

# Opportunities and Challenges in the Elimination of Cervical Cancer

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THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS

MD Anderson  
~~Cancer~~ Center

Making Cancer History®



CANCER PREVENTION & RESEARCH  
INSTITUTE OF TEXAS

# Disclosures

I have no conflicts of interest to disclose.

The global burden of cervical cancer is high

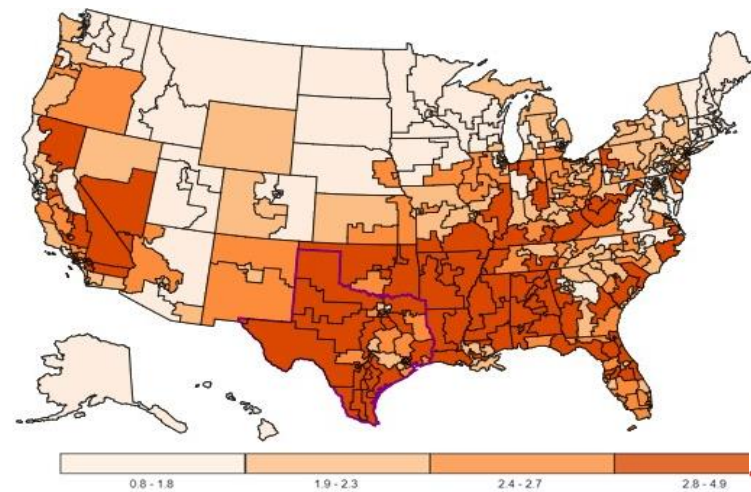
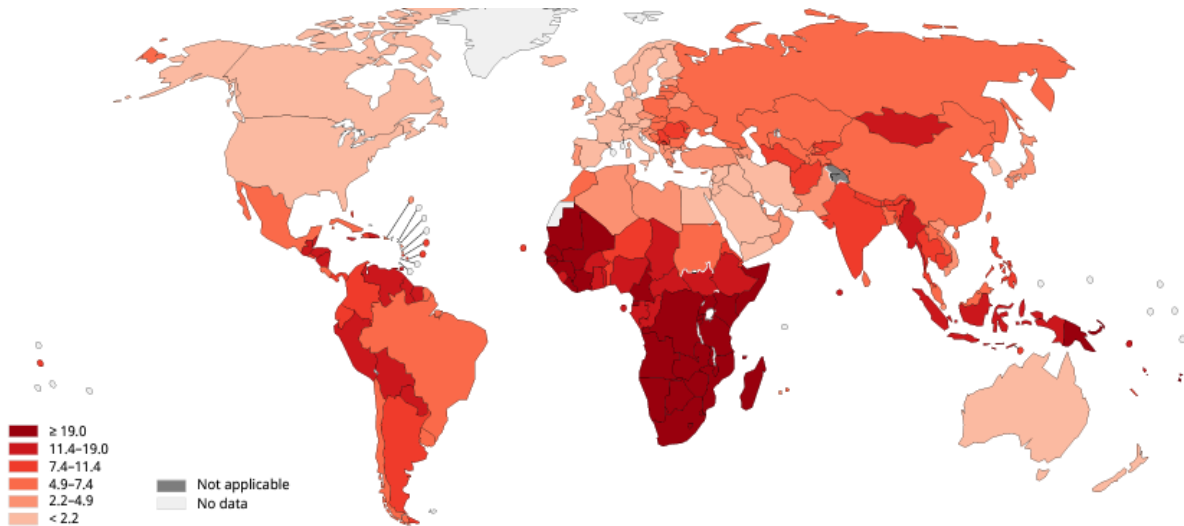
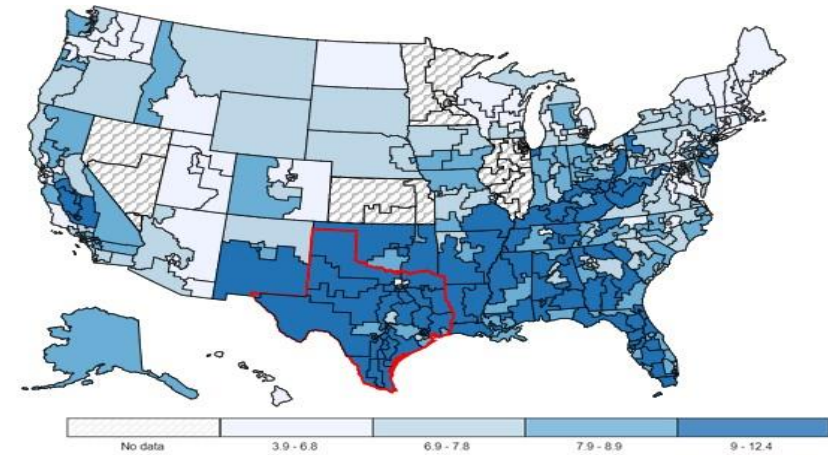
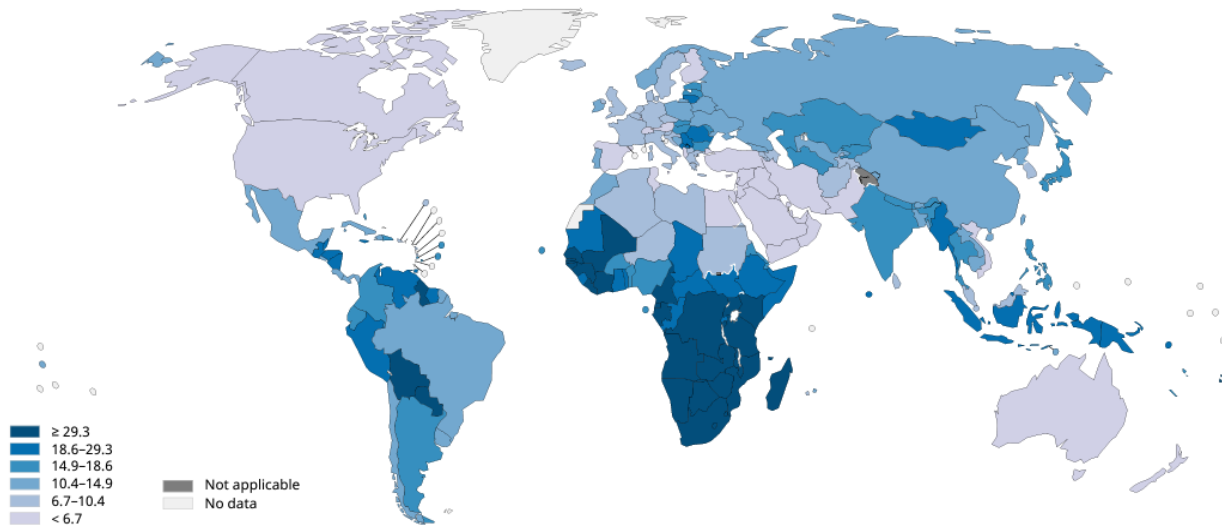


1 new diagnosis every minute  
1 new death every 2 minutes

*Cervical cancer  
can be prevented*



# Cervix Cancer: *A Marker of Inequity, Globally and Locally*



Globocan 2020

CDC 2020

\* and boys in countries where resources allow

90%

of girls\* fully vaccinated with HPV vaccine by age 15

70%

of persons screened with a high-performance test

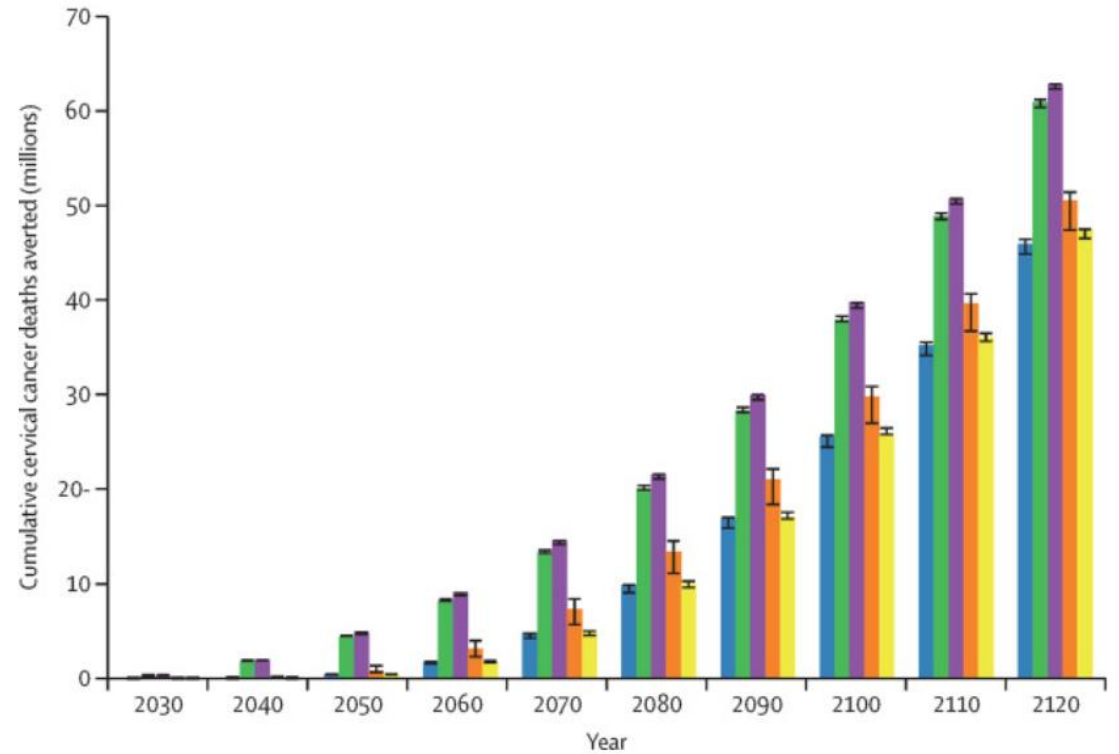
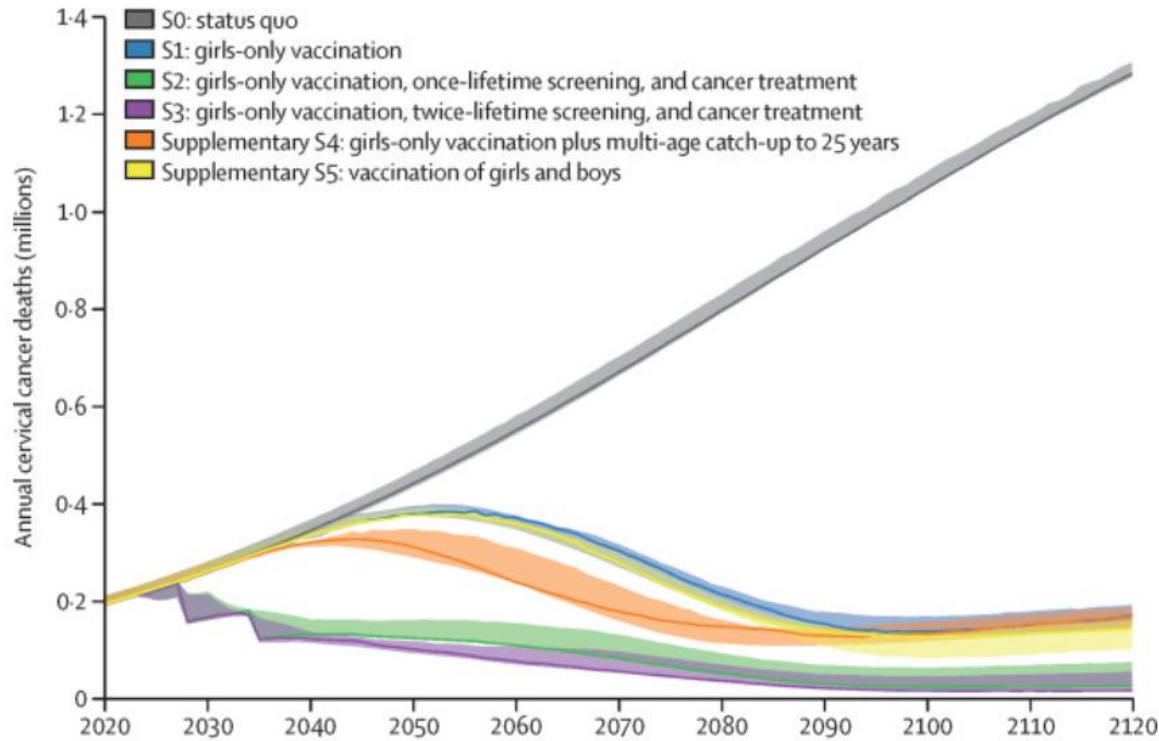
90%

