Very Important invitation, Cervical Screening Project

Suffolk GP Federation CIC

The Very Important Invitation (V.I.I.) project recognises and responds to the deeply rooted barriers that prevent many people from accessing cervical screening, particularly those from marginalised communities. Early detection of abnormal cell changes dramatically increases the chances of successful treatment. The project was co-designed with women and people with a cervix, from communities most affected by low screening uptake. Using lived experience, the project directly challenged the stigma, fear, and mistrust that often deter engagement with services, ensuring that the care provided was not only clinically effective but also emotionally safe and culturally relevant.

The project prioritised groups facing structural health inequalities, including the LGBTQ+ community, individuals with learning disabilities, people with mental health challenges, survivors of sexual trauma, and people from ethnically diverse backgrounds. Tailored resources including translated materials, an LD support pack, and a trauma informed survivors' toolkit, help make the invitation to screening inclusive, accessible, and respectful. Sensitive clinics were created to support non responders with care that acknowledged and addressed complex needs, including trauma histories. The campaign was delivered in safe, trusted community spaces using pop-up info stands and peer led outreach, helping people feel seen, heard, and respected on their own terms. The small team of nurses are proactive, warm, friendly, knowledgeable and work with many communities especially the harder to reach ones. The project has made a measurable difference in increasing screening uptake among groups with historically low engagement, improving early detection and outcomes, and fostering trust, dignity, and long-term change by involving communities as co-creators of their own care.