



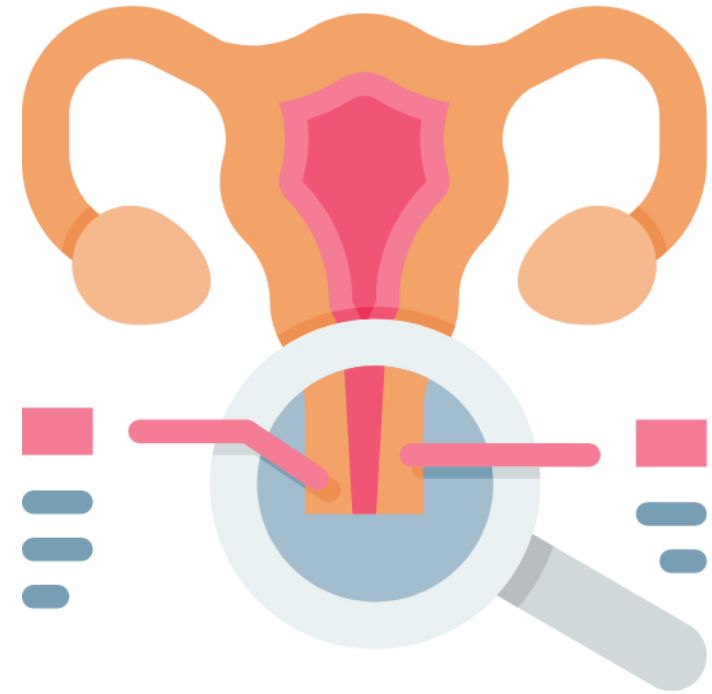
Exploring the Knowledge, Attitudes, and Beliefs Towards the HPV Vaccination and How this Impacts Intentions to Attend Screening Among Individuals Invited/Eligible for Their First Cervical Screening in Wales: A Qualitative Study.

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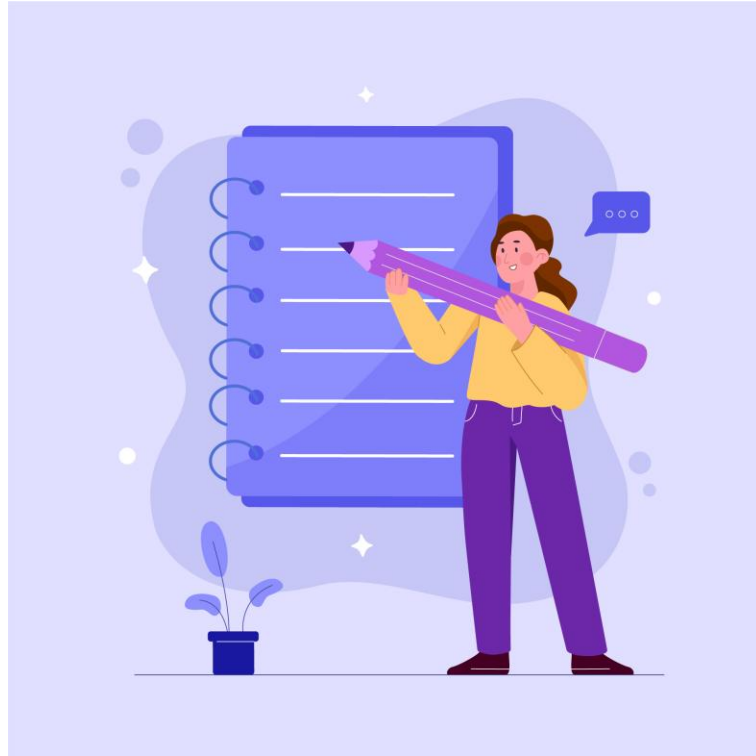
Cervical Cancer & Screening in Young People

- Cervical cancer is the fourth most common cancer in women globally
- Approximately 3,300 new cervical cancer cases and 890 deaths each year in the UK
- Although mortality rates have decreased over the last decade, there is an increasing burden of cervical cancer among young people, specifically for 25–29-year-olds
- Declining screening attendance for those invited for their first cervical screening appointment



