

This is a story of a 26 year old Bolton patient called Sarah who recently had her first cervical screening. She would like to share her story –

“I received a letter through the post a few months after I turned 25 years old inviting me to contact my GP practice to book an appointment to have a smear test done. Was immediately really nervous about this as found the whole idea of the procedure really embarrassing! I decided to ignore the letter as I was worried I would find it painful and didn't place any importance on having it done.

Couple of months later my mum asked if I had received a letter about having a smear test. I admitted I had and I didn't want to have it done. My mum explained that she understood why I was nervous but stressed how important it was to have this screening done. She said she had recently read in a newspaper that a lot of women in their late 20s are diagnosed with cervical cancer every year, so it is vital women have a smear test. I could see this was important to my mum so I decided to book in for the appointment.

When I rung my GP practice the receptionist was really reassuring and guaranteed that only a female nurse would do the screening, which made me feel a lot better.

However, by the day of the appointment I was extremely nervous! I was anxious that it would hurt, and embarrassed about the idea of having to take my clothes off from the waist down. When I arrived at the appointment, I immediately started to feel better as the nurse was so friendly and reassuring. She completely understood my nerves and did everything she could to make me feel better and relaxed. She explained everything clearly so I would know what she would do, and made me feel at ease. I was still quite nervous but it really didn't hurt much as much as I imagined it would, and because of the nurse I didn't find it embarrassing at all. I did have a bit of period pain afterwards for a few hours but no problems apart from that.

I wanted to tell my story as I think it is very easy for women to put off having these screenings, but it is so important we do. It really is not as bad as you imagine it will be! Due to the lovely nurse at my GP practice I will always have these screenings done now, and will never think about ignoring letters again.”

Notes:

It is Cervical Screening Prevention Week from 22nd–28th January 2018. The theme is “Reduce your risk”.



Bolton

Clinical Commissioning Group