of persons identified with cervical disease receive treatment



*Global Strategy  
to achieve the elimination of cervical  
cancer as a public health problem  
(incidence  $\leq$  4 per 100,000 person-years)*

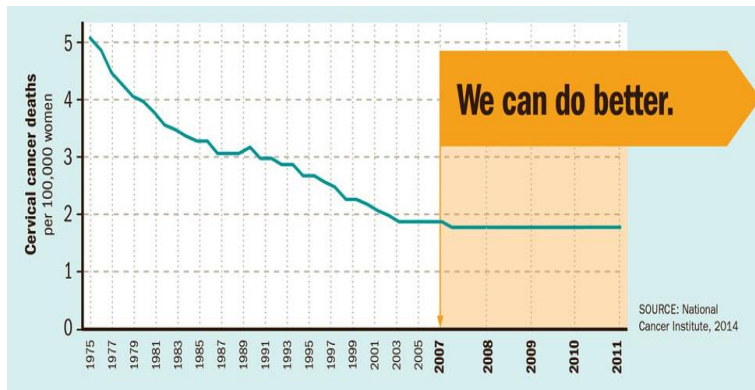
# Elimination Modeling



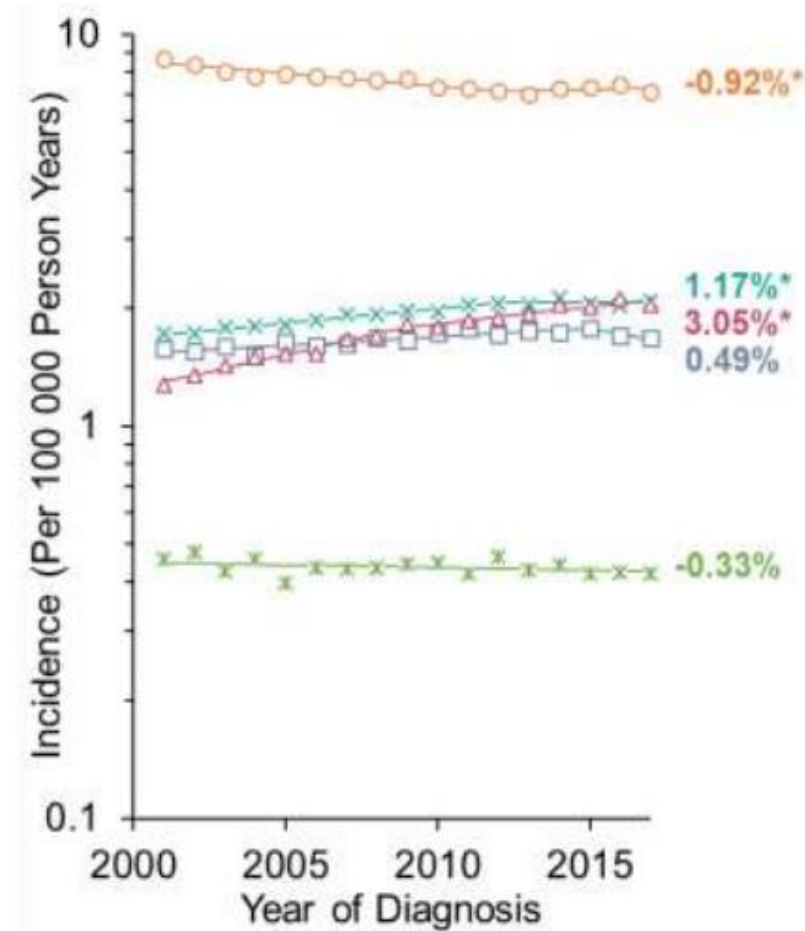
*Achieving the 90-70-90 targets by 2030 would result in over 62 million cervical cancer deaths averted by 2120.*

In an era in which world leaders have committed to eliminate cervical cancer...

