

Ninth/Tenth Monthly Report from the Ministry of Health to the Minister on the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Gisborne Cervical Screening Inquiry Report

REPORT

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. In response to Recommendation 46 of the Inquiry Report, the Director General will supply monthly reports to the Minister. This is the ninth and tenth of these monthly reports combined.
2. The Ministry has also recently provided a further briefing to the Minister in response to recent reviews completed by the Office of the Auditor General and Dr Euphemia McGoogan. (Ref. HR 20021040)

COMMENT

Evaluation of the National Cervical Screening Programme

- 1 The Audit design, development and planning work done to date by the NSU Cancer Audit Project Team in Phases 1 and 2 has proceeded to the point of being able to submit an application to Ethics Committees this month. Ethics Committee approval is expected by early April and the external data collection (information obtained from women's clinical records and in interview) aspect of the Audit will commence immediately following.
- 2 The NSU has engaged the services of three epidemiologists from the University of Auckland. In addition, a further public health physician and epidemiologist has been appointed as clinical leader for the project. Dr Julia Peters, as project sponsor and clinical director of the NSU, the newly appointed clinical leader and the project manager are all very experienced in the delivery of screening programmes.
- 3 A revised project structure has been set-up and around 24 staff and contractors are in the process of being appointed, in addition to a number of expert advisors. Dr Gabriele Medley of the Victorian Cytology Service has also been appointed to oversee the Audit's slide review.

Changes to Legislation

3. Parliamentary Counsel Office drafting of the Health Professional Competency Assurance Bill and amendments to Section 74A of the Health Act 1956 and the Health and Disability Commissioner Act is proceeding. (Recommendations 14, 16, 17, 30, 34, 35, 36, 44)

4. The Ministry recently provided a further briefing on the best way to proceed with the proposed Comprehensive Bill. (Ref. HR 20021898)
5. Officials have now met with a National Kaitiaki Focus Group (past and present Kaitiaki Group members) to discuss a draft discussion document on the review of the Kaitiaki regulations in preparation for 10-12 regional hui planned for March 2002.

Ethics Committees

6. Consultation on the amendments requested by Hon Tariana Turia's to the revised operational standard for health and disability ethics committees is proceeding and it is hoped that the Standard will be released during February.
7. Members of the National Ethics Committee have been appointed and as their first task they will be required to address Recommendations 19, 21, 22 and 23.

NCSP Operations

Legal Assessment

8. A full legal assessment of the NCSP Interim Operational Policy and Quality Standards, and the legal authority of the NCSP have been completed and a report provided to the NSU for review. A further briefing in response to this report will be provided within the next two weeks.

Provision of Statistical Information

9. The 1996-98 NCSP Statistical Report is currently being processed for printing. Unfortunately due to workforce constraints publication was delayed to March 2002. The 1999-2000 NCSP Statistical Report is proceeding according to plan, although a revised application to the Kaitiaki and Pacific Women's Data Advisory Groups has been required due to some changes in the analyses required for the report. (Recommendation 7)
10. The NSU has examined the requirement to correlate the reporting patterns of laboratories with regional incidence of cervical cancer together with the University of Otago and has found that there is no straightforward way to deliver this aspect of Recommendation 8. The NSU may need to consider contracting with laboratories on a regional basis to ensure that this reporting can be provided in the future. It will not be possible, however, to report retrospectively.

Policy and Quality Standards

11. The third Independent Monitoring Group's National Cervical Screening Programme quarterly monitoring report (covering the period January 2001 to March 2001) was publicly released in December 2001. (Recommendation 4)

12. The two public hospital laboratories providing cervical cytology services have recently alerted the NSU to the possibility that they may not reach the required minimum volume of cytology cases as required, despite their best endeavours. A briefing will be provided to the Minister following further meetings with the hospitals and an examination of other options for shifting volumes from other laboratories. (Recommendation 9)
13. Project planning for the implementation of Recommendation 27, the review of standards for the NCSP, has started but commencement of the actual work itself has been put on hold due to the unavailability of the required resource. The NCSP Interim Operational and Policy Standards were published in October 2000, and this Inquiry recommendation calls for a review every two years, i.e. by October 2002. It is unlikely that this review will be well underway before October 2002 and this will have implications for the implementation of Recommendations 26 and 32

