

# Cervical Cancer Awareness Month

January



## Education, engagement and inclusion for employees.

Cervical Cancer Prevention Week 2026 is a dedicated awareness campaign aimed at educating people about cervical cancer, its prevention, and the importance of regular screenings. Cervical cancer is highly preventable, and this week helps remind employees to prioritise cervical health and take steps to reduce their risk.



## Why promote Cervical Cancer Awareness Week in your workplace?

- Most cervical cancer cases are diagnosed in those aged 30 to 45 – in other words, those of working age
- The NHS cervical screening programme (offered to women and people with a cervix aged 25–64) is highly effective at preventing cervical cancer
- Five million women were not up to date with cervical screening as of November 2024 – that's one in three of those eligible
- Offering education and screening support can make a real difference to employees, as well as to the significant costs associated with cancer

**65%**

Of surveyed employees agreed that cancer prevention and early detection education is important in the workplace.

**55%**

Agreed that employers have an actual responsibility to support cancer prevention and early detection education.

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Given the significant number of people of working age who are affected by cancer, and the devastating impact the illness can have on them and their loved ones, it is vital for employers to appropriately support their staff.

Ian Talbot, CEO, Healix Health Services

## Five easy ways to promote the campaign



01

Share the employee brochure provided in the Perci Health cancer awareness campaign hub

02

Display the provided posters in areas of high footfall around the workplace, such as breakout areas, kitchens and bathrooms

03

Share the ready-to-go social media posts on your chosen channels, offering reliable stats about cervical cancer

04

Post a short awareness message on Slack, Teams or the company intranet, explaining the importance of the campaign

05

Encourage employees to book outstanding screening appointments and offer flexible time off to attend

## How to have sensitive conversations during a cancer awareness campaign

Feeling uncomfortable about having conversations about cancer and screening is a significant barrier to running an engaging cancer awareness campaign. Here's how managers can approach them.



**DO** Use inclusive language. For example, at Perci, we use, 'Women and people with a cervix' and 'eligible people' when we talk about cervical screening.



**DO** Signpost employees to reputable information (like the Perci campaign awareness assets) and sources of advice (like Macmillan, NHS, their GP or Perci cancer nurse specialists).



**DO** Plan how to respond if an employee raises concerns, before you actually need to.



**DON'T** Ask employees whether they are up to date on screening. Instead, direct employees to the NHS app to check the date of their last results.



**DON'T** Offer medical advice yourself or share personal stories about screening experiences or cancer.

## How can employers support screening uptake?

It's vital to offer hesitant employees the reassurance they need to overcome barriers to screening. A YouGov survey of 3,000 people across the UK found that, of eligible people who were behind on screening:



**42% had found cervical screening painful previously.**

Cervical screening can be uncomfortable, but it shouldn't be painful. It's fine to ask for adjustments and/or pause the test if you need to.



**40% did not want a man to carry out the screening test.**

Most cervical screens will be carried out by a female nurse or doctor. It's possible to check this when booking or to ask for an appointment in a location where that can be provided.



**19% said they were too embarrassed to go for screening.**

The screening test is quick and discreet. It's also fine to take a friend or family member for support.

Many people who are behind on screenings have cited work conflicts or lack of time. One of the most vital reassurances an employer can offer is that employees can take flexible time off for healthcare appointments, without having to specify the nature of the appointment. Managers can also model attending health appointments during working hours.

## Trusted cervical screening resources

[gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) • [nhs.uk](https://www.nhs.uk) • [macmillan.org.uk](https://www.macmillan.org.uk) • [cancerresearchuk.org](https://www.cancerresearchuk.org)

It's also a good idea to research screening support local to your workplace.