*the U.S. is losing ground*

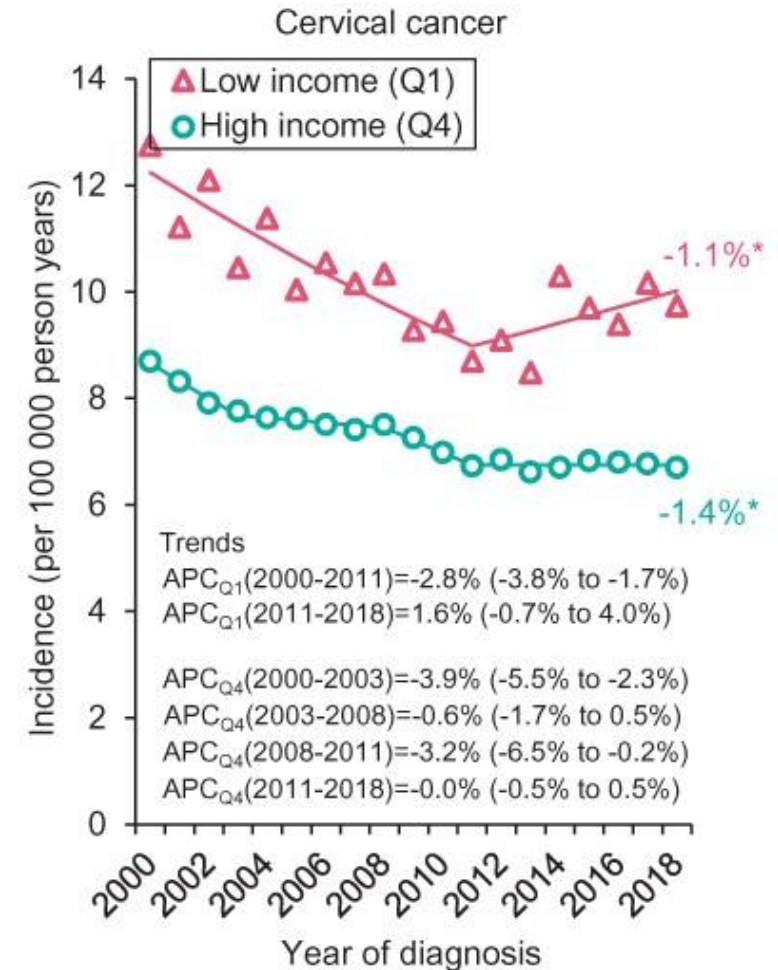


NCI, 2014



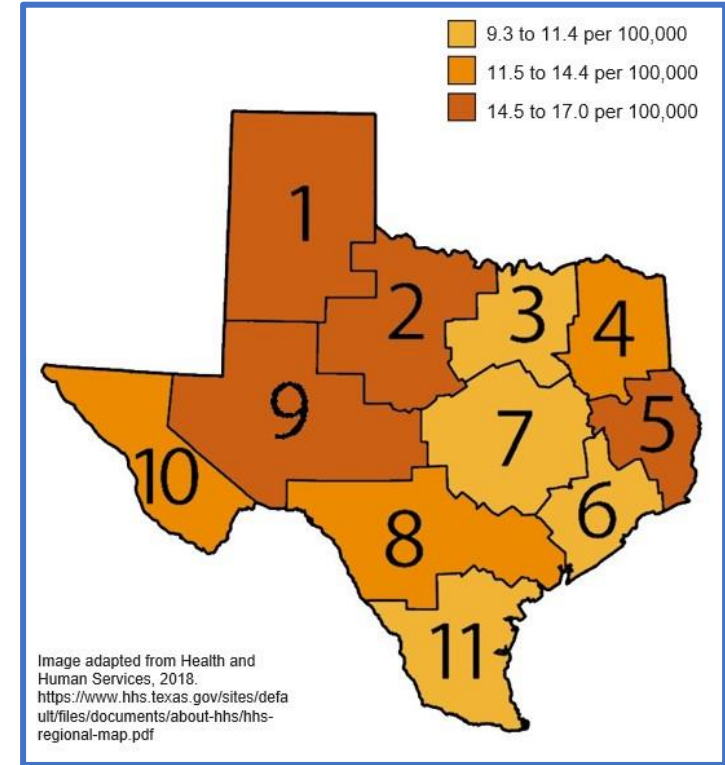
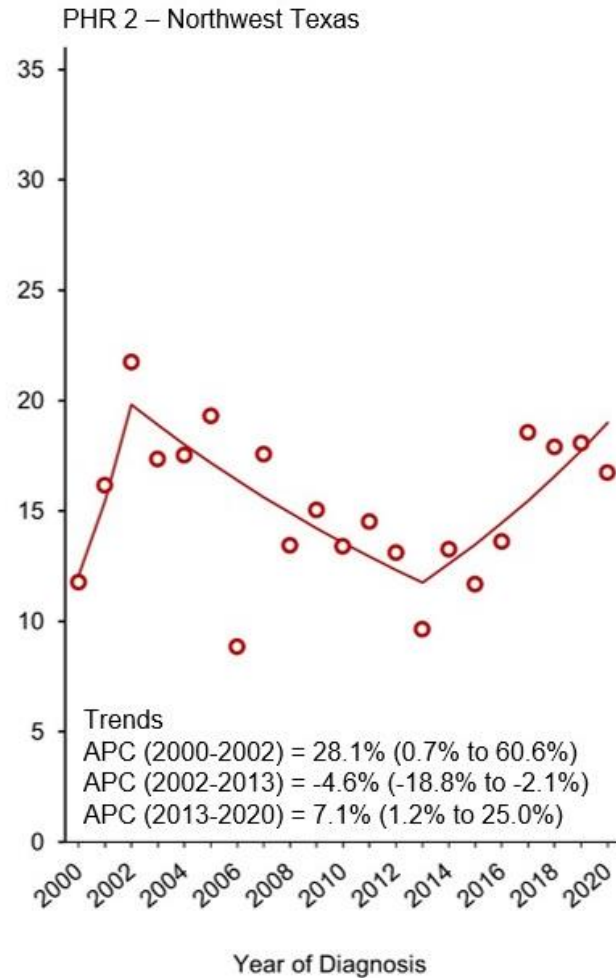
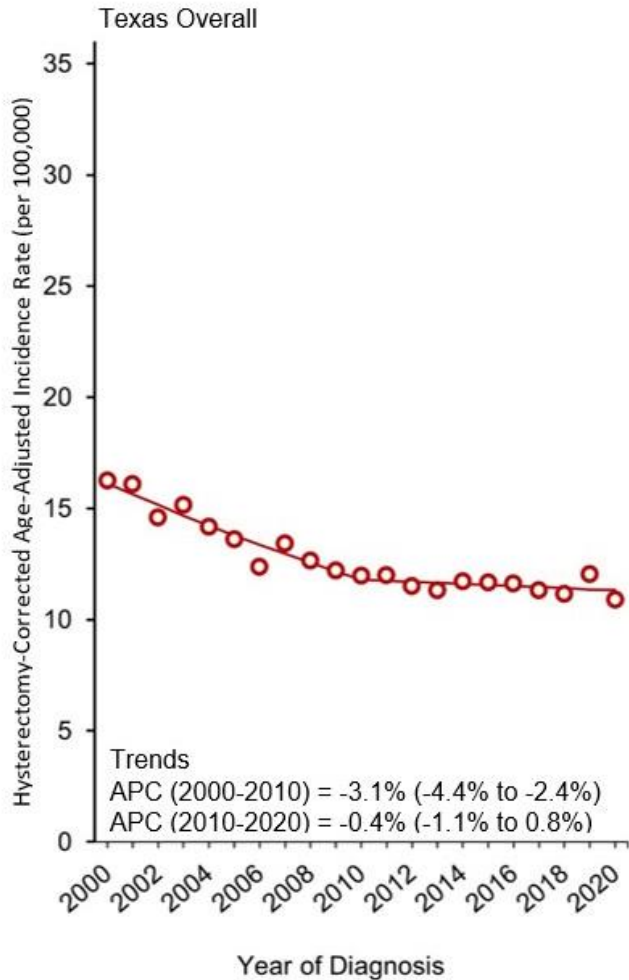
Deshmukh et al, JNCI 2021

**A** County-level household income



Lin et al, JNCI Cancer Spectrum, 2022

# And the trends are similar in Texas



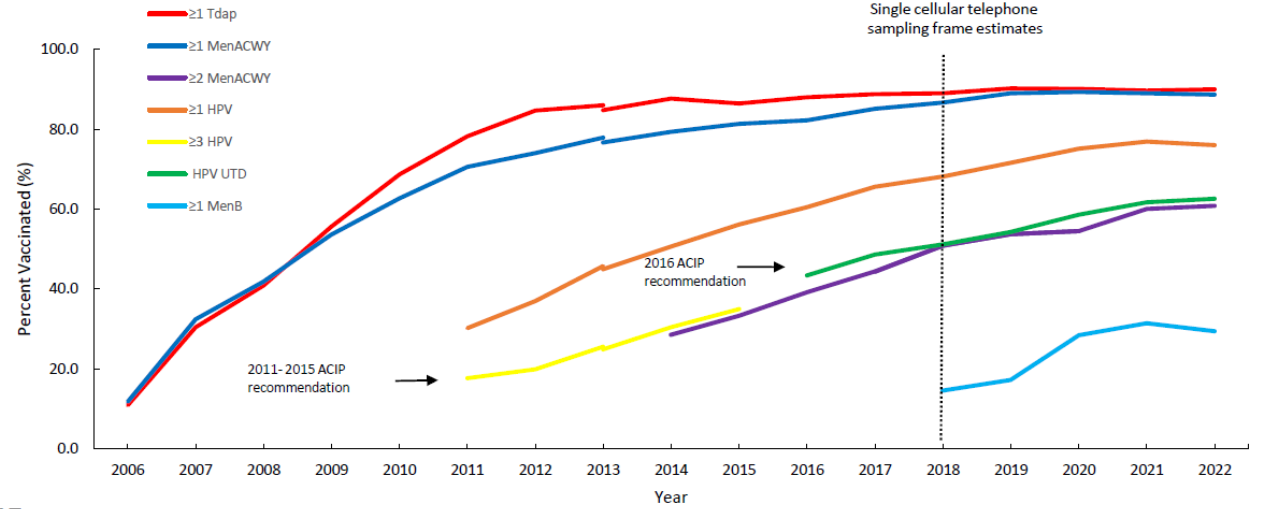
Trisha Amboree, PhD  
 PRESTIS Postdoctoral  
 Fellow

CPRIT Conference Poster  
 presentation

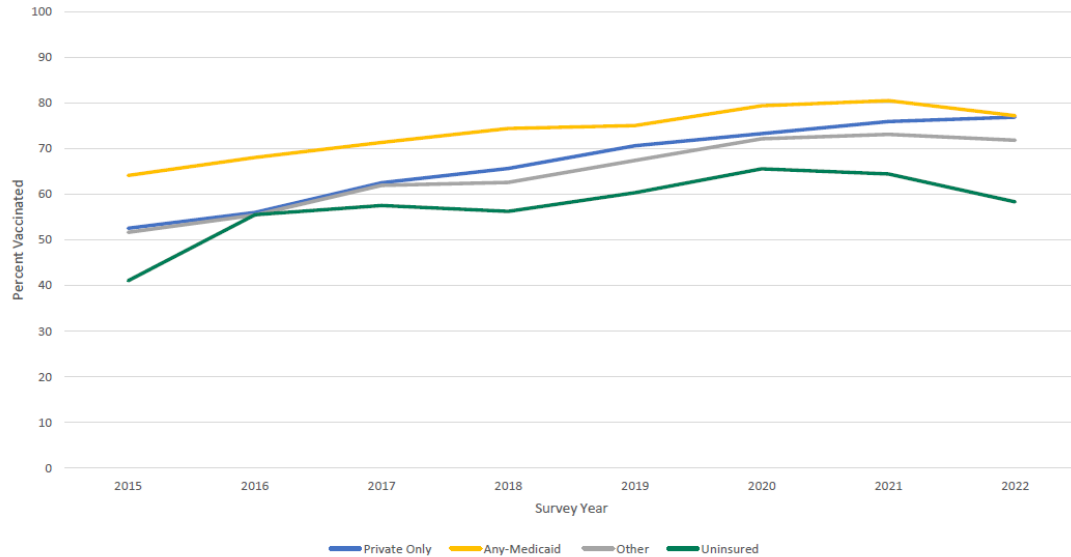


There is slowing uptake of the HPV Vaccine.

Estimated vaccination coverage with selected vaccines and doses\* among adolescents aged 13-17 survey year—National Immunization Survey-Teen<sup>S, ¶</sup>, United States, 2006-2022