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Local Insights



- Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board (CTMUHB) is the local health board of NHS Wales for Bridgend, Rhondda Cynon Taf & Merthyr Tydfil
- Screening coverage was the lowest in the youngest age group (25-29 years) at 64.8% within CTMUHB in 2021/22
- 3,208 individuals under 25 years were invited for their first cervical screening appointment, although only 1,116 received screening
- Uptake for this age group was still only 71.8% as of 1st April 2024, meanly around 30% are not taking up screening despite being invited

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Barriers & Facilitators to Screening: A Multi-Level Perspective

Barriers:

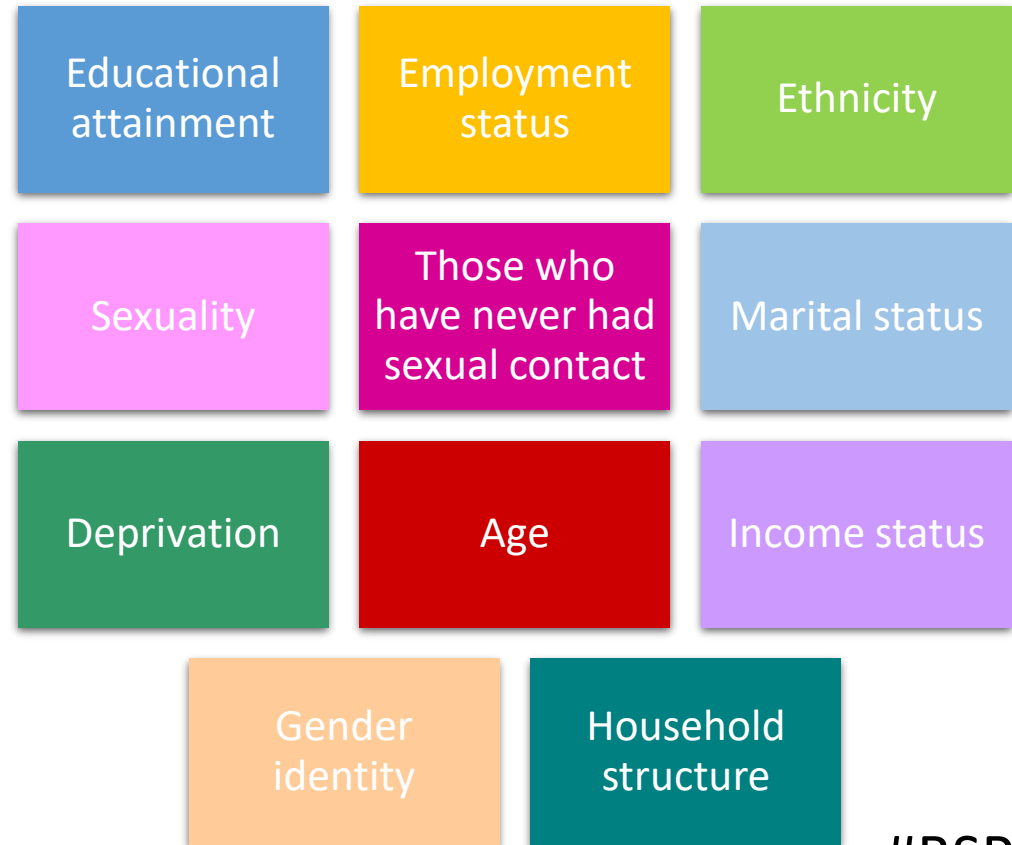
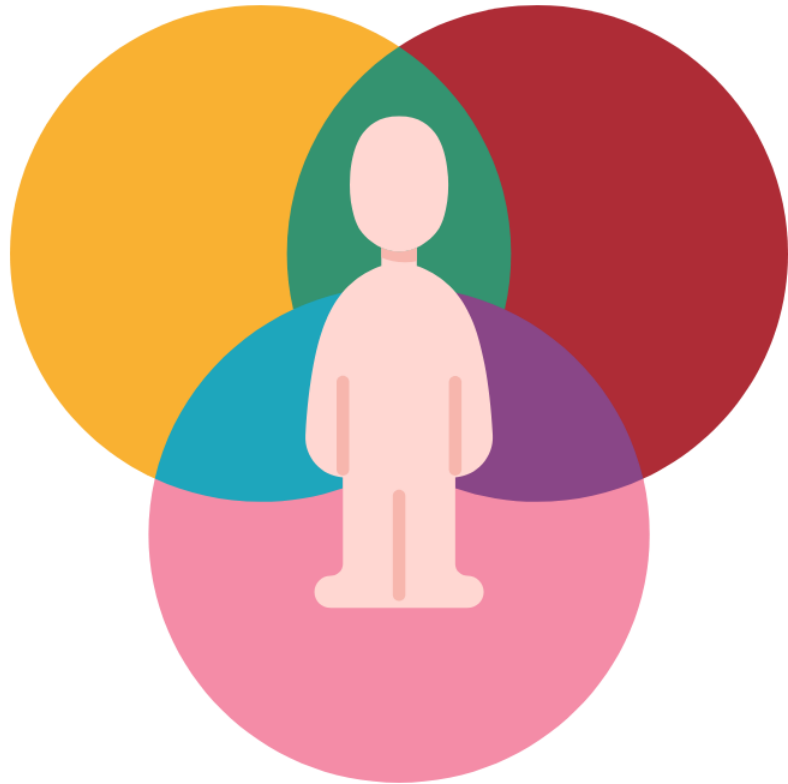
- Discomfort, pain & embarrassment
- Low perceived risk/susceptibility to cervical cancer
- Knowledge gaps (HPV, cervical cancer & screening)
- Trauma & sexual abuse
- Family, peer & social norms
- Stigma associated with sexual health
- Negative previous healthcare experiences
- Time restraints & limited accessibility

