

<p>PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION WESTERN CAPE: DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH</p>
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CIRCULAR: H84/1995

DATED 22/11/1995

PROVINCIAL CERVICAL SCREENING POLICY

This Circular replaces Circular H 64/1994 dated 10/8/94.

PREAMBLE

Cervical smears are taken to detect cancer of the female cervix.

In view of the financial constraints and facilities available, the Administration has had to revise its policy regarding cervical screening to one which is affordable and manageable with the emphasis on maximising the total number of women screened rather than increasing the frequency of screening the same women.

1. Cervical Screening Programme

1.1 Cervical smears should be taken from all women at approximately the age of 30, 40, and 50 years, that is, at least three times in every woman's lifetime with a 10 years interval.

- 1.2 Any woman over the age of 30 years who has never had a cervical smear taken, or over the age of 40 years who has not had a cervical smear taken during the last 10 years, should have one taken.
- 1.3 It is important that women be informed of the reason for the taking of the smear and that follow-up treatment may be necessary – a reliable address of the patient must, therefore, be obtained in order to facilitate follow-up treatment.
- 1.4 The screening programme should be incorporated into Primary Health Care Services as far as possible.
- 1.5 Staff at Primary Health Care Services should create an awareness of the importance of screening the target group, in order to reach as many women as possible.
- 1.6 Women whose ages fall outside the screening programme, who are not considered to be at risk and for whom there are no clinical indications for cervical testing, should be referred to an appropriate service if they request a cervical smear.

2. Exceptions to the above Policy
 - 2.1 Any woman who is considered to be clinically at risk for carcinoma of the cervix, should have a smear taken during her visit to the Clinic/Out-patient Department.
 - 2.2 All women who attend a Family Planning Clinic, should have an annual visual cervical examination as part of their general examination. Any suspicious pathological manifestation must receive immediate attention.
 - 2.3 All women who undergo surgical contraception (sterilisation or hysterectomy) should have had a cervical smear taken at least a year prior to surgery to exclude pathology.
3. Please bring the above Cervical Screening Policy to the attention of all persons concerned.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT