

27th April 2018; Harris sends medical team into Cervical Check to take charge, RTE Midwest correspondent Cathy Halloran

The Academy of Clinical Science and Laboratory Medicine said it is very concerned that an error identified by an audit in 2014 should take two years to report to Ms Phelan's physician and a further year to be communicated to her.

It said that for any screening programme to be successful, it must have the trust and confidence of the public. It has called for the results of the audit of 2014 to be published. The Academy said the report must include the number of both false negative and false positive smears. It said where there is evidence of either false negative, or false positive results, they must be communicated to the woman as quickly as possible.

27th April 2018; Why did 206 women get false negative results from the cervical check programme

Dr Irene Regan of the Academy of Clinical Science and Laboratory Medicine; News at One, RTE Radio 1.

10 May 2018; Call for screening service to be re-established when HPV test introduced, Fergal Bowers, Health Correspondent RTE

CervicalCheck has told GPs the Academy of Clinical Science and Laboratory Medicine has called for the entire cervical screening service to be re-established in Ireland when an extra test, HPV screening, is introduced later this year.

It said that this laboratory service should be led by consultant medical scientists and pathologists, a service configuration which is now emerging as standard practice in the UK. The Academy said it wanted to clarify that the Irish laboratories that tendered for the cervical screening service in 2007/2008 were informed that they had scored highly in all areas of quality and turnaround time, but not in relation to cost.

10 May 2018; @rtenews The Academy of Clinical Science and Laboratory Medicine calls for entire cervical screening service to be re-established when HPV screening is introduced later this year

May 11 2018; Seven given wrong results still not contacted, Irish Independent, Eilish O'Regan and Cormac McQuinn

Meanwhile, the organisation representing Irish staff involved in the reading of smear tests said yesterday that when Irish labs tendered to do the CervicalCheck work in 2008 they scored highly in all areas except cost. The work went to Quest Diagnostics in Texas. Half the smears are now read in the United States and the rest in Dublin labs. The Academy of Clinical Science and Laboratory Medicine, which represents lab staff in Ireland, said it recommends that when HPV testing of smear tests is introduced here in the autumn the entire work be carried out in this country. The service should be led by consultant medical scientists and pathologists. This is already happening in the cervical screening service in the UK, it added.

13 May 2018; Coveney pledges State will learn from 'tragic lesson' Sunday Independent; Philip Ryan and Alan O'Keeffe

Dr Irene Regan, vice president of the Academy of Clinical Science and Laboratory Medicine, told the Sunday Independent this weekend that 45pc of smears go to a US laboratory, Quest Diagnostics; 45pc go to MedLab Pathology, part of the Sonic Healthcare group in Dublin; and 10pc go to the laboratory at the Coombe Hospital in Dublin.

According to Dr Regan, smears taken at Well Woman Clinics or from Carlow and Kilkenny area are read in the Coombe Hospital. Smears from the rest of Leinster are sent to the US, while smears from the rest of Ireland go to MedLab Pathology.

13 May 2018 'WHERE DO MY BITS OF CERVIX GO?' DR IRENE REGAN ON WHAT WOMEN SHOULD KNOW ABOUT SMEARS, Sunday Independent, Maeve Sheehan

"Where are the slides with bits of my cervix on them?" demanded Fine Gael TD Kate O'Connell of HSE officials at an Oireachtas committee hearing.

We put this and other questions to Dr Irene Regan, vice president of the Academy of Clinical Science and Laboratory Medicine, who sets out the facts involved in the process of reading smear tests.

Dr Regan says she can attest to best practice in Irish laboratories only.

Medical scientists are required to reach individual 'pick-up' or detection rates of 95pc or greater for high-grade abnormalities, and greater than 90pc for all abnormalities. Slides, and digital images, must be retained by laboratories for 30 years. The over-all capacity of the population screen to detect abnormalities in a woman is about 65pc. The examination of prepared slides should detect abnormalities greater than 90pc of the time.

14 May 2018 Call for audit results of cervical screenings from 2011-2014 to be published, www.RTE.ie Morning Ireland

Dr Irene Regan, Vice President of the Academy of Clinical Science and Laboratory Medicine, welcomes suggestions that all smear tests should be looked at here in the future.

15 May 2018; US lab is 'less likely to pick up abnormalities' than testing done here, Irish Independent, Eilish O'Regan

Without naming the lab, Dr Irene Regan, a medical scientist, said the lab picked up around half the high-grade abnormalities of the other two facilities.

20 May 2018; Screen Test, The Sunday Business Post, Susan Mitchell

Irene Regan vice-president of the Academy of Clinical Science and Laboratory Medicine, said further details about each of the 209 cases as well as 'error rates' from the laboratories would be hugely important when determining the diagnostic accuracy of the labs used by CervicalCheck. If all cases were distributed across all laboratories, it could be seen as a limitation of the cytology test. However, if the false negatives were concentrated in one laboratory, then this required further investigation.

23 May 2018; Decision to outsource smear test analysis 'short-sighted' Health Committee hearing on cervical cancer screening programme, by Justin McCarthy, RTÉ Political Staff.

The professional body representing medical scientists in Ireland has said the decision to outsource cervical smear test analysis to laboratories in the United States was "short-sighted". Dr Irene Regan from the Academy of Clinical Science and Laboratory Medicine told the Oireachtas Health Committee that the decision to move screening to the US means there is a lack of information about the standards of individual labs carrying out the analysis. "One consequence of this decision to outsource is that the academy does not have access to information from these laboratories and is therefore not in a position to comment on the quality metrics or standards of individual laboratories at this time," she said. Dr Regan was giving evidence as part of an examination of medical screening programmes by the Oireachtas Health Committee. She said if the Scally Scoping Report identifies any suboptimal performance within laboratories currently providing this service that "a rigorous approach to remedying these issues will be required to bring them in to line with international standards".

She told the committee that the professional staff in cytology screening labs in Ireland are medical scientists and pathologists who have specific qualifications and training. Dr Regan said the academy wished to clarify that Irish accredited laboratories that

tendered for the cervical screening service in 2007/8 were informed that they had scored highly in all areas (quality and turnaround times) except cost. Marie Culleton from the Academy of Clinical Science and Laboratory Medicine said it was necessary to wait until the Scally report comes out before being able to identify if there was a problem with one particular laboratory.

"He is doing an in-depth audit and will tell us if there was a problem with one particular laboratory," she said.

May 24 2018; Smear probe 'needed to boost public confidence', Irish Independent, Eilish O'Regan

The number of misread CervicalCheck smear tests among women who developed cervical cancer has been described as 'worrying' by medical scientists.

May 24, 2018, Future of breast screening at risk over payouts, Irish Examiner, Evelyn Ring

Earlier, the Academy of Clinical Science and Laboratory Medicine told the committee that the decision to outsource the analysis of cervical smear tests was "short-sighted". In 2008, a decision was taken to tender for screening cytology and that resulted in the service, previously undertaken in hospital laboratories in Ireland, being largely undertaken by laboratories in the US.

The academy's president, Irene Regan, said the Irish laboratories that tendered for the service in 2007 and 2008 were told they had scored highly in all areas except cost.

May 27 2018; HSE refuses to disclose smear test quality data, The Sunday Business Post, Susan Mitchell

Dr Irene Regan, vice president of the Academy of Clinical Science and Laboratory Medicine said the six-minute standard in Ireland was a number of key quality assurance mechanisms that were in place.