

CANCER PREVENTION AND CONTROL BRANCH

2023

Cervical Cancer

AWARENESS MONTH TOOLKIT



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**
Division of Public Health



Introduction

This toolkit is designed for NC Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program (BCCCP) providers to encourage communication with their patients and community members about cervical cancer. The resources in this toolkit will provide information on NC BCCCP, early detection, regular cervical screenings and human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccines.

You can tailor this messaging to your intended audience or audiences. Your organization offers unique strengths and expertise. Make sure to capitalize on them to make your campaign effective.

For more information or additional resources, contact Erin Brown at erin.brown@dhhs.nc.gov.

Sample Article

(Your organization) recognizes January as Cervical Cancer Awareness month. All women are at risk for cervical cancer, though it occurs most often in women over age 30. Almost all cervical cancers are caused by human papillomavirus (HPV), a common virus that can be passed from one person to another during sex. Screening tests and the HPV vaccine can help prevent cervical cancer. When it is found early, cervical cancer is highly treatable and associated with long survival and good quality of life. The NC State Center for Health Statistics projected that in 2022, more than 409 women in North Carolina will be diagnosed with cervical cancer, and over 126 will die from this disease. *(You may wish to include county projections instead: <https://schs.dph.ncdhhs.gov/data/cancer/projections.htm>)*

Pap tests and HPV tests are the two screening tests that can help prevent cervical cancer or find it early. The Pap test (or Pap smear) looks for precancers which are cell changes on the cervix that might become cervical cancer if they are not treated appropriately. The HPV test looks for human papillomavirus that can cause these cell changes. If you are uninsured or underinsured, you may qualify for free cervical cancer screenings through the North Carolina Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program (NC BCCCP). NC BCCCP provides free or low-cost breast and cervical cancer screenings and follow-up to eligible women. NC BCCCP services are provided at *(clinic/organization)*. Call *(number)* to see if you qualify and schedule your cervical cancer screenings.

The main risk factor for developing cervical cancer is having an HPV type that causes cervical cancer, but other things can increase your risk. The most important thing you can do to help prevent cervical cancer is to get vaccinated early and have regular screening tests. The HPV vaccination is recommended for preteens ages 11-12 years but can be given starting at age 9 and is recommended for everyone through age 26 years if they are not vaccinated already. While HPV vaccination prevents new HPV infections, it does not treat existing infections or diseases. This is why the HPV vaccine works best when given before any exposure to HPV. You should still get screened for cervical cancer regularly, even if you received the HPV vaccine.

Talk with your doctor about your risk factors and they can help you decide how often to screen for cervical cancer, and which tests you need. For more information about NC BCCCP visit <https://bcccp.dph.ncdhhs.gov/> . For more information about NC BCCCP services at *(organization name)*, or to schedule a cervical cancer screening, call *(number)*.

Sample Proclamation

If you want to reach out to your local elected leaders to help elevate awareness, here's a proclamation template you can customize for local audiences. Please fill in local data and name/title as appropriate. Cervical cancer data specific to your county can be found in the [Projected New Cancer Cases and Deaths for Selected Sites by County, 2021](#) table located on the NC State Center for Health Statistics website under Cancer Projections (<https://schs.dph.ncdhhs.gov/data/cancer/projections.htm>).

CERVICAL CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

(For local governments) WHEREAS, in North Carolina, 409 women were diagnosed with invasive cervical cancer, and 126 women died of cervical cancer in 2022¹; and

WHEREAS, an estimated 13,000 new cases of invasive cervical cancer are diagnosed each year nationwide and Hispanic women have the highest rates of developing cervical cancer, and Black women have the highest rates of dying from cervical cancer²; and

WHEREAS, it is likely that factors such as income, education, access to health care, stress and racism are among the major causes of the poorer health of minorities on many health measures leading to a greater need for screening and early detection; and

WHEREAS, the North Carolina Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program (NC BCCCP) in the NC Department of Health and Human Services provides free or low-cost breast and cervical cancer screenings and follow-up to eligible uninsured or underinsured women; and

