

# Smertaker Training Prospectus 2011-2012



## Smertaker Training Prospectus 2011-2012

'CervicalCheck smertakers will be provided with training opportunities – initial and update – by the Programme on an ongoing basis to foster and maintain quality cervical smertaking.' (National Cancer Screening Service; Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Cervical Screening, First Edition 2009)

### Introduction

CervicalCheck – The National Cervical Screening Programme is a quality assured, organised and population-based screening programme that is managed by the National Cancer Screening Service (NCSS).

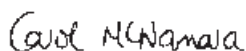
Smertaker training has been identified as critical in the provision of a quality assured cervical screening programme to the women of Ireland.

CervicalCheck has developed and delivers accredited smertaker training programmes for health professionals in line with the recommendations of the 'Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Cervical Screening' (2009). The training opportunities available are provided in partnership with the Irish College of General Practitioners, the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (Nursing Faculty) and the National University of Ireland Galway.

This training prospectus has been compiled as a useful resource for those interested in participating in smertaker training for the academic year 2011-2012.

We hope that you will find a course suited to your learning needs.

Places on courses are limited therefore early application is advisable.



**Carol McNamara**

*National Smertaker Training Co-ordinator*

*CervicalCheck – The National Cervical Screening Programme*

## Rationale for Training of Smartakers

Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Cervical Screening state that smartakers should complete a CervicalCheck recognised smartaker training course during the first three to five years following registration with CervicalCheck.

## Smartaker Training Programmes for Health Professionals 2011-2012

### Benefits of Training

#### How the Smartaker Benefits:

- Primary care contribution to meeting the minimum target of 80% coverage in reducing the incidence of cervical cancer in Ireland
- Primary care contribution to a quality assured, competency-based cervical screening service
- Increase in uptake of cervical screening as smartakers involved in training need to take additional smear tests for audit purposes
- Professional development and lifelong learning
- Smartakers who undertake training have increased rates of transformation sampling post training
- Potential to audit smartaking practice

#### How the Woman Benefits:

- Potential for better smear test experiences for women, with clear explanations provided and attention paid to their comfort
- Less risk of false reassurances to women as trained smartakers are more likely to sample the Transformation Zone (TZ), where the pre-cancerous lesions occur
- Effective training results in women having a better understanding of the importance of regular cervical smear tests and the benefits and limitations of screening
- As a result of smartaker training, women are better prepared for the consequences of results and better prepared for follow-up

#### Additional Benefits:

- Cytology laboratories report improved quality of data input as a consequence of training, which results in greater likelihood that the correct smear test history is linked to the correct woman – and less delay in receiving results
- Quality smartaker training reduces the rate of inappropriate and unsatisfactory smear tests which may cause unnecessary referrals to colposcopy

## Aim of the Smertaker Training Programme

To provide core knowledge and development of the necessary technical and communication skills to enable health professionals to deliver a quality smertaker service to women.

## Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of the training programme, the student will be able to:

- Understand the rationale behind cervical screening while recognising the importance of the criteria for early detection of cervical cancer
- Understand the relevant normal anatomy, physiology and cytopathology of the cervix and demonstrate competence in performing cervical smear tests
- Demonstrate the ability to produce and document, with appropriate history a quality laboratory sample and dispatch it appropriately
- Interpret laboratory smear test results accurately and apply screening recommendations as appropriate to each situation, with explanation of treatment options available for women who return abnormal smear tests or who have cervical cancer
- Maintain client comfort, confidence and confidentiality
- Initiate and develop greater communication skills to facilitate relationships with both clients and colleagues
- Develop support and counselling skills in relation to client needs
- Effectively promote cervical screening
- Demonstrate their knowledge of CervicalCheck – The National Cervical Screening Programme

## Course 1 – Classroom-based and Clinical Setting

### Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI) – Smertaker Training Programme for Health Professionals

This course consists of two days classroom-based teaching followed by a review study day six to 12 weeks later and a further half day for written theory assessment – a total of three and a half study days.

The theory component of these courses is combined with the clinical skills component to achieve best practice standards in smertaking. This course is usually completed within 24 weeks.

#### Details of Clinical Skills Component

1. A CervicalCheck-appointed Clinical Trainer is assigned to each trainee to support the clinical aspects of training in the trainee's own clinical setting.
2. Best practice in smertaking is modelled by the appointed Clinical Trainer who then supervises the taking of an average of three to four smear tests during the clinical visit.
3. The Clinical Trainer provides support during the training period as needed.
4. Clinical assessment in practice.
5. Submission of an audit of a minimum number of satisfactory training smear tests for quality analysis.
6. Assessment of client feedback.

