

Freedom of Information request 142-18

Request

1. Besides from awareness raising initiatives, what actions have your health board taken to ensure more women in your area can participate in the cervical screening programme in the last year (February 2017 – February 2018)? This may include extending GP opening hours, arranging screening clinics, ensuring women can access appointments at sexual health or women's health services.
2. Are women able to attend cervical screening at GUM / sexual health services in your area? Please delete as appropriate:
 - a. All women can access cervical screening through sexual health services
 - b. Some women are able to receive their cervical screening on an opportunistic basis (if this is the case, please specify which group/s of women)
 - c. Women are unable to receive cervical screening at sexual health services in our area.
3. Has access to cervical screening through GUM/ sexual health services in your area increased or decreased over the last five years in your area. Please give details if so, eg. numbers of cervical screening samples collected per year through GUM/sexual health services
4. Are women able to access cervical screening anywhere other than their GP, and sexual health service (if applicable)? This may include family planning clinics and through other community clinics and services

Response

1. In this period NHS Borders Public Health Screening Team have provided:
 - "Staff Amnesty Smear Clinics" in the Borders General Hospital outwith normal working hours.
 - Pilot work with Borders GP Practices developing a toolkit of resources to engage and encourage women to attend cervical screening, supported by providing additional appointments at BGH for their patients.
 - Identified areas of inequalities and target populations, supporting services to enable these groups to access cervical screening.
 - Sourced additional external funding to provide a range of support resources to facilitate education & training.
 - Staff training around the National Cervical Screening Programme.
 - Work with Learning Disability Provider services has commenced.
2. Statement best fits -

We do not promote GUM/sexual health services as an option for routine cervical screening. However, should a woman attend and request a smear test this is almost always carried out, unless she attends with other complex issues which take precedence, at which point she would be encouraged to arrange an appointment with her GP practice.
3. "Access" to cervical screening through GUM/sexual health services has not changed as such in recent years.

Please find below the number of smears taken at Sexual Health Clinics:

Year	No. smears taken
2017/18	125
2016/17	167
2015/16	197
2014/15	202
2013/14	211

4. Apart from NHS staff accessing “Staff Amnesty Smear Clinics” in the Borders General Hospital outwith normal working hours, NHS Borders Public Health Screening Team members are not aware of any other places where women can access cervical screening other than their GP and GUM/sexual health services.

If you are not satisfied with the way your request has been handled or the decision given, you may ask NHS Borders to review its actions and the decision. If you would like to request a review please apply in writing to, Freedom of Information Review, NHS Borders, Room 2EC3, Education Centre, Borders General Hospital, Melrose, TD6 9BS or foi.enquiries@borders.scot.nhs.uk.

The request for a review should include your name and address for correspondence, the request for information to which the request relates and the issue which you wish to be reviewed. Please state the reference number **142-18** on this request. Your request should be made within 40 working days from receipt of this letter.

If following this review, you remain dissatisfied with the outcome, you may appeal to the Scottish Information Commissioner and request an investigation of your complaint. Your request to the Scottish Information Commissioner should be in writing (or other permanent form), stating your name and an address for correspondence. You should provide the details of the request and your reasons for dissatisfaction with both the original response by NHS Borders and your reasons for dissatisfaction with the outcome of the internal review. Your application for an investigation by the Scottish Information Commissioner must be made within six months of your receipt of the response with which you are dissatisfied. The address for the Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner is, Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner, Kinburn Castle, Doubledykes Road, St Andrews, Fife.