

### Media statement

7 November 2019

#### Women urged to have cervical screening tests

As part of the National Cervical Cancer Awareness Week (11-17 November) local women are being urged to make an appointment for a Cervical Screening Test if they are due or overdue.

Dr Kuong Taing, Clinical Director Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service's Sexual Health Service (Clinic 87) said more than 70 per cent of cervical cancers occurred in women who had never had a screen or skipped their screens.

"The test takes just five minutes of your time and provides five years of peace of mind, yet around half the population of Queensland eligible women are skipping their cervical screening," he said.

"The rate of deaths from cervical cancer has halved since the National Cervical Screening Program started in 1991.

"The program has started using a new Cervical Screening Test which screens for human papillomavirus (HPV).

"HPV is the main cause of abnormal cells in the cervix, so the new test has meant women are receiving interventions earlier.

Dr Taing said: "The latest Australia data shows almost all cases of cervical cancer are caused by HPV.

"Women aged 25 to 74 should book a Cervical Screening Test two years after their last Pap test, and if the results are normal, get a test every five years after that. Sexual Health Nurses at Clinic 87 provide this test for free.

"I encourage all women to get up-to-date with their cervical screening—it's quick and it may just save your life."

For more information on the National Cervical Screening Program visit [www.cancerscreening.gov.au/cervical](http://www.cancerscreening.gov.au/cervical) or call 13 15 56

**ENDS**

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