

# Cancer screening services

## How your practice can support people to access cancer screening services during recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic

Across the UK, national cancer screening programmes covering bowel, breast and cervical are now restarting, however this varies across each nation and programme. In your practice, you can support people to access cancer screening services. Below are some useful tips.

### What can you do to support your eligible practice population?

Be alert to people who have missed out on their screening appointment:

- those who had their invitation delayed
- those who were scheduled for screening, but their appointment could not go ahead
- those who were eligible for screening but did not attend
- those who were screened and received a positive result, however they are awaiting further tests or did not want to attend for further tests due to concerns about COVID-19

#### Tips for all cancer screening programmes

-  Understand the **barriers** to participating which may be exacerbated by the pandemic.
-  Be proactive in contacting people about their cancer screening and raising it opportunistically in other appointments.
-  Review practice records or use final non-responder lists to identify whose screening may have been affected.
-  Those that prefer not to participate in screening at the moment should be safety netted, including making them aware that if they experience any changes that are not normal for them they should seek advice from a health professional.

-  Bowel and breast screening programmes do not involve as much contact with primary care as cervical screening does, but as they restart, it will be helpful for all staff to be able to explain what happens for each programme, and the benefits and harms of taking part.

-  A negative result does not guarantee the patient not having or developing cancer in the future. It is important for patients to be aware and to speak to a health professional if they notice anything new or unusual, even if they have recently participated in a cancer screening programme.

#### Further resources and support

- See CRUK's [screening information](#) and its dedicated [web pages for Health Professionals](#)
- Contact CRUK Facilitators ([facilitators@cancer.org.uk](mailto:facilitators@cancer.org.uk)) for practical support for primary care
- For further information or to give feedback contact [earlydiagnosis@cancer.org.uk](mailto:earlydiagnosis@cancer.org.uk)