Facilitators:

- Strong perceived importance of screening
- Health consciousness
- Previous engagement in healthcare (e.g., familiarity with reproductive health services)
- Strong social support
- Trust & confidence in healthcare and professionals
- Effective campaigns and communication
- Access to appointments

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Inequalities, Inequities & Intersectionality



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Link to HPV Vaccination

- Systematic review found evidence that the HPV vaccination increases likelihood of screening attendance
- However, there is a lack of exploration into how and why this affects behavioural intentions
- The impact of sociodemographic factors are also not well explored
- Contradictory research suggests that HPV vaccination may reduce likelihood of screening due to it creating a false sense of security



This highlights a gap in research which needs to be addressed, to better understand the complexity of the connection between the HPV vaccination and cervical screening, and how this may affect intentions of individuals to attend their first screening appointment

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Research Aims & Objectives

Aim

To address the gap in evidence around how and why the HPV vaccination impacts cervical screening uptake among young people living in CTM, to specifically provide evidence to help reduce the burden of having the lowest coverage rates and high incidence of cervical cancer.

Objectives

- 1) To explore the attitudes, knowledge, and beliefs towards HPV vaccination and the impact on intentions to attend cervical screening among individuals invited/eligible for their first screening in Wales.
- 2) To understand whether the HPV vaccination impacts screening intentions, and how and why this impacts behaviours.
- 3) To identify the key psychological and behavioural determinants driving screening intentions and make recommendations for policy and practice.

Methodology: Recruitment



Aim to recruit 10-15 participants aged between 24.5-29 years and living in CTMUHB (Bridgend, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Merthyr Tydfil)

Flyers included in Cervical Screening Wales invitation letters for first-time attendees

Reaching priority individuals accessing CTMUHB CHOICE sexual health service who do not access mainstream healthcare and experience complex barriers and challenges

£25 e-voucher provided as a token of appreciation for participant's time

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Methodology: Data Collection & Analysis

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Short pre-survey to collect basic demographic and health-related data and pre-screen for eligibility



Online & in-person semi-structured interviews to explore attitudes, knowledge, and beliefs towards the HPV vaccination in relation to barriers and facilitators for screening attendance, and to understand experiences of being invited to and attending/not attending cervical screening



Descriptive statistics & reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2022)

Why This Matters for Public Health and Behavioural Science



Applies an intersectional lens to behavioural-decision making



Aims to identify key psychological and behavioural determinants impacting screening attendance



Explores if, how and why knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs towards HPV vaccination shapes screening intentions



Moves beyond coverage statistics to understand the 'how' and 'why', which is essential to understand and drive behaviour change



Will generate detailed, qualitative insights to explore a current research gap in an important topic



Will provide behaviourally informed recommendations for policy, practice, and future research on a local and national level

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