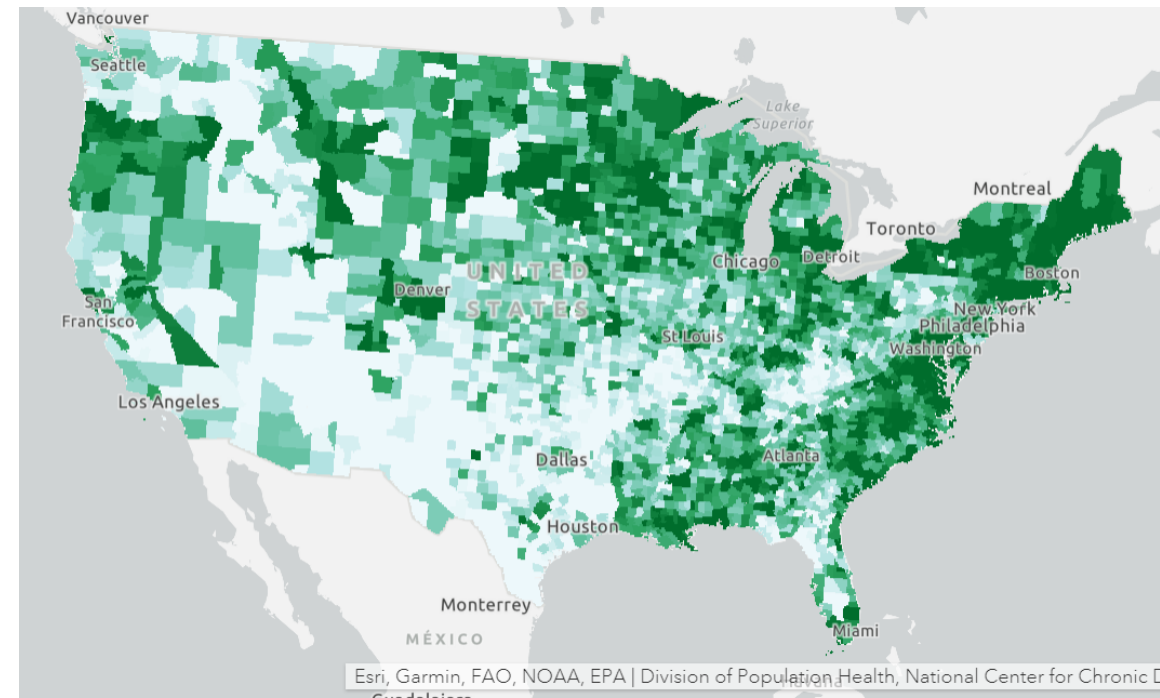
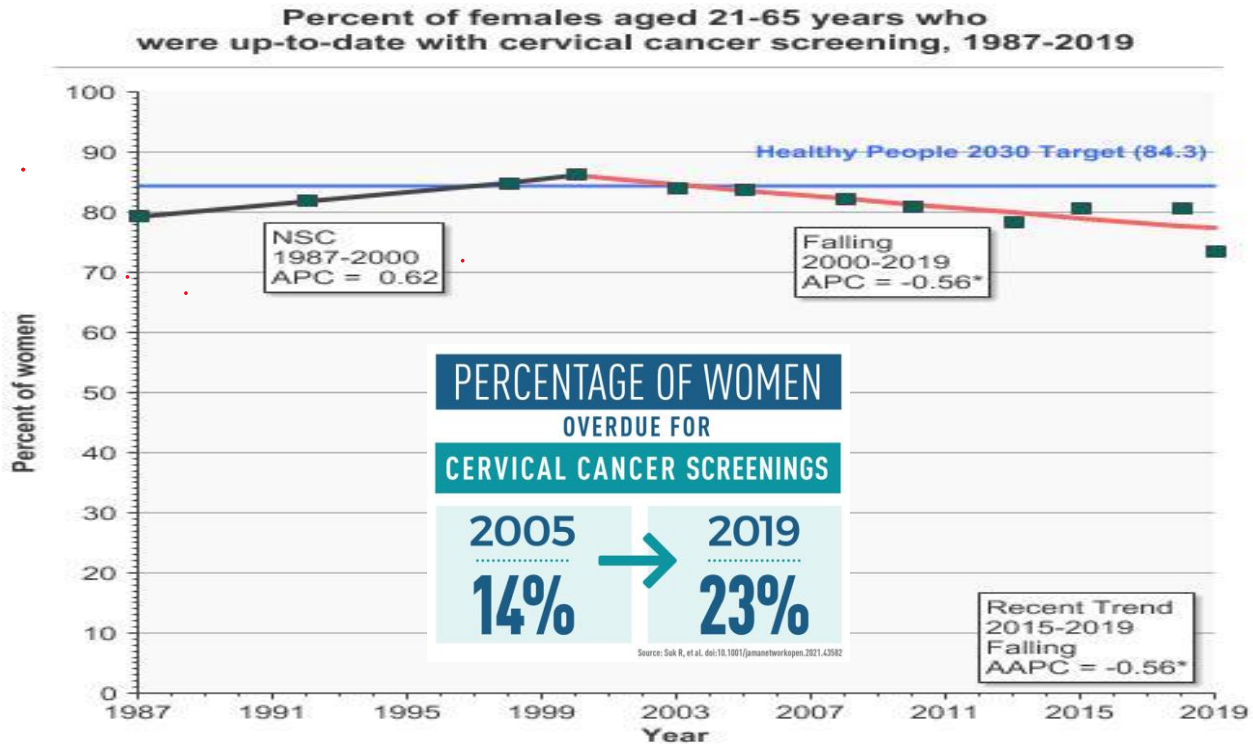
Estimated vaccination coverage with ≥1 human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine among adolescents 13-17 years, by Health Insurance Status— National Immunization Survey–Teen (NIS-Teen), United States, 2015-2022.



*And there are significant disparities*

In particular, lower HPV vaccine coverage among uninsured children and teens.

# Cervical cancer screening coverage has declined.



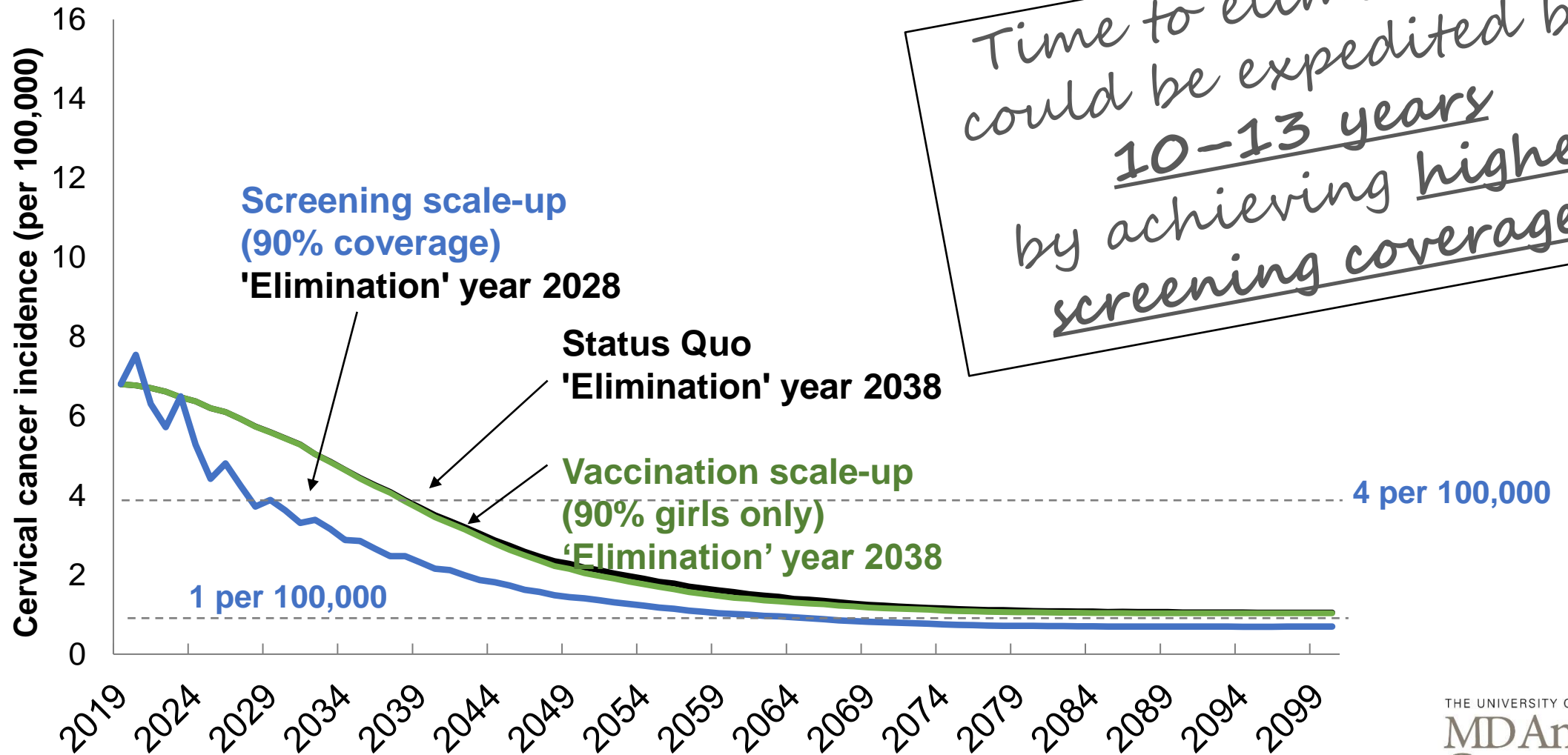
Rates of overdue cervical cancer screening in 2019 by sociodemographic group

Racial and ethnic groups	
Non-Hispanic Black	22%
Non-Hispanic White	20%
Other (including Alaska Native and American Indian)	27%
Geographic groups	
Rural women	26%
Urban women	23%
Health insurance status	
Uninsured	42%
Public insurance	28%
Private insurance	18%

And the disparities are *profound.*

NCI, 2021  
 CDC Cancer Statistics Visualizations, 2022  
 Suk et al, Lancet Public Health, 2022

Nonetheless, the U.S. can eliminate cervical cancer as a public health problem in the next two to three decades.



Burger et al, Lancet Public Health, 2020

# How are we going to get there?



HARNESS INNOVATIONS



ACCELERATE AND  
SCALE-UP IMPLEMENTATION



FOCUS ON EQUITY

# Several test options according to the current *Cervical Cancer Screening Guidelines\**

Pap Smear (cytology)

- 21-65 Years
- Every 3 Years

Pap Smear/High Risk HPV  
Co-test

- 30-65 Years
- Every 5 Years

PRIMARY High Risk HPV TEST  
*(Preferred)*

- 25-65 Years
- Every 5 Years

## Shifting Paradigm to Primary HPV

Primary HPV screening tests for HPV first, followed by a triage test such as cytology, colposcopy, and/or HPV genotyping if the initial test is positive.

# Shifting Paradigms:

*Primary HPV testing is superior to cytology in terms of:*

- ✓ Improved sensitivity for CIN3+ over cytology alone (↑ detection by 50%)  
(Minimally lower sensitivity over co-testing for CIN3+, but not for cancer diagnosis\*)
- ✓ High negative predictive value → high reassurance rate for women with a negative HR-HPV test
- ✓ Ability to be conducted on self-collected samples
- ✓ Improved access

