
25 to 49	Every 3 years
50 to 64	Every 5 years
65 or older	Only if 1 of last 3 tests was abnormal

- Cervical screening is not available for people under the age of 25 (unless they have had their invite letter which can arrive up to 6 months before)
- A screening test can be requested by women who are older than 65 if they have never had a cervical screen, or if they have not had one since the age of 50

Text Messaging Top Tips



DO NOT rely on practice systems to have up to date cervical screening information. The Cervical Screening Management System (CSMS)* is the only system that will hold current information on a person's screening history.



DO use PNLs (prior notification lists) to identify non-responders. They are sent via an email to your practice by the Cervical Screening Administration Service (call/recall) and can also be viewed on the CSMS.



DO always check the CSMS before identifying who should be sent a text message. The CSMS will tell you when patients are due/ if they are overdue for screening.

*Open Exeter has been replaced by the Cervical Screening Management System.



Helpful Guidance

Cervical Cancer Screening Tool Kit – Produced by HWE ICB

This tool kit has been created for GP practices in Hertfordshire and West Essex, to support efforts to increase the uptake of cervical cancer screening.

Download the tool kit here: [Cervical Screening Tool Kit - Herts and West Essex ICS](#)

Bowel Cancer Screening

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Bowel Cancer Screening Eligibility Information

- Bowel cancer screening is offered every 2 years to men and women aged 54 to 74
- The bowel cancer screening test (faecal immunochemical test) is sent to eligible people's home address by post
- The test is completed at home and sent off to a central laboratory for testing
- Soon, men and women aged 50 and 52 will be eligible to be invited to complete a bowel cancer screening test
- People older than 74 can request screening every 2 years by calling the free helpline on 0800 707 60 60

Text Messaging Top Tips



DO ensure patient's bowel cancer screening results are recorded. GPs are informed of their patient's bowel cancer screening results (including if a patient did not respond to their bowel cancer screening offer) either electronically or by letter.



DO focus on using text messaging to encourage non-responders or first attenders. Use your practice system to identify these cohorts, ensuring your practice system holds the up-to-date information.



DO engage with your PCN on any bowel cancer uptake projects you are planning or need support with, including the use of text messaging.



Helpful Guidance

Bowel cancer screening primary care good practice guide – Produced by Cancer Research UK

This guide has been created for health professionals, to support primary care to understand and confidently communicate the details of the bowel cancer screening programme to their practice population and to provide practical steps to increase the uptake of bowel cancer screening.

Download the guide here: [Bowel Screening Good Practice Guide - UK-wide | Publications \(cancerresearchuk.org\)](https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/publications/bowel-screening-good-practice-guide-uk-wide)

Breast Cancer Screening

- Who is eligible
- Text messaging dos & don'ts



Breast Cancer Screening Eligibility Information

- Women are eligible for breast cancer screening from 50 years old, up to their 71st birthday
- Women attend either a mobile van or hospital unit for a mammogram
- Women will receive an invite letter through the post every 3 years, when their practice is due for screening*
- Some women may not get their first invitation until they are 52 because of when their practice is due for screening*
- Women should receive their final breast screen between the ages of 68, up to their 71st birthday
- Women 71 years of age and older can self refer themselves for breast screening every 3 years

*Women living in Three Rivers, Hertsmere and Watford (covered by the North London Breast Screening Service) are invited based on age, rather than by GP practice.

*Women covered by the North London Breast Screening Service will receive their first invite at age 50.

Text Messaging Top Tips



DO NOT send texts to women when your GP practice is not due for screening*. Your breast screening provider will notify you when they will be inviting women registered to your GP practice.



DO consult with your breast screening provider before you do any text messaging work.



DO work with your breast screening service if you would like to text your eligible patients.

*This excludes practices in Three Rivers, Hertsmere and Watford (covered by the North London Breast Screening Service)



Further Resources

Cervical Screening

CSMS Information: [New NHS Cervical Screening Management System - NHS Digital](#)

CSAS: [Primary Care Support - CSAS](#)

Bowel Screening

East of England Bowel Cancer Screening Hub: [Bowel Cancer Screening Programme | NUH](#)

Breast Screening

[Breast screening \(mammogram\) - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)

HWE Breast Screening Services:

- [Breastscreening \(bhbs.nhs.uk\)](#)
- [Breastscreening \(london-breastscreening.org.uk\)](#)
- [Our services | Princess Alexandra Hospital \(pah.nhs.uk\)](#)

Thank You



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