

Doctors are encouraged to stay vigilant of HPV vaccination and cervical screening in South Australia particularly in populations who experience significant barriers to screening. This comes amidst recent research launched at the International Papilloma Virus1 Conference in Sydney which suggests that by 2022 cervical cancer could be considered rare to the point of virtual elimination should vaccination and screening programs be continued.

SHINE SA is South Australia's key sexual and reproductive health agency, and the State's sole training provider for the Cervical Screening Credentialing Program, a course which ensures doctors and nurses are skilled to conduct screening tests for the human papilloma virus (HPV).

SHINE SA's CEO Natasha Miliotis looks forward to virtual elimination however warns against complacency on HPV vaccination and screening:

"Virtual elimination relies on clinicians continuing to ensure high rates of vaccination for all young people prior to becoming sexually active, as well as regular five yearly screening for all people over 25 with a cervix.

Young people who missed the HPV vaccination in Year 8 should receive a catch up vaccination. But regardless of HPV vaccination status, all people over 25 with a cervix should still receive cervical screening.

However some South Australians are at risk of being left behind. Groups such as Aboriginal people and new arrivals are still experiencing significant barriers to screening due to geographic isolation or language difficulties.

For others, internal examinations can be difficult, particularly for trans men or people who have experienced trauma. The good news for high risk groups is that there is now an option of self-collected samples for those who meet criteria as outlined in the National guidelines².

We would encourage all GPs to continue working to close the gaps on HPV vaccination and cervical screening for their patients."

People who think they have missed HPV vaccination or find cervical screening difficult are encouraged to call SHINE SA 1300 794 584 for an appointment.

NATASHA MILIOTIS CEO

1 Human papillomavirus is the name for a group of viruses. HPV is a common infection that affects the surface of different areas of the body, such as the cervix, vagina and skin.

2 National Cervical Screening Program: Guidelines for the management of screen-detected abnormalities, screening in specific populations and investigation of abnormal vaginal bleeding

https://wiki.cancer.org.au/australia/Guidelines:Cervical_cancer/Screening)

Contacts

Tracey Hutt
0434 937 036
mailto:tracey.hutt@shinesa.org.au