\*Gage JC et al, J Natl Cancer Inst, 2014  
Arbyn et al, Lancet Oncol, 2018

# But still certain trade-offs to acknowledge

## Lack of specificity

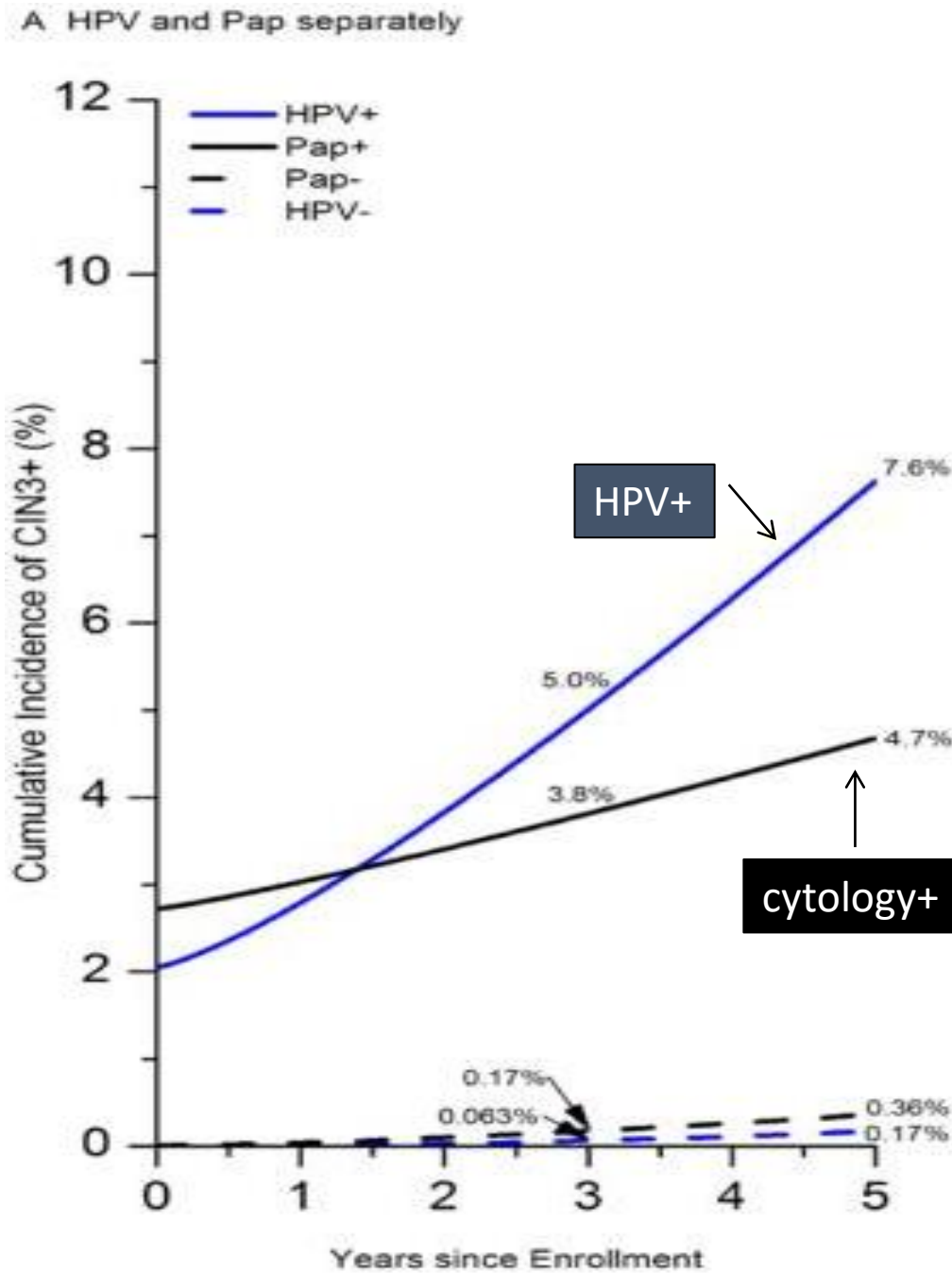
- Triage test needed to determine management of HPV+

Requires integrated infrastructure to assure appropriate follow-up of test results

## Only 2 FDA-approved tests

- Many health systems are currently using an HPV testing assay that is approved from co-testing but not primary HPV testing

Primary HPV testing predicts risk of CIN3+ better than cytology



Katki et al, J Low Genit Tract Dis. 2013  
Slide adapted from Debbie Saslow, PhD, ASC



# Primary HPV Screening is the Most Cost-Effective Approach

Modeling study based on 99,549 patients with co-testing followed over 3 years.

Screening Modality	Cases of CIN3+ Detected	Number of Colposcopies	Cost
<b>Primary HPV Screening</b>	294	2422	\$3.47 M
<b>Primary Cytology</b>	285	2966	\$4.80 M
<b>Cotesting</b>	308	2988	\$5.85 M

# Current Screening Guidelines for Average-risk Individuals

	American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG), 2020	US Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF), 2018	American Cancer Society (ACS), 2020
<b>Age to start screening</b>		<b>21</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Screening test options and intervals</b>	<p><b>Ages 21-65:</b> Cytology alone every 3 years OR</p> <p><b>Ages 21-29:</b> Cytology alone every 3 years</p> <p><b>Ages 30-65:</b> Cytology plus HPV testing every 5 years OR</p> <p><b>Ages 21-29:</b> Cytology alone every 3 years</p> <p><b>Ages 30-65:</b> HPV testing alone every 5 years</p>		<p><b>Ages 25-65+ Preferred:</b> HPV testing alone every 5 years OR</p> <p><b>Acceptable:</b> Either Cytology plus HPV testing every 5 years OR Cytology alone every 3 years</p>
<b>Age to end screening</b>		<b>65</b>	
	if 3 consecutive negative Pap tests OR 2 negative cytology plus HPV tests OR 2 negative HPV tests AND no abnormal tests within the prior 10 years with the most recent within the prior 5 years AND no CIN2+ within the prior 25 years		

# Shifting Paradigms:

*Primary HPV testing is superior to cytology in terms of:*

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\*Gage JC et al, J Natl Cancer Inst, 2014  
Arbyn et al, Lancet Oncol, 2018

# Currently, there are several test options

**Pap Smear**

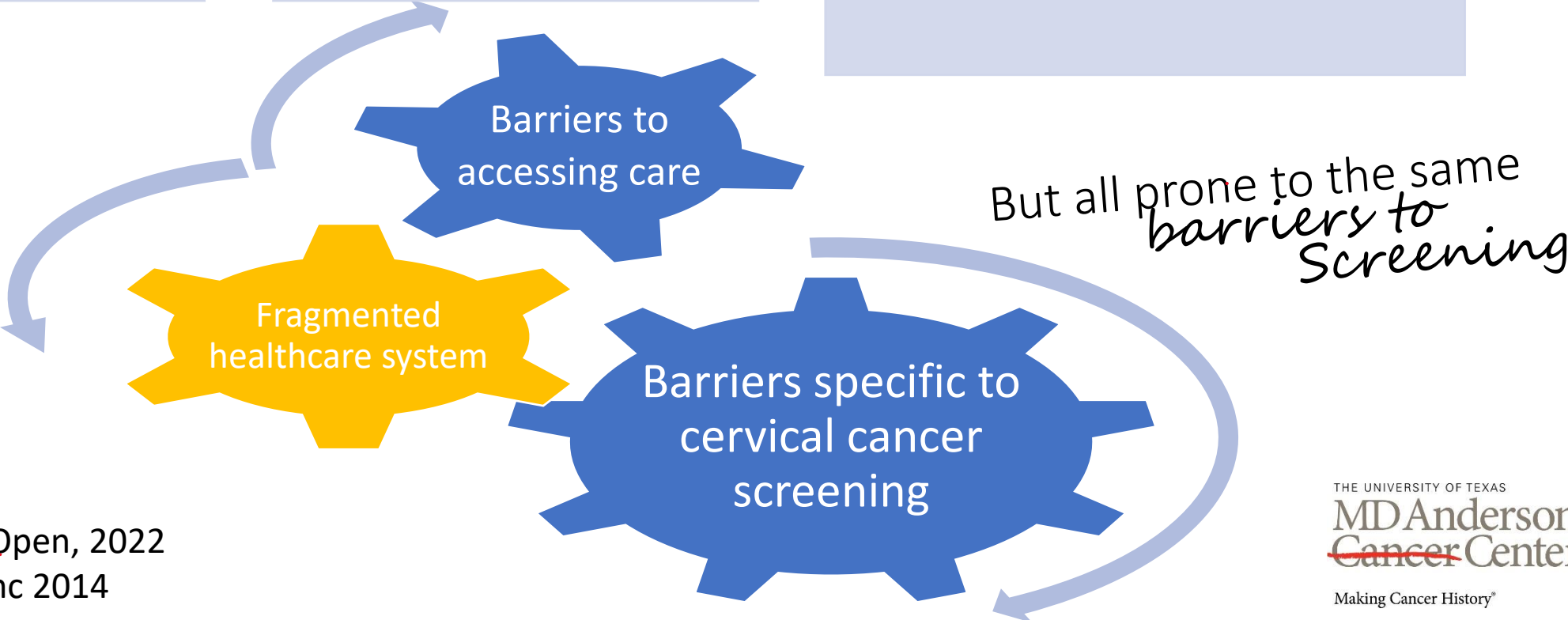
- 21-65 Years
- Every 3 Years

**Pap Smear/High Risk HPV Co-test**

- 30-65 Years
- Every 5 Years

**PRIMARY High Risk HPV TEST (Preferred)**

- 25-65 Years
- Every 5 Years



Suk et al, JAMA Network Open, 2022  
Montealegre et al, Gyn Onc 2014

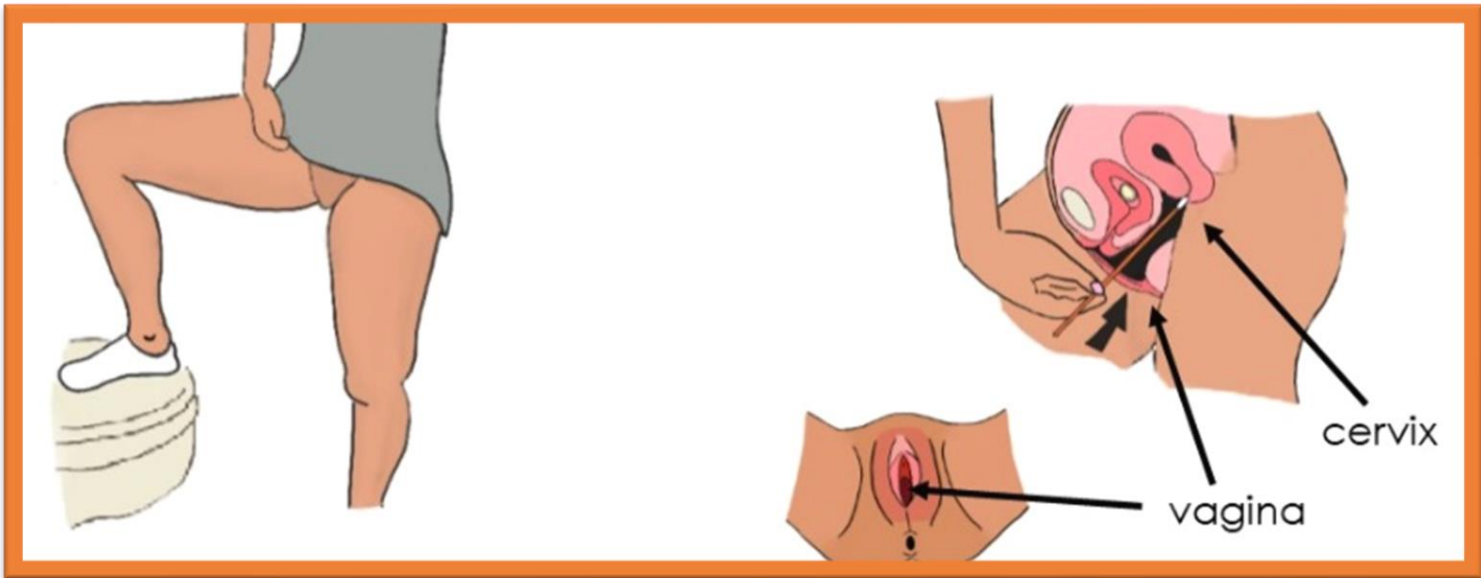
It's time

Pap Smear
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 21-65 Years</li><li>• Every 3 Years</li></ul>

Pap Smear/High Risk HPV Co-Testing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 30-65 Years</li><li>• Every 5 Years</li></ul>

PRIMARY High Risk HPV TESTING (Preferred)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 25-65 Years</li><li>• Every 5 Years</li><li>• <b>Performed on samples collected by a provider or by self</b></li></ul>

Paradigm Shift



What is the evidence for self-sample HPV testing?

