

MEDIA RELEASE

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HEALTH LEADERS LAUNCH CAMPAIGN TO INCREASE SMEAR TEST TAKE UP AT THURROCK'S HEALTH HUBS

A campaign to increase the numbers of women taking up their smear test has been released this week by Thurrock Clinical Commissioning Group.

Figures from Public Health England's Cancer Screening 2015/16 suggest that in Thurrock 27% of women are failing to attend their screening tests. One of the reasons could be embarrassment or lack of awareness that there are screening appointments after work and at weekends at Thurrock's new Health Hubs.

NHS Direct confirm that around 3,000 cases of cervical cancer are diagnosed each year in the UK. It is possible for women of all ages to develop cervical cancer. A regular smear test can reduce the number of women who develop cervical cancer and the number of women who die from the disease.

Rahul Chaudhari, Head of Primary Care at Thurrock CCG said:

"We are making a plea this March for women to utilise our nurses at the Health Hubs and ensure they attend their smear test. As Jo's Cervical Cancer Trust campaigned earlier this year, many cases of cervical cancer can be prevented by regular smear testing. We hope that by raising awareness we'll improve rates of screening."

Robert Music from Jo's Cervical Cancer Trust said:

"It is great to see this new initiative from Thurrock CCG. Last year only 72.7% of women went for their smear test when invited and providing the opportunity to book smear tests on the weekend or in the evening will make it much easier for women, in particular those who work, to attend. Smear tests prevent 75% of cervical cancers from developing and I would encourage all women to attend, it is a five minute test but it is one that could save your life."

Thurrock's Health Hubs have benefited from NHS funding to open seven days a week until 31 March 2017. The Health Hubs are based in Grays, Corringham, Tilbury and Purfleet/South Ockendon and appointments can be booked by a person's GP practice. Nurses, who carry out smear tests, can be booked up to a week in advance. After 31 March hubs will open on Wednesday evenings and weekends.

For more information about the Health Hubs, please visit: www.thurrockccg.nhs.net

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Media enquiries: Contact the Communications Team at Thurrock CCG, 01375 365 810 or email: thurrock.ccg@nhs.net

- Figures on Cancer Screening tests and diagnostics were obtained from Public Health England, website accessed 24 February 2017

<https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/cancerservices/data#page/3/qid/1938132830/pat/19/pat/E38000185/ati/7/are/F81742/iid/91341/age/167/sex/2>

About Thurrock Clinical Commissioning Group

Thurrock Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is responsible for the commissioning and delivery of local health care services. The CCG buys healthcare from hospitals, community and mental health services and some specialist services (service contracts with GPs, dentists, pharmacists and opticians are managed by [NHS England](#)).

Driven by clinicians, the CCG is supported by a wide range of professionals and strategic partners, to commission and deliver joined up seamless quality services to the public, patients and carers of Thurrock. Our vision is that the health and care experience for the people of Thurrock will be improved as a result of our working together. Further information about Thurrock Clinical Commissioning Group is available from www.thurrockccg.nhs.uk

About Jo's Cervical Cancer Trust

Jo's Cervical Cancer Trust is the only UK charity dedicated to women affected by cervical cancer and cervical abnormalities. The Trust provides information, emotional and practical support to women, their families and friends affected 24 hours a day and at every step of the journey. For more information visit: www.jostrust.org.uk