1. Statement

The Department of Health (the Department) has a legislative obligation to:

- ensure that access to confidential information held on the Queensland Pap Smear Register (PSR) is restricted to authorised persons with a legitimate reason for access
- endorse the role of authorised registered nurses, enrolled nurses and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workers as non-medical cervical screening providers (NCSPs)
- maintain an authorisation process for new and continuing NCSPs employed in the public, private and non-Government sectors who wish to access the PSR

2. Scope

This standard applies to all employees, contractors and consultants within the Department of Health divisions and commercialised business units.

This standard may be used to provide information to non-medical cervical screening providers employed within the public, private and non-Government sectors who are seeking access to the Queensland Pap Smear Register.

3. Content

This authorisation process meets the Department of Health’s obligations under the Public Health Act 2005 with regard to access of NCSPs to confidential information held on the Queensland Pap Smear Register. The responsibility to monitor and maintain the quality of service delivery rests with the individual NCSP employed in the public, private and non-government sectors, their supervisors, and their employers.

Authorised non-medical cervical screening providers (NCSPs) are required to work within:

- their scope of practice
- the guidelines for registration and national standards for Pap smear providers
- the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia professional indemnity insurance arrangements registration standard

NCSPs are responsible for maintaining current knowledge and competence of practice in cervical screening. Health worker and enrolled nurse NCSPs must work under the supervision of a registered nurse NCSP and within the delegation framework as outlined in their position description.

It is recommended that cervical screening providers:

- Undertake accredited cervical screening provider training and ongoing professional development to develop and maintain competence as a cervical screening provider.
- Adhere to principles of continuous quality improvement in compliance with best practice standards and medico-legal considerations.
• Develop and maintain appropriate links with other health care agencies and health care providers to ensure referral avenues for symptomatic women or women who have abnormal Pap smears.
• Utilise a social model of health to provide services that are acceptable and accessible to women, are collaborative, and which address the broader determinants of health.

3.1 **Initial applications by non-medical cervical screening providers to have access to the Queensland Pap Smear Register**

3.1.1 To be authorized to access the Queensland Pap Smear Register (PSR), a non-medical cervical screening provider (NCSP) must complete the QCSP authorization process. This process demonstrates their eligibility to access data held on the PSR, and verifies that they meet quality standards for Pap smear providers.

NCSPs are required to submit the appropriate application form and supply the following information:

- Proof of current unrestricted registration as a registered / enrolled nurse;
  or
- Proof of completion of a Certificate IV in Primary Health Care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workers where appropriate;

  **and in addition**
  - Proof of completion of an accredited Pap smear training program
  - Evidence of a referral and clinical support network
  - Evidence that cervical screening is part of the applicant’s role, verified by the completion of an employer / supervisor declaration
  - Completion of a declaration to agree to abide by the National Standards for Pap Smear Providers and the NHMRC Guidelines, to practice within the scope of practice outlined in their position description, and to abide by the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia guideline on professional indemnity arrangements for ENs, RNs and Nurse Practitioners.

3.1.2 Enrolled nurse and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health worker NCSPs will be named in a Gazettal Notice once their eligibility to access the PSR is ascertained. A Gazettal Notice is required under the [Public Health Act 2005](#) to recognise enrolled nurses and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health worker NCSPs as health practitioners under the Act, and to allow their access to information held on the Pap Smear Register.

3.2 **Continuing competence applications by non-medical Pap smear providers seeking continued access to the Queensland Pap Smear Register**

3.2.1 Every four years NCSPs must re-apply for authorization to continue to be eligible to access data held on the PSR

3.2.2 In order to be granted continued authorization to access the PSR, a NCSP must complete the QCSP continuing competence process which demonstrates their eligibility to access data held on the PSR, and verifies that they meet the National standards for Pap smear providers. This process requires that NCSPs submit the appropriate application form and supply the following information:

- Proof of current unrestricted registration as a registered / enrolled nurse where applicable.
3.2.3 Where NCSP providers have submitted incomplete continuing competence applications the Department of Health will contact the NPSP to prompt the submission of any missing or incomplete information.

3.2.4 Should NCSP providers submit twelve months of cytology quality statistics which are below the stipulated level of a 75% endocervical capture rate and 95% satisfactory rate, the Department of Health may activate one or more of the following options:

- 6 month temporary authorization granted with a scheduled review of cytology results at completion of this period
- NCSP submission of a documented clinical skills review with an appropriate reviewer
- NCSP submission of documented evidence that they have completed up-skilling training with an accredited cervical screening training organization
- Suspension of NCSP authorization to access the PSR

The review of cytology quality statistics will take into consideration the number of Pap smears collected, and other factors related to the women screened such as: pregnant women, post-menopausal women or women with a history of cervical treatment or surgery.

3.3 Suspending access to the PSR

NPSPs who are no longer practicing as a PSP in Queensland must suspend their access to the PSR within two months by completing the Suspend PSR Access form.

3.4 Reactivation of Authorisation to access the PSR

3.4.1 Authorization to access the PSR can be reactivated for NCSPs who are returning to employment as a NCSP after time away from the role. Dependent upon the length of lapse in authorization, the Department of Health may require one or more of the following criteria be met:

- Submission of a Non-medical Pap Smear Provider Continuing Authorisation form and required documentation.
- Submission of a documented clinical skills review with an appropriate reviewer
- Submission of a recent cytology quality assurance for a minimum of 15 Pap smears
- Submission of documented evidence of completed up-skilling training with an accredited cervical screening training organisation
4. **Related legislation and documents**

- *Public Health Act 2005* – Chapter 6; Part 3: s272
- Policy: Access to the Queensland Pap Smear Register by Non-Medical Cervical Screening Providers (NCSP)
- Form: Queensland Cervical Screening Program (QCSP) Non-Medical Pap Smear Provider PSR Authorisation Application
- Form: QCSP Non-Medical Pap Smear Provider PSR Continuing Authorisation Application Form: QCSP Non-Medical Pap Smear Provider Suspend PSR Access

5. **Definition of Terms**

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<tr>
<th>Term</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NCSP</td>
<td>Non-medical Cervical Screening Provider</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSR</td>
<td>Pap Smear Register</td>
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<tr>
<td>Authorisation</td>
<td>A process which recognises a Cervical Screening Provider’s expertise in cervical screening. NCSPs demonstrate their competence through completion of an accredited training program and assessment against competency standards.</td>
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**Version Control**

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