WHEREAS, regular cervical cancer screening tests are an effective way to detect the disease early, allowing for early diagnosis and treatment which significantly increase a woman's chance of survival; and

WHEREAS, increased awareness of prevention and detection techniques among patients and health care providers is a key component in safe-guarding cervical health; with HPV vaccination, as well as routine screening and follow-up, cervical cancer is highly preventable; and

WHEREAS, the State of North Carolina recognizes Cervical Cancer Awareness and encourages all citizens to recognize that Cervical Cancer is treatable, and routine screening and HPV vaccinations can save lives;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, (Local Elected Leader Name/Title) do hereby proclaim January 2023, as CERVICAL CANCER AWARENESS MONTH" in xxxxxx County and commend its observance to all our citizens.

¹ North Carolina State Center for Health Statistics Cancer Projections
<https://schs.dph.ncdhhs.gov/schs/CCR/ProjectionsBySiteFinal-2022.pdf>

² Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Cervical Cancer Statistics
<https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/cervical/statistics/index.htm>
NCDHHS • Division of Public Health • Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program,
2023 Cervical Cancer Awareness Month Toolkit • September 2022

Sample Reddit Ask Me Anything (AMA)

If someone in your organization is familiar with Reddit, hosting an *Ask Me Anything* (AMA) is a great way to provide information on cervical cancer and NC BCCCP. Your organization can post an introduction in the *r/AMA* sub and other users can respond with questions or comments. Users can also “upvote” other questions/comments to show that they’re interested in knowing the answer to those questions as well. Schedule your AMA to have a set start/stop time so you can have someone monitor the post for interactions.

Consider having one of your providers, a cancer survivor, or a patient who utilizes the program co-host with you to answer a wider variety of questions.

I’m a (job title) in the North Carolina Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program (NC BCCCP). I help provide free or low-cost breast and cervical cancer screenings and follow-ups for eligible women in North Carolina. AMA

Sample Social Media

If your organization uses social media sites such as Facebook, Instagram or Twitter, Cervical Cancer Awareness Month is a great time to engage with your audience and educate about your services. Communication surrounding cervical cancer should consider health literacy, promote patient-provider discussions of family history, risk and HPV vaccination.

Sample Social Media Posts

1. We're kicking off #CervicalCancer Awareness Month! Read about ways to reduce your risk of Cervical Cancer here: <http://bit.ly/2yNSCkq>
2. Regular screening tests are the best tools doctors have to find cervical cancer early. Confused about which screening test to get? Talk to your doctor about whether you need a pap test, HPV test, or both: <http://bit.ly/2zMCHAX>
3. As parents, you do everything you can to protect your kids' health. Today, there's a way to prevent #CervicalCancer! The HPV vaccine is a safe and effective way to prevent HPV, the leading cause of cervical cancer. <https://bit.ly/36qOIT9>
4. The North Carolina Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program (NC BCCCP) provides free or low-cost breast and cervical cancer screenings and follow-up to eligible women. Learn more about the program here: <https://bit.ly/3EKF1Kw>
5. Ana was diagnosed with cervical cancer at age 36 with two young children. Read [her story](#) to find out how she learned to advocate for herself and why she's encouraging people to vaccinate their children for HPV.

Resources

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2021. Basic Information About Cervical Cancer. Available at: < https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/cervical/basic_info/ > [Accessed 14 September 2022].

George Washington Cancer Center; Social Media Toolkit Archive. January 2020. Cervical Cancer Awareness Month Social Media Toolkit. https://cancercontroltap.smhs.gwu.edu/sites/g/files/zaskib661/files/2021-11/Cervical%20Cancer%20Social%20Media%20Toolkit%202020_508%20in%20progress.pdf [Accessed 14 September 2022]

NC DPH: Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program. *Breast and cervical cancer control program*. Available at: < <https://bcccp.dph.ncdhhs.gov/> > [Accessed 14 September 2022].

NC DPH: NC State Center for State Statistics. *North Carolina Cancer Projections*. Available at: <https://schs.dph.ncdhhs.gov/schs/CCR/ProjectionsByCountyFinal-2022.pdf> [Accessed 14 September 2022].

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR ADDITIONAL RESOURCES CONTACT:

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