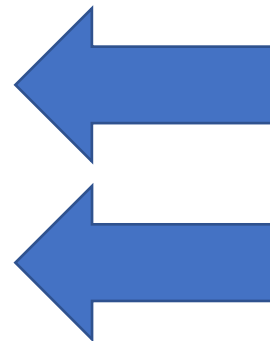


# Sensitivity and specificity of self-sample HPV test is similar to provider-collected HPV test

Relative parameters, comparing HPV testing with self- versus provider-collected samples

Assay	Clinical Endpoint	# studies	Ratio (95% CI)			
			Sensitivity	Specificity	Test positivity	Positive Predictive Value
PCR	CIN2+	17	0.99 (0.97-1.02)	0.98 (0.97- 0.99)	1.00 (0.94-1.06)	0.97 (0.90-1.04)
	CIN3+	8	0.99 (0.96-1.02)	0.98 (0.97-0.99)		0.90 (0.78-1.05)

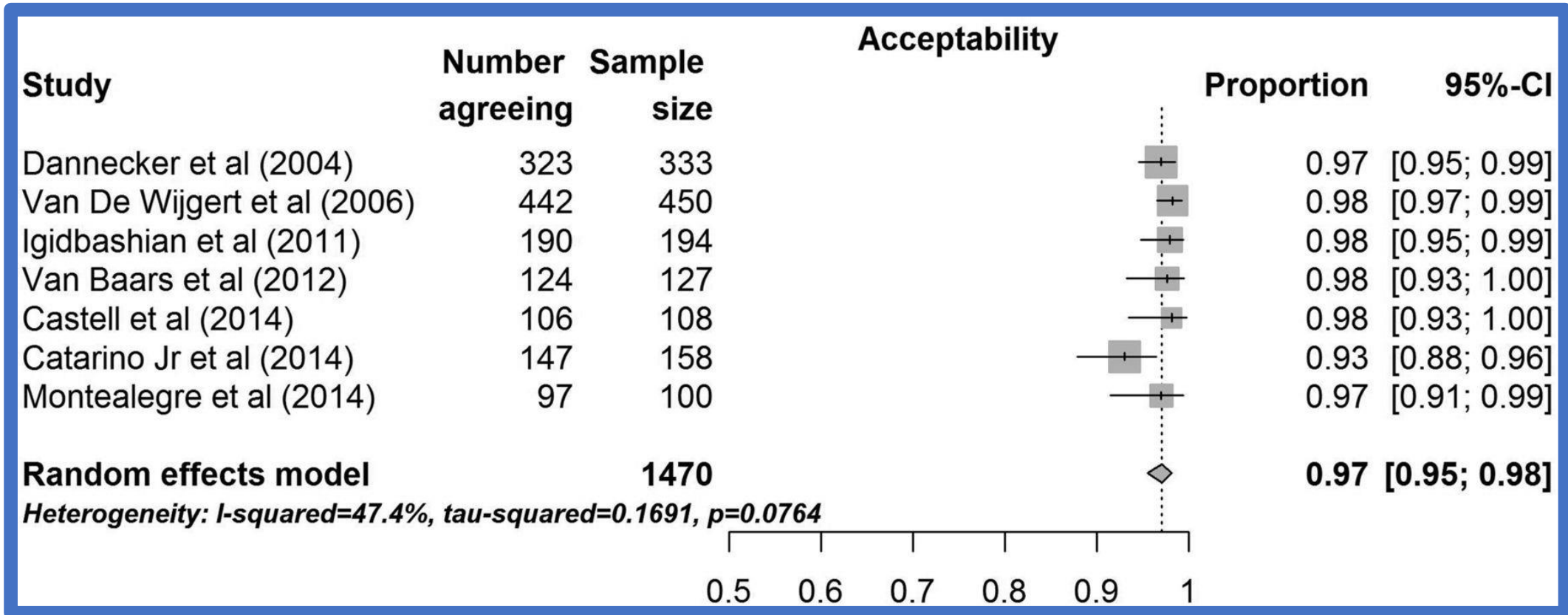
	Pooled Estimates
<b>Sensitivity</b>	
Self-collected	96%
Provider-collected	96%
<b>Specificity</b>	
Self-collected	79%
Provider-collected	79%



Pooled sensitivity and specificity using PCR Assays

Arbyn et al, Lancet Oncol, 2018

# ✔ Self-sampling is highly acceptable to women.







# Self-Sampling Increases Participation in Cervical Cancer Screening

	Self-Sampling Participation	Control Participation	Difference	Relative Participation
Mailed kits	24%	10%	13%	2.5
Door-to-Door	93%	53%	39%	1.9
Offer at Clinic	50%	22%	28%	2.3

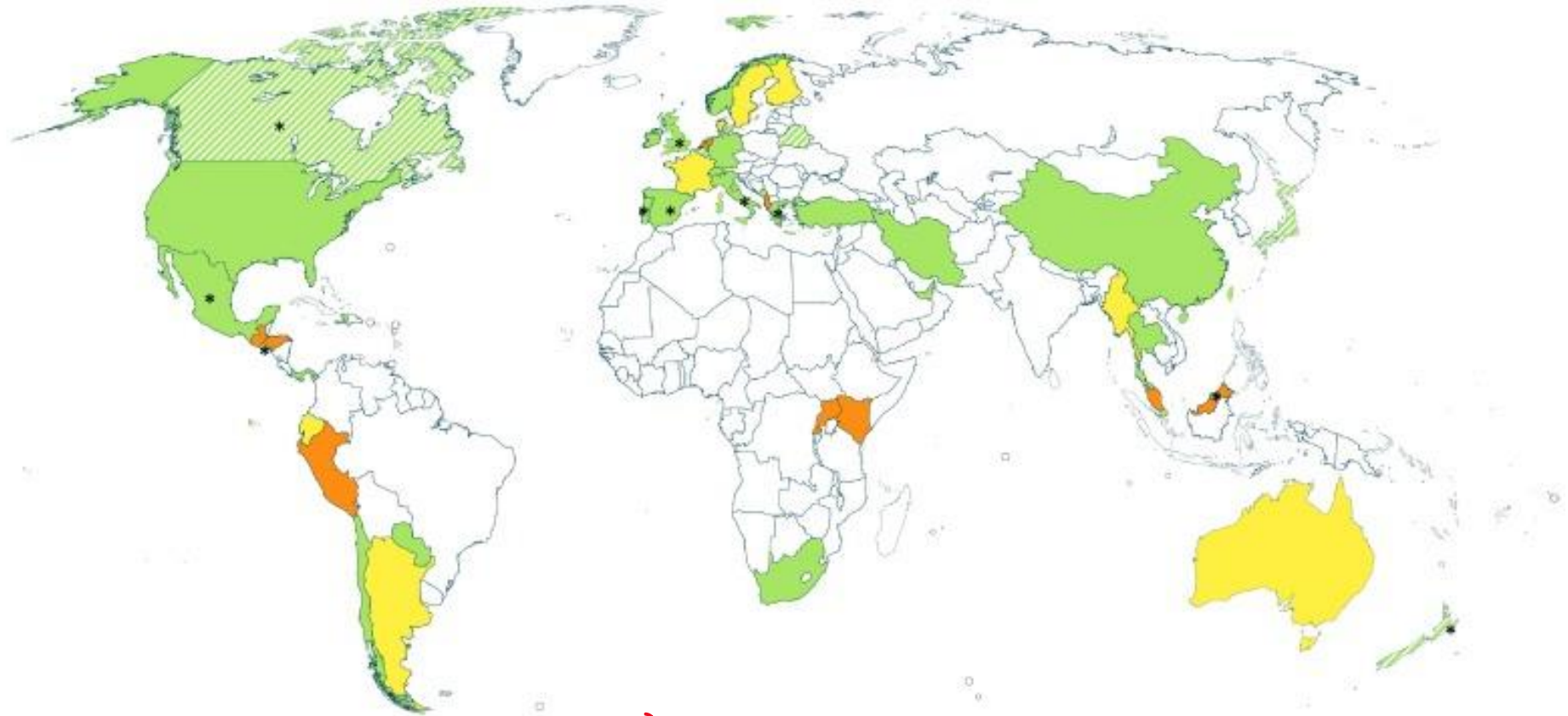
*Pooled relative participation:  
2-fold increase*

Costa et al, Br J Cancer, 2022



Increasingly used in national cervical cancer screening programs

## Self-Sampling in National Cervical Cancer Screening Programs



HPV-based screening

HPV-based screening with self-sampling for ALL women

HPV-based screening with self-sampling for UNDERSCREENED women

Planned HPV-based screening

\* Pilot self-sampling study

# Regulatory Landscape of Self-Sampling in the U.S.

Goal: FDA approval of home-based self-sampling

'Last Mile' Initiative by National Cancer Institute

Public-private partnership to validate at-home self-sample HPV testing for FDA approval



