

PRESS RELEASE – June 6th, 2018

Hospital team raise awareness of importance of lifesaving cancer screening test for women



The cervical screening team at South Tyneside District Hospital will be offering advice and information during Cervical Screening Awareness Week, June 11th -17th, in a bid to improve uptake of the vital test to detect pre-cancer changes.

Specialist nurse Val Coneley and her colleagues will be in the hospital's Ingham Wing on Wednesday, June 13th, from 9am to 4.30pm.

Every year in the UK, around 3,000 women will be diagnosed with cervical cancer, which is the most common cancer in women aged 35 and under. Cervical

screening is a method of examining cells from the cervix to detect precancerous and abnormal cells so that they can be treated to prevent the occurrence of cancer.

Around five million women in the UK between the ages of 25 and 64 are invited for the screening each year. Women aged 25-49 are invited every three years and women aged 50-64 every five years. However, in a recent trend, fewer women have been attending for the screening, with one in three not taking up their invitation in 2014/2015.

Miss Coneley said: “In the North East the uptake of cervical screening is particularly low. Having regular cervical screening increases the opportunity to detect cervical cancer at an earlier stage. There are various reasons why women may be reluctant to have the test, including anxiety about the actual procedure and fear about the result. However, while the test can be uncomfortable, it is very quick and can save lives.”

One of the main reasons for the South Tyneside District Hospital event on June 13th is to highlight how important cervical screening is in detecting changes that may lead to or indicate the presence of cervical cancer.

Cervical Screening Awareness Week is organised by the charity Jo’s Cervical Cancer Trust, which is dedicated to women affected by cervical cancer or cervical abnormalities.

Ends

Photo caption: South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust specialist nurse Val Coneley, centre, with staff nurse Catherine Brack, left and healthcare assistant Dawn Hughes

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