**MEDIA RELEASE**

**November 2024**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Your Choice Can Prevent Cervical Cancer - Awareness Week (10-16 Nov 2024)**

Cervical cancer is a preventable cancer that is still causing women to suffer and die prematurely and many women either aren’t aware that it’s preventable or they are choosing not to act.

Australian women have more choices than ever to prevent it almost entirely and achieve the goal to help us make cervical cancer history, in Australia!

Cervical Cancer Awareness Week (10-16 November 2024) is the Australian Cervical Cancer Foundation’s annual awareness campaign. This year, the theme is **‘The Power of Choice’** *and the simple, important message is “You can choose to protect yourself from cervical cancer with more choice than ever before”.*

**Women can protect themselves and prevent cervical cancer with more choices than ever before:**

1. One (1) dose of the HPV vaccine is free for all young people from 12 to 25 years, male and female, if you missed your chance at school age.
2. Cervical screening tests are now every five (5) years for women *and those with a cervix from age 25 – 74 years.*
3. Women can choose a preferred Screening Method. There are two choices:
	1. To have a doctor or nurse perform a cervical screening test OR
	2. Self-Collect – Women can talk with their doctor or nurse about choosing to collect a sample.

Cervical screening is now recommended every 5 years (rather than 2 years, due to improved detection) for women and people with a cervix from age 25–74 years. Being overdue for screening or never being screened, greatly increases the risk of cervical cancer.

Sarah Maree Cameron, ACCF Ambassador, award-winning radio presenter and comedian says “With Australia’s national cervical screening and HPV vaccination programs today, preventing cervical cancer has never been easier or more accessible. This week ACCF provides information and resources to share important messages with family and friends.”

Lynda McAlary-Smith, ACCF Ambassador and highly regarded Victorian Small Business Commissioner says, “My message to women is, when you get your cervical screening reminder please choose to ‘stay up to date’ AND know that now that self-collection is an option, ask your doctor or nurse about choosing to collect your sample yourself, if that seems like a more comfortable choice for you”.

Queensland-based ACCF Charity Director Fiona Gaske says “I want everyone to know that lifesaving Cervical Cancer (HPV) vaccination is now free for anyone from 12 to 25 years. It’s very safe and prevents 90% of the risk of cervical and some other cancers. HPV vaccine is available at school for all boys & girls around 12-13 years of age and for the 15% of people who missed school vaccination, you can see your GP, health clinic or state vaccination clinic and get your protection up to date.”

For more information, please go to https://accf.org.au/cervical-cancer-awareness-week/

**ACCF is offering fun ways to get involved while raising money for** [**Orange Hearts Programs**](https://accf.org.au/financial-support/)to help support women with cervical cancer and their families.

Follow this link to get involved: https://accf.org.au/cervical-cancer-awareness-week/

1. Host a Morning or Afternoon Tea with Orange Cake or Pumpkin Scones!
2. Have a girl’s night in with your closest friends

ACCF Charity Director and long-term donor Joe Tooma says” This is an excellent excuse for just about everyone to have some fun with a small event at work or home, catch up with friends and colleagues, share the cervical cancer prevention message and help raise funds for ACCF Orange Hearts program to support women with cervical cancer and their families. Donate funds raised at this link <https://drct-accf.prod.supporterhub.net/donations/donate>

Whatever you choose to do, big or small, every conversation and every dollar donated could save a life or support a woman with cervical cancer and related families.

For further information, or for informative interviews with our Ambassadors and Directors, please contact:

Name – Natalie Potter

Phone: +61 7 3177 1099

Mobile: + 61 409 996 087

Email: natalie@beammarketing.au

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