## Course 2 – E-learning

### Irish College of General Practitioners (ICGP) – Theory for Cervical Smertaking

The theory component will be delivered by the ICGP via E-learning. The course consists of six topics and is completed over 12 weeks. The course requires a time commitment of at least six hours per week. All work is completed at home, based on supplied material. Assessments will be submitted by email. IT support is available from the ICGP.

This can be taken as a stand-alone module or can be combined with the clinical skills component to achieve best practice standards in smertaking. This combined course is usually completed within 24 weeks.

#### Details of Clinical Skills Component

1. Attendance at a one-day Clinical Skills workshop.
2. A CervicalCheck-appointed Clinical Trainer is assigned to each trainee to support the clinical aspects of training in the trainee's own clinical setting.
3. Best practice in smertaking is modelled by the appointed Clinical Trainer who then supervises the taking of an average of three to four smear tests at the clinical visit.
4. The Clinical Trainer provides support during the training period as needed.
5. Clinical assessment in practice.
6. Submission of an audit of a minimum number of satisfactory training smear tests for quality analysis.
7. Assessment of client feedback.

## Course 3 – Blended Learning

### National University of Ireland Galway (NUI Galway) – Best Practice in Cervical Smeartaking

Blended learning combines the use of online learning technologies with traditional face-to-face sessions.

At NUI Galway, the interactive, web-based educational tool used to supplement or replace traditional classroom teaching is called Blackboard. This is a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) that supports online learning and teaching. The module Best Practice in Cervical Screening is delivered via Blackboard.

Online learning enables student-centred teaching approaches. Every student has their own way of learning that works best for them. Blended learning supports this and allows students to study at their own pace.

Students must also attend a one-day workshop at NUI Galway. Students will receive Blackboard training at the beginning of the module and are supported by online facilitators. The module consists of six online units. The module begins in September each year and is completed by May of the following year.

This theory component is combined with the clinical skills component to achieve best practice standards in smearing.

### Details of Clinical Skills Component

1. Attendance at a one-day workshop in NUI Galway.
2. A CervicalCheck-appointed Clinical Trainer is assigned to each trainee to support the clinical aspects of training in the trainee's own clinical setting.
3. Best practice in smearing is modelled by the appointed Clinical Trainer who then supervises the taking of an average of three to four smear tests at the clinical visit.
4. The Clinical Trainer provides support during the training period as needed.
5. Clinical assessment in practice.
6. Submission of an audit of a minimum number of satisfactory training smear tests for quality analysis.
7. Assessment of client feedback.

### Student Testimonials

- *“Very interesting informative programme, paced and designed to suit both novice and experienced smearer. Really enjoyed the course”*
- *“Being able to submit assignments online was a great benefit for me as a very busy mother”*
- *“I found the course very good. I feel I do a much better job now, am more confident dealing with all aspects of care regarding CervicalCheck. I promote it daily and ask every woman in the smear test age group who comes my way if they have registered”*
- *“I found the sessions with the clinical trainer very useful in regards to improving on my current practice”*

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Who Can Apply for the Course?

Course participants must be registered or eligible to be registered as smeartakers with CervicalCheck, with access to a smeartaking practice. The course participant must provide a letter of support from their General Practitioner or Doctor Smeartaker Supervisor to undertake clinical supervision and support of the trainee's smeartaking practice during training. It is a course requirement that trainees take sufficient smear tests during their training to become effective, competent and safe smeartakers.

### How Do I Apply for the Course?

1. Review the courses outlined in this prospectus and choose the training course best suited to your personal and professional needs. Smeartaker Training Unit staff are available to discuss training courses on **061 406564/406565** or alternatively you may contact the relevant college for more information.
2. Complete the relevant application form, ensuring all sections are complete. Please note all trainees are required to be registered smeartakers with CervicalCheck before the clinical skills component commences.
3. Return the application form and course fee to the relevant college. On receipt of the completed application form, notification of course placement will be issued as soon as possible thereafter.

### How Long Does the Training Last?

The duration of training varies depending on which course type is chosen (see course outlines for specifics). In general, the theory and clinical skills components of the courses are completed within 24 weeks. Course participants may sometimes need to take in excess of 50 smear tests to achieve competency. A significant time and energy commitment is required by all students undertaking training. Extensions may be granted at the discretion of the course co-ordinators in accordance with training programme policy.

### How Much Does it Cost?

Course fees are outlined in the Course Calendar 2011-2012. They are correct at time of print but may be subject to change. Course fees are determined by the college partner. The college partner is the recipient of course fees and fees are paid directly to the chosen college.

### What Support is Available for E-learning Participants?

For students undertaking the ICGP Theory Course for Smeartakers, training is provided by the E-learning Unit prior to commencement of the course. Basic computer literacy is essential for this course. For those with minimal computer skills, pre-course training is provided free of charge by the ICGP E-learning Unit. For further details, refer to contact listing for Louise Nolan, ICGP.

