

# news

Local news from your local Healthwatch

## **Government to expand cervical screening access through NHS App**

The Government has announced measures to improve women's experiences with cervical screening. Booking screening should be easier, and lower-risk people will attend fewer appointments

The NHS announced plans to roll out digital invitations and reminders for **cervical screenings** via the **NHS App**

As part of a new "ping and book" service to boost uptake and help save thousands of lives, eligible women will first receive a notification through the NHS App to alert them to book a screening appointment. If the app notification isn't opened, a text message will follow. Letters will remain in place for those who need them.

Last year, nearly half of the women who took part in our **research on women's experience of cervical screening**, told us that the ability to book screenings via the NHS App would make them more likely to attend screening appointments in the future

From July, younger women (ages 25-49) who test negative for **human papillomavirus (HPV)**, meaning they are at very low risk of developing cervical cancer over the next ten years, will be invited for screening every five years rather than three year intervals. Those whose screening sample indicates the presence of HPV, or who have a recent history of HPV, will continue to be invited to more frequent screenings.

### **Our Chief Executive, Louise Ansari, said:**

"We welcome this change, which confirms that most women will not need to attend screening so frequently.

"Healthwatch research last year showed many women can find it an uncomfortable experience, and sometimes difficult to schedule in around their busy lives. Reducing the number of times they need to attend, alongside sensitive and empathetic approaches by health professionals, will make these important appointments easier to manage.

"Women will also welcome getting screening invites via the NHS App, which many now have on their smartphones as a one-stop health portal in their pocket. Nearly half of the women we polled last year said the ability to book screenings via the App would make them more likely to attend future appointments, so we're pleased to hear this function will also be introduced in the future."

Healthwatch Hartlepool

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## **How to improve ADHD support for people**

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is a neurodevelopmental condition characterised by difficulties with concentration, energy levels, impulsiveness, or a person's ability to manage their time. Recently, there has been a massive rise in demand for assessment, diagnosis and support for ADHD. Local Healthwatch raised concerns with us about the state of ADHD services. Healthwatch England commissioned YouGov to run two rounds of polling about adults' experiences of ADHD. We also ran our own survey, asking people with both diagnosed and possible ADHD to share their experiences with us. **Key findings**

- ❑ The impact ADHD has on people's lives can be profound, affecting work, mental wellbeing and household management.
- ❑ An ADHD diagnosis can be life-changing – giving people a better understanding of themselves and improving their ability to manage their health and wellbeing.
- ❑ People are experiencing long waits, pushing them to pay for a private assessment. This is creating a two-tier system based on whether people can afford to pay for care.
- ❑ There are hidden waits for ADHD referrals. Along with the long wait for an assessment, people told us of referral delays and reluctance to ask for support due to the long waiting times.
- ❑ People want support while they wait for an ADHD assessment, but most aren't getting any.
- ❑ People with ADHD or suspected ADHD can be reluctant to speak to their employers about support.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

To improve access, provide more consistent support to people waiting, and build capacity for specialist hospital teams to deliver more complex care, we have called on NHS decision-makers to:

- ❑ Move ADHD assessments to the community. This includes providing NHS teams with the training and resources they need to deliver care closer to people's homes. This shift will require collaboration between NHS, social care, education, employment and criminal justice stakeholders.
- ❑ Review National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) ADHD guidance to reflect this shift to more care delivered by general psychiatry and GP teams, and explore future prescribing of first-line medication from non-hospital settings.
- ❑ Provide better support to people waiting for ADHD assessments, including keeping people updated with clear and accessible communication from the NHS.
- ❑ Collect and publish official data on ADHD assessment waiting times, including demographic data, to understand and address health inequalities.
- ❑ Improve employers' support for those with ADHD through raising awareness, proactive offers of reasonable adjustments, and expanding support provided through the Access to Work scheme.

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To read or download the full report, please visit;  
[www.healthwatch.co.uk/report/2025-05-28/how-improve-adhd-support-people](http://www.healthwatch.co.uk/report/2025-05-28/how-improve-adhd-support-people)

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