

Sanghvi H, Limpaphayom KK, Plotkin M, Charurat E, Kleine A, Lu E, Eamratsameekool W, Palanu Wong B. Cervical cancer screening using visual inspection with acetic acid: operational experiences from Ghana and Thailand. *Reprod Health Matters*. 2008 Nov; 16(32): 67–77.

Abstract:

Thailand in 2000 and Ghana in 2001 initiated cervical cancer prevention programmes using a single-visit approach with visual inspection with acetic acid (VIA) with cryotherapy for pre-cancerous lesions. This service was integrated into existing reproductive health services, provided by trained nurses. The providers maintained a high level of competence and performance, including after the withdrawal of external funding. In Ghana, independent co-assessments revealed a high level of agreement in diagnosis between providers and a Master Trainer. In Thailand, high quality performance was associated with quality assurance mechanisms such as peer feedback and review of charts and service statistics. Provider performance was maintained at a high level in both countries: an average of 74% of providers from both countries met 85% or more of performance standards. The successful transition from a demonstration project to a national programme in Thailand was dependent on a strong commitment from government health bodies and health professionals. In contrast, the lack of health infrastructure and political will has prevented scale-up to a national programme in Ghana. However, this study shows that a single-visit approach with VIA and cryotherapy is programmatically feasible and sustainable and should be considered in national investments to control cervical cancer.

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