### What Clinical Support Structures are in Place?

Irrespective of experience in smeartaking, all students' first recorded training smear test will be taken at their Clinical Trainer's initial visit. All trainees are appointed a Clinical Trainer who facilitates and supports the students' training in clinical practice. The trainer will model a smear test and supervise the taking of smear tests. Following this, the trainee requires the clinical supervision and support of the GP/doctor for an agreed minimum number of smear tests. The Clinical Trainer will return, if necessary, to do a final assessment of smeartaking and review overall progress and competency.

Experienced smeartakers who currently provide a cervical smear test service to women may continue to do so, but for training/audit purposes the above criteria will still apply.

### **What Recognition is Awarded for the Smertaker Training Programme?**

The Smertaker Training Programme has been awarded National University of Ireland (NUI) accreditation for RCSI and NUI Galway modules. Credits for these modules can be used towards an NUI Bachelor of Nursing.

The NUI Galway module carries a credit rating of 10 European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) credits and a certificate of accreditation is issued from the School of Nursing and Midwifery NUI Galway and CervicalCheck – The National Cervical Screening Programme on successful completion. External students undertaking the module Best Practice in Cervical Smertaking, will be eligible to apply for an exemption should they apply for a Post-Graduate Diploma in Nursing (Practice Nursing). The RCSI/NUI Galway module equates to 250 hours of learning in lecture content time, self-directed learning and course work assessment. This is equivalent to a credit rating of 10 ECTS and a certificate of accreditation is issued from the Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery, RCSI, on successful completion. External students undertaking the module Smertaker Training Programme for Health Professionals will be eligible to apply for an exemption should they apply for a Post-Graduate Diploma in Nursing (Practice Nursing/Community Nursing).

The ICGP theory course is eligible for 12 sessions of study leave. It is also approved for Competence Assurance Structure (CAS) Credits. A certificate of completion from CervicalCheck is issued upon successful completion of the clinical component of the Smertaker Training Programme.

### **What Support or Training is there Available to Doctor Smertakers?**

Doctors taking smear tests or taking responsibility for smertaking in the practice must ensure that all smertakers are competent.

To equip and update the doctor smertaker with the necessary skills and knowledge, CervicalCheck can suggest the following:

- ICGP Theory Course for Smertakers with clinical training sessions – six modules by E-learning plus one day clinical training
- Attendance at RCSI or NUI Galway Smertaker Training Course
- At a doctor's request, CervicalCheck can provide one-to-one support for addressing quality issues
- Trainee GPs are offered support in cervical screening via the vocational GP training schemes. Each GP training scheme can avail of a specially designed resource pack for educational use. CervicalCheck offers the opportunity to GP trainees to have free certified training. To fulfil the criteria of certification, GP trainees must:
  - Complete two theory sessions as specified in the GP Trainee Resource Pack. GP training schemes must certify the theory component has been completed with evidence of dates
  - Complete a clinical audit with a CervicalCheck Clinical Trainer, available through the Smertaker Training Unit by contacting 061 406564/406565

Continual professional development is supported by the provision of cervical screening updates nationally. Details of all training developments and Clinical Update schedules are available on [www.cervicalcheck.ie](http://www.cervicalcheck.ie).

## Smertaker Training Programmes – Course Calendar 2011-2012

	Commencement Date	Location	Fee
<b>Smertaker Training Programme for Health Professionals</b> Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI)	13 & 14 September 2011	RCSI Dublin	€550
<b>Best Practice in Cervical Smertaking</b> National University of Ireland Galway	29 September 2011	Galway	€650
<b>Clinical Skills Workshop for Irish College of General Practitioners (ICGP)</b> E-learning 12 week course	1 October 2011	IMI Sandyford Dublin	€650*
<b>Smertaker Training Programme for Health Professionals</b> Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI)	17 & 18 November 2011	Limerick	€550
<b>Clinical Skills Workshop for Irish College of General Practitioners (ICGP)</b> E-learning 12 week course	23 February 2012	Athlone	€650*
<b>Clinical Skills Workshop for Irish College of General Practitioners (ICGP)</b> E-learning 12 week course	May 2012	TBC	€650

### \* ICGP courses

Application forms and fees received at the ICGP before 24 June will attract a 10% reduction in course fees. The fee for applications received before 24 June is €585

## Contact List

### CervicalCheck – The National Cervical Screening Programme



#### **Smeartaker Training Unit**

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The National Cancer Screening Service is part of the Health Service Executive National Cancer Control Programme. It encompasses BreastCheck – The National Breast Screening Programme and CervicalCheck – The National Cervical Screening Programme.