

Regional Review of Outcome of Cervical Smears Reported with Cytological Features of Non Cervical Glandular Neoplasia

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Abstract : Introduction: Cervical cytology showing features raising the suspicion of non cervical glandular neoplasia are reported as code 0 under the United Kingdom National Health Service Cervical screening programme (NHSCSP). As the suspicion is regarding non cervical neoplasia, smear is reported as normal and patient informed that cervical screening result is normal. GP receives copy of results where it states further referral is indicated in small font within text of report. Background: There were several incidents of delayed diagnosis of endometrial cancer in Lancashire which prompted this Northwest Regional review to enable an understanding of underlying pathology outcome of code zero smears to raise awareness and also to review whether further action on wording of smear results was indicated to prevent such delay. Methodology: All Smears reported at the Manchester cytology centre who process cytology for Lancashire population from March 2013 to March 2014 were reviewed and histological diagnosis outcome of women in whom smear was reported as code zero was reviewed retrospectively . Results: Total smears reported by the cytology centre during this period was approximately 109400. Reports issued with result code 0 among this during this time period was 49. Results revealed that among three fourth (37) of women with code zero smear (N=49), evidence of underlying pathology of non cervical origin was confirmed. Of this, 73 % (36) were due to endometrial pathology with 49 % (24) endometrial carcinoma, 12 % (6) polyp, 4 % atypical endometrial hyperplasia (2), 6 % endometrial hyperplasia without atypia (3), and 2 % adenomyosis (1 case) and 2 % (1 case) due to ovarian adenocarcinoma. Conclusion: This review demonstrated that more than half (51 %) of women with a code 0 smear report were diagnosed with underlying carcinoma and 75 % had a confirmed underlying pathology contributory to code 0 smear findings. Recommendations and Action Plan: A local rapid access referral and management pathway for this group of women was implemented as a result of this in our unit. The findings and Pathway were shared with other regional units served by the cytology centre through the Pan Lancashire cervical screening board and through the Cytology centre. Locally, the smear report wording was updated to include a rubber stamp/ print in "Red Bold letters" stating that " URGENT REFERRAL TO GYNAECOLOGY IS INDICATED". Findings were also shared through the Pan Lancashire board with National cervical screening programme board, and revisions to wording of code zero smear reports to highlight the need for Urgent referral has now been agreed at National level to be implemented.

Keywords : code zero smears, endometrial cancer, non cervical glandular neoplasia, ovarian cancer

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