**SHIP** Trial: Self-Sampling for HPV to Improve Prevention of Cervical Cancer

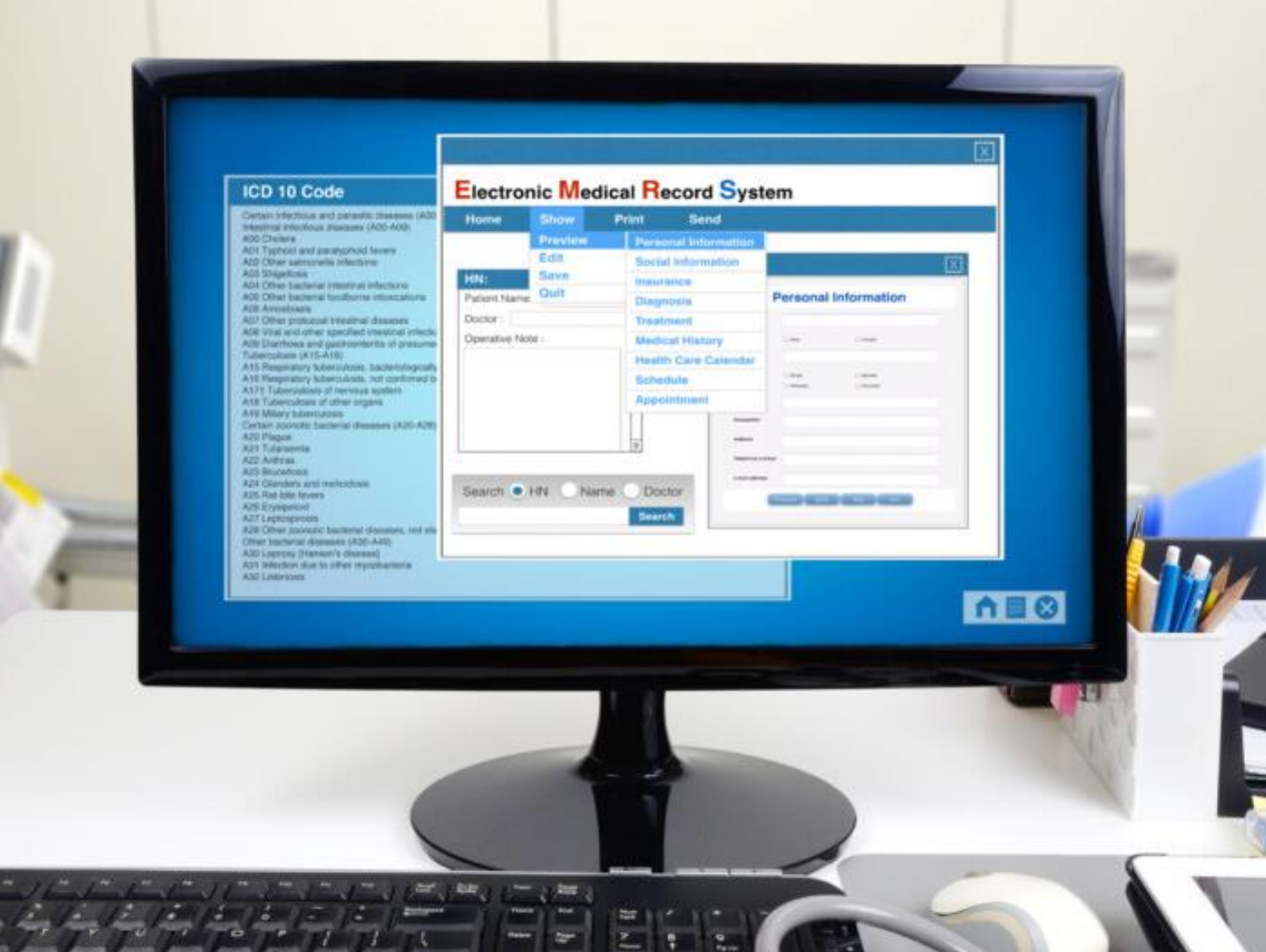
Anticipated FDA approval: 2024-2025 (?)



three components of the ROSE screening platform.



*New possibilities.*  
At-home screening



*New possibilities:*  
Opportunistic Clinic-Based Self-Sampling

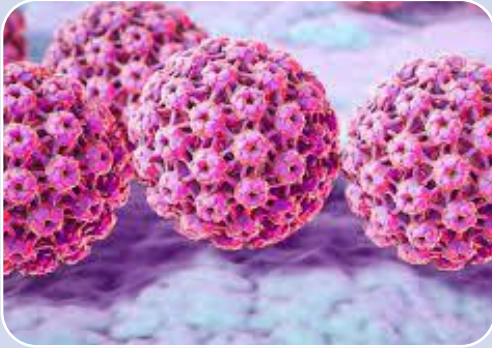
# New possibilities: Community-based screening



Montealegre et al, J Immigr Minor Health 2014

Erin Kobetz, PhD, University of Miami

# How do we prepare?



Facilitate adoption and integration of primary HR-HPV testing

Build collaborative networks, capacity at decentralized facilities, and access to patient navigation to ensure clinical follow-up

Implement contextually-relevant strategies to ensure broad and equitable reach of primary HR-HPV Testing

Develop new technologies to dramatically and equitably increase access



*Develop contextually-relevant strategies*



**Screening from the privacy of your own home!**  
*¡Detección temprana en la privacidad de su hogar!*

- 1**  
Read the information  
*Lea la información*
- 2**  
Collect your sample  
*Tome su muestra*
- 3**  
Place your sample in the mail **or** drop it off at your Harris Health clinic  
*Mande su muestra por correo or llévela a una clínica de Harris Health*
- 4**  
Receive your results  
*Reciba sus resultados*