NCSP Structure

14. A fixed term employee has been employed by the NSU to develop and implement processes and systems to handle complaints, which come to the attention of the NSU. This project will include formalising the communication between the NSU and ACC, HDC, Medical Council. (Recommendation 24)

Workforce Development

15. The final draft of the Workforce Development Strategy was received by the NSU at the end of December 2001. A proposed Implementation Plan is currently being drafted. (Recommendations 28, 40, 41, 42)

Information to Women

16. The NSU has completed its review of the detailed NCSP Brochure produced in draft by Women's Health Action (WHA). The brochure is now out for its first round of pre-testing with consumers and health professionals. (Recommendation 38)

Dr McGoogan's Review

17. Dr McGoogan has completed her 6-Month Review on Progress to Implement the Cervical Screening Inquiry Recommendations. The Ministry's response to her review was provided 8 February 2002. (Ref. HR 20021940)

APPENDIX 1.0**TABLE 1.0: SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS UNDERWAY OR IMPLEMENTED AND/OR WHICH FORM PART OF ONGOING NCSP OPERATIONS**

	Status	Recommendations	Total Number
1.	Implemented and/or ongoing component of NCSP	4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 25, 36, 37, 39	12
2.	Underway	1, 3, 7, 8, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 38, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46	33

TABLE 2.0 IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND PROGRESS AGAINST REPORTING MILESTONES FOR 10 OCTOBER TO 10 DECEMBER 2001

Ref.	Recommendation	Underway/ Implemented	Reporting Milestones ¹ for 10 October to 10 December 2001	Milestone Achieved
1.	Evaluation of NCSP – Part 3 (Cancer Audit).	Underway	Epidemiologists and expert international cytopathologist appointment to audit team.	✓
2.	Re-enrolment and re- screening of women.		No Reporting Milestone this period.	
3.	Cox's 1997 comprehensive evaluation of the NCSP should be commenced within 18 months.	Underway	Parts 5, 6 and 8 included within the scope of Part 3 (Cancer Audit) – see recommendation 1 above. No Reporting Milestone this period. Parts 4, 7 and 10 included within scope of NCSP Statistical Reporting. Refer to recommendation 7 below.	
4.	Implementation of Operational Policy and Quality Standards & Evaluation & Monitoring Plan.	Underway	Further project work to take place with regard to implementation of standards for Smear-Takers. Third Independent Monitoring Group NCSP quarterly monitoring released December 2001.	✓
5.	Full legal assessment of Operational Policy and Quality Standards.	Implemented	Report provided to NSU.	✓
6.	Legal assessment of NCSP Authority.	Implemented	Report provided to NSU.	✓
7.	Statistical Reporting.	Underway	Milestone Delayed 1996-98 Report in process of being printed.	x
8.	Regular Statistical Information.	Underway	NSU and University of Otago consider delivery of aspects of this recommendation not possible.	

¹ Reporting Milestones refer to those tasks and activities that need to be completed in the period covered by the report, against which progress on the implementation of the recommendations is measured.

Those recommendations and their Reporting Milestones marked Current Practice/ or Completed will not be reported in subsequent reports, as they have already been implemented.

Recommendations where there is no Reporting Milestone against which to report for this month are marked No Reporting Milestone this period; work may however be already underway.

Ref.	Recommendation	Underway/ Implemented	Reporting Milestones ¹ for 10 October to 10 December 2001	Milestone Achieved
			recommendation not possible.	
9.	Minimum Standards for Cytology Laboratories.	Implemented	DHB and Community Laboratory Agreements incorporate minimum volume standards. Public Hospital laboratories struggle to meet minimum volume standards.	✓
14.	Amend S74 of the Health Act 1956.	Underway	Third draft of legislation completed.	✓
15.	Kaitiaki Regulations.	Underway	Focus Group Meeting held and discussion document for regional hui consultation being finalised.	✓
16.	Legal right to access information from the Cancer Register.	Underway	Third draft of legislation completed.	✓
17.	Amend Health Act 1956 to enable access to medical files.	Underway	Third draft of legislation completed.	✓
18.	Change guidelines under-which ethics committees operate.	Underway	Milestone delayed. Publication of Operational Standards due February 02.	✗
19.	Review of operations of ethics committees.	Underway	Work to be undertaken by the National Advisory Committee on Health and Disability Support Services Ethics (The National Ethics Committee).	
20.	Provide guidelines to ethics committees regarding Privacy Act & Code.	Underway	Milestone delayed. Publication of Operational Standards due February 02.	✗
21.	Guidelines to ethics committees for observational studies.	Underway	Work to be undertaken by the National Advisory Committee on Health and Disability Support Services Ethics (The National Ethics Committee).	
22.	National ethics committee – multi-centre studies.	Underway	Work to be undertaken by the National Advisory Committee on Health and Disability Support Services Ethics (The National Ethics Committee).	

Ref.	Recommendation	Underway/ Implemented	Reporting Milestones ¹ for 10 October to 10 December 2001	Milestone Achieved
23.	Appeal process for ethics committee decisions.	Underway	Work to be undertaken by the National Advisory Committee on Health and Disability Support Services Ethics (The National Ethics Committee).	
24.	NCSP Complaints System.	Underway	Contractor appointed to commence project.	✓
25.	Electronic Link Cancer Register & NCSP Register.	Implemented	Processes for linking and matching data implemented.	✓
26.	Performance Standards for NCSP Register and Cancer Register.	Underway	Delays to commencement of project work	x
27.	Standards for the NCSP should be reviewed every two years.	Underway	Delays to commencement of project work.	x
28.	The Government must ensure sufficient cytotechnologists and cytopathologists and training sites.	Underway	Final Draft Workforce Development Strategy Completed.	✓
29.	Amend Medical Laboratory Technologists Regulations 1989.	Underway		
30.	Impose Legal obligations on storage of slides.	Underway	Third draft of legislation completed.	✓
31.	Ensure electronic linkage between NCSP Register and Cytology Labs.	Underway	No Reporting Milestone this period. This requirement will form part of the National Screening Units development of an Information Systems Strategy.	
32.	Develop Standards for accuracy of laboratory coding.	Underway	Delays to commencement of project work.	x
33.	The NCSP should develop a population-based register.	Underway	No Reporting Milestone this period. The National Screening Unit is represented on the Ministry's Population Register Project led by NZHIS.	

Ref.	Recommendation	Underway/ Implemented	Reporting Milestones¹ for 10 October to 10 December 2001	Milestone Achieved
34.	Legal mechanisms should be in place to allow the ACC, Medical Council and the Health & Disability Commissioner to share relevant information with the Ministry's NCSP.	Underway	Initial draft of legislation completed.	✓
35.	Medical Tribunal to supply information to NCSP.	Underway	Initial draft of legislation completed.	✓
36.	ACC & Medical Council should exchange relevant information regarding claims for medical misadventure.	Implemented	Royal assent received for Injury Prevention and Rehabilitation Bill – to come into effect April 02	✓
38	Information to Women.	Underway	Draft detailed brochure completed and out for consumer testing	✓
39	Letters to Medical Practitioners.	Implemented	Letter sent.	✓
40	Appropriately trained personnel should do cervical screening.	Underway	Final Draft Workforce Development Strategy Completed.	✓
41	All pathologists undertaking cytology should be appropriately trained.	Underway	Final Draft Workforce Development Strategy Completed.	✓
42	Cytopathologists must participate in continuing education in cytopathology.	Underway	Final Draft Workforce Development Strategy Completed.	✓
43	Pathologists ought to be more open-minded.	Underway	No Reporting Milestone this period.	
44	The Medical Council should ensure that systems are in place to support the early reporting of errant medical practitioners by their colleagues.	Underway	Included in HPCA bill. Initial draft of legislation completed.	✓
45	NCSP should have a system for identifying deficiencies.	Underway	No Reporting Milestone this period.	
46	There should be a process for monitoring the implementation of the Committees	Underway	Dr McGoogan's 6-Month Report released.	

Ref.	Recommendation	Underway/ Implemented	Reporting Milestones ¹ for 10 October to 10 December 2001	Milestone Achieved
	Recommendations.			