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## Barriers and facilitators to cervical cancer screening among transgender men and non-binary people with a cervix: A systematic narrative review

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### Abstract

Cervical cancer mortality in the United Kingdom (UK) has decreased over the last decade, largely due to uptake of cervical cancer screening. However, only those with a female gender marker on their health records are invited, creating a significant barrier to gender minorities accessing screening. We undertook a systematic review to synthesise published literature on cervical cancer screening among eligible gender minorities, aiming to identify barriers and facilitators that might inform changes in UK policy and clinical practice. We conducted a broad search across Medline, Embase, PsycInfo and Global Health databases to 3rd January 2020 and included any original, peer-reviewed research, published in the English language that reported on cervical cancer screening among gender minorities assigned female at birth (AFAB). Twenty-seven studies were critically appraised and included in the final synthesis, which identified significant disparities in cervical cancer screening uptake between gender minorities AFAB and cis women. It revealed a lack of knowledge surrounding the relationship between gender minority status and cervical cancer risk among both service users and providers and highlighted significant barriers to access for gender minorities AFAB. Cervical cancer screening was not universally associated with dysphoria among gender minorities AFAB and we recommend that providers explore patients' preferences around screening, while avoiding assumptions. Providers should be proficient in examination techniques that maximise patient autonomy and minimise gender dysphoria or pain. Self-swabs for high-risk HPV may provide a more acceptable, evidence-based, alternative to Pap smears but there remains a need for further UK-specific research, to inform changes in policy.

**Keywords:** Cervical cancer; Cervical screening; Human papillomavirus; Non-binary person; Papanicolaou test; Screening; Trans man; Transgender; hrHPV.

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