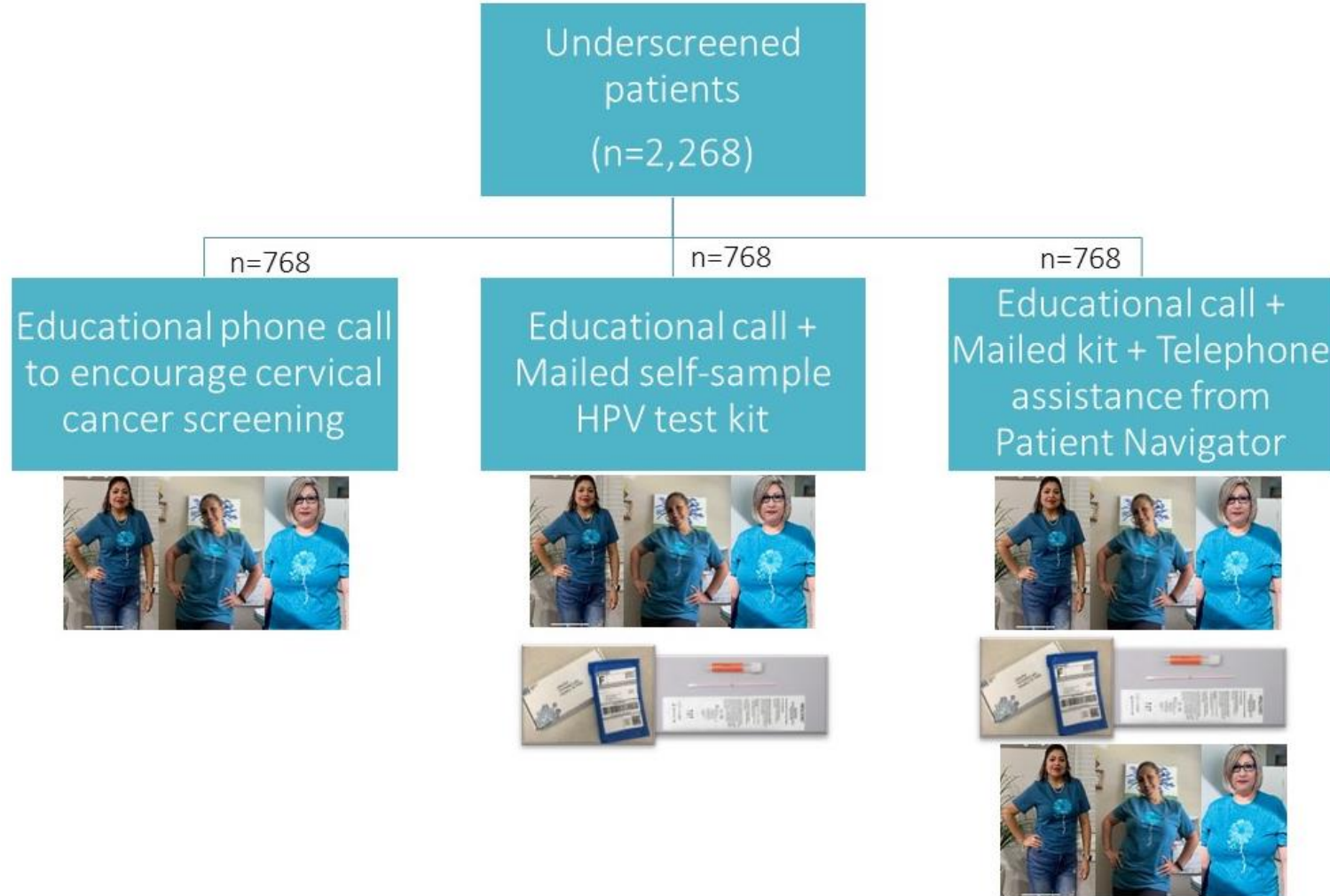


**Mailed self-sample HPV testing for underscreened patients in a safety net health system**





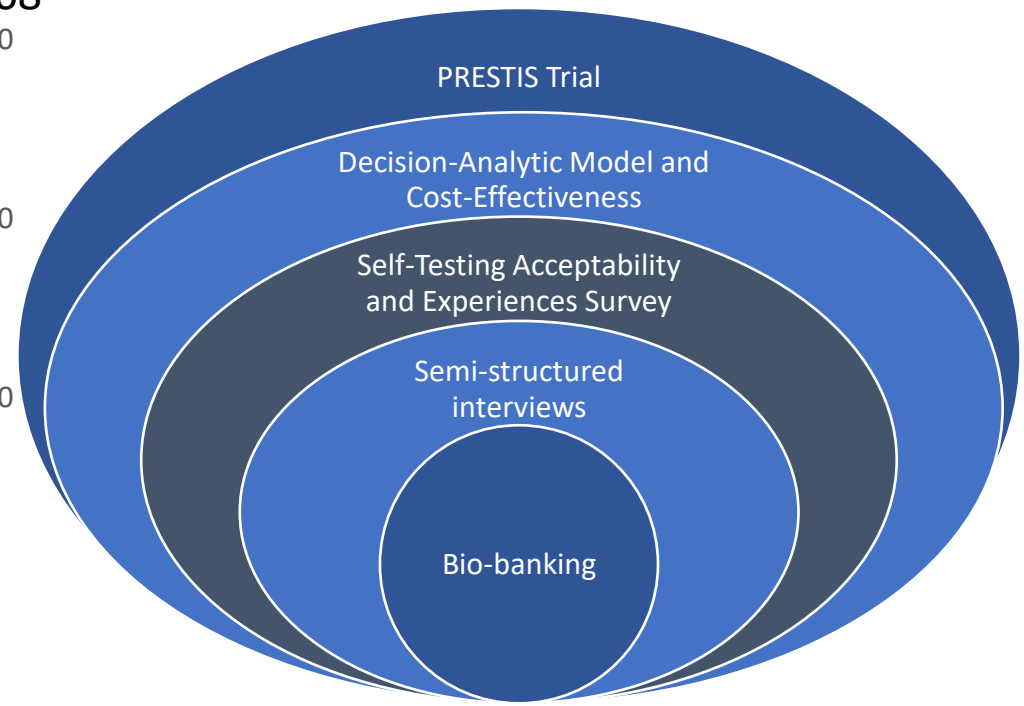
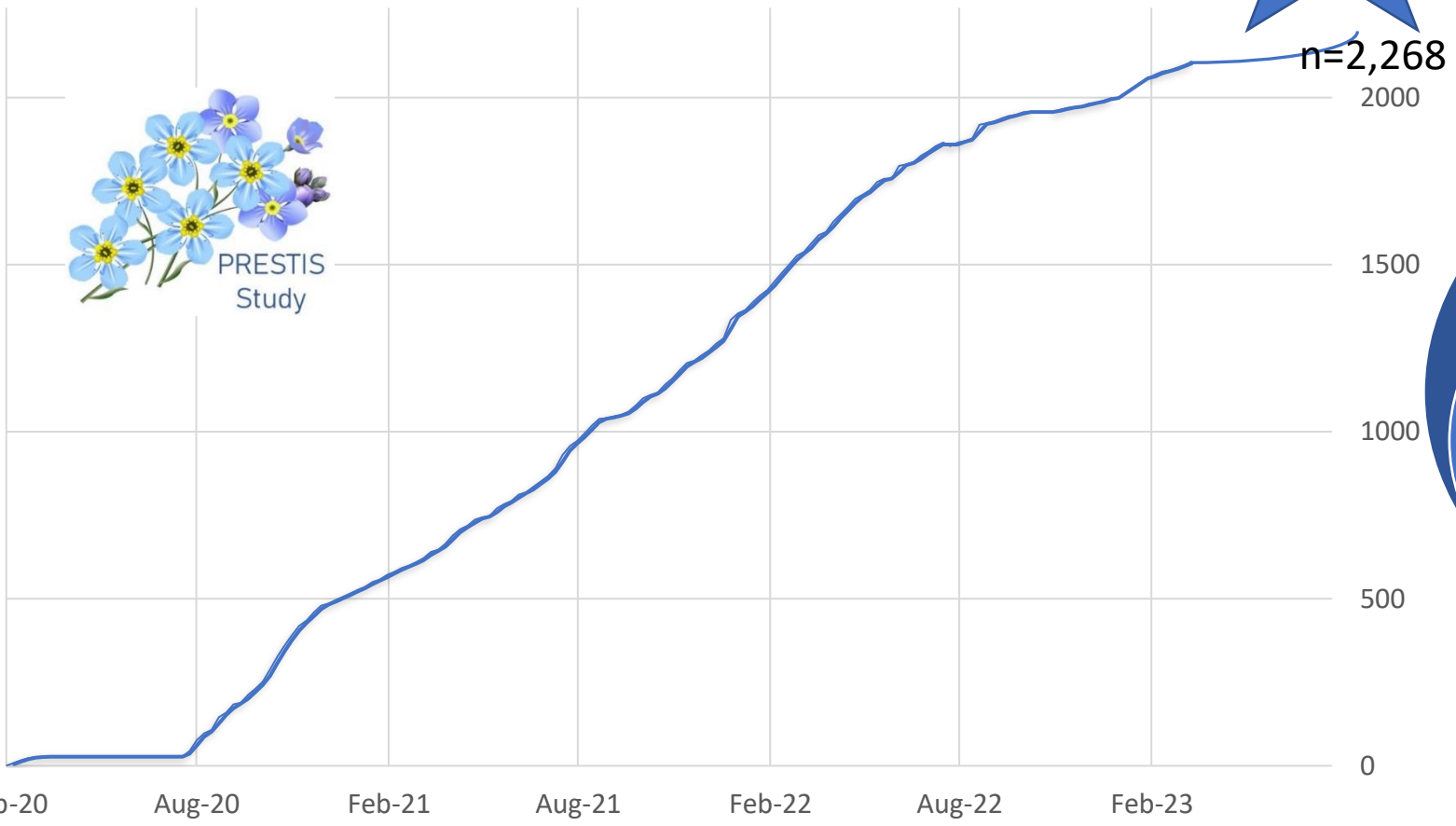
# Develop contextually-relevant strategies





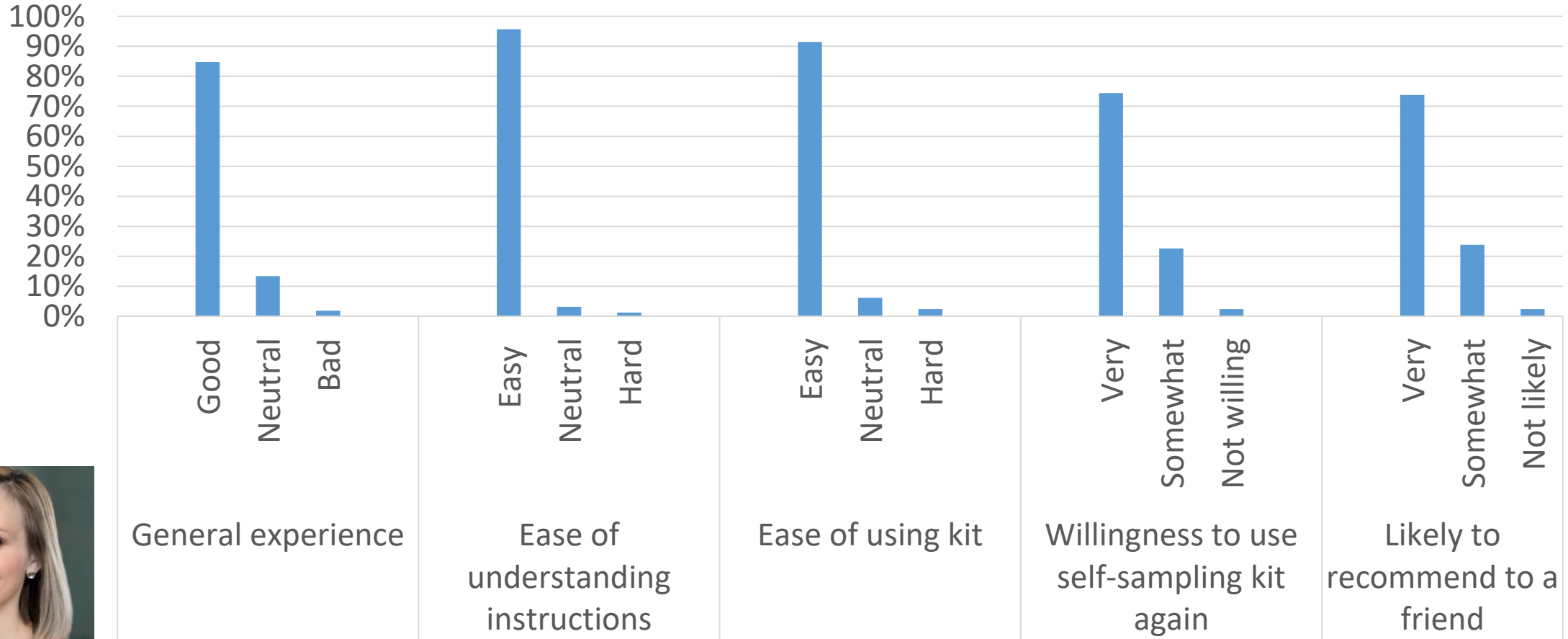
# Develop contextually-relevant strategies

100 %





# Develop contextually-relevant strategies

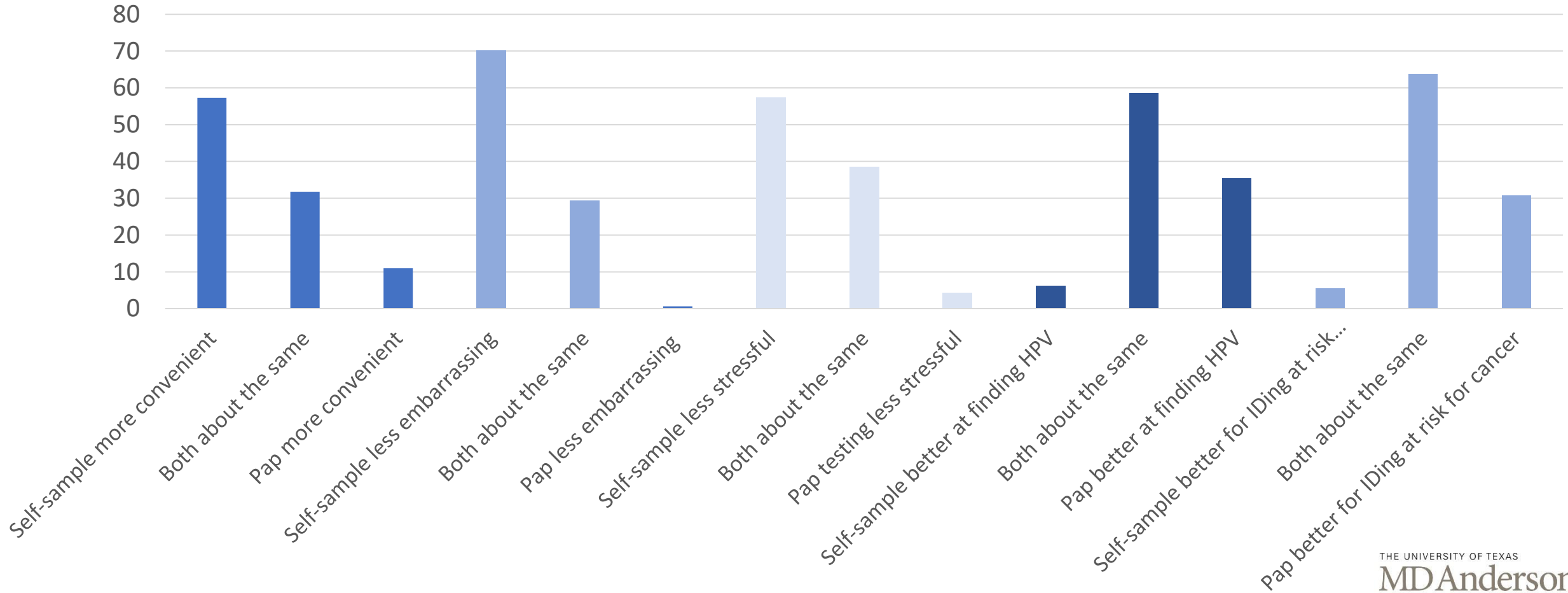


Susan Parker, MPH

Parker SL et al, Elife, 2023; Parker SL et al Amer J Prev Med, *Under Review*

