

**Very
Important
Invitation**



**Raising Awareness
Of Cervical
Screening**

CERVICAL SCREENING LAURA'S BLOG



This week is my turn to write our blog. Hi everyone, this week's blog post is coming from Laura, I work as a Health Educator Nurse with the Suffolk GP Federation's Very Important Invitation Project. A project that puts you at the centre and wants to ensure that all people with a cervix have access to, and are equipped to attend cervical screening appointments.

Here at the project, we are celebrating the 12 Days of Christmas and will be sharing with you, the reasonable adjustments which can be made to make screening easier for you. So, our topic this week is, what is a reasonable adjustment?

A reasonable adjustment can relate to removing or reducing a disadvantage related to a person's disability or circumstance. In terms of cervical screening, reasonable adjustments are focused on what YOU as the patient need to be able to attend or even consider attending an appointment. We need to ensure that we are able to visualise and sample the cervix with the reassurance that the sample is high quality and visual assessment can be made.

More commonly requested reasonable adjustments we offer are:

- Bringing a trusted person with you to your appointment: this could be a friend, mother, father, boyfriend, girlfriend, sister, daughter – whoever you trust the most to make you feel safe and comforted. This doesn't necessarily mean this person will need to see any of your body parts. We can work this out so you maintain your privacy.
- Listening to music: we don't mind anything; we may even like to hear it too! We only ask that we can gain consent throughout and that you know you can withdraw your consent at any stage. For example, we may agree a word to use if you'd like to stop if that's something you'd prefer. You are in control at all times.

- Evening & weekend appointments: did you know we can offer these throughout Suffolk? Our health educators also work in these clinics alongside many other experienced clinicians. So, if you build up trust with a health educator, we are able to arrange that you can see them for your screening too.
- Pre-screening: we can offer an appointment to simply meet your clinician and have a look at the environment and equipment we use. There is no obligation to have your screening done there and then; sometimes it takes multiple visits to feel able to try to have the sample taken – and this is ok. We can also offer a questionnaire which can communicate something without verbally saying it – because some things can be hard to say out loud.

There really is nothing which we won't be open to discussing with you. We want to ensure everyone with a cervix is able to make an informed choice about whether or not they'd like to consider cervical screening. Confidentiality is maintained at all times, unless there is a threat to yourself or someone else – this means we may need to seek further assistance or advice dependent on the situation.

We hope you are having a great festive period, we know this time of year can throw out all sorts of emotions, so please be kind to yourselves. If you are overdue your screening, why not make it your mission in 2023 to speak to us if there is something stopping you going. We really do care.

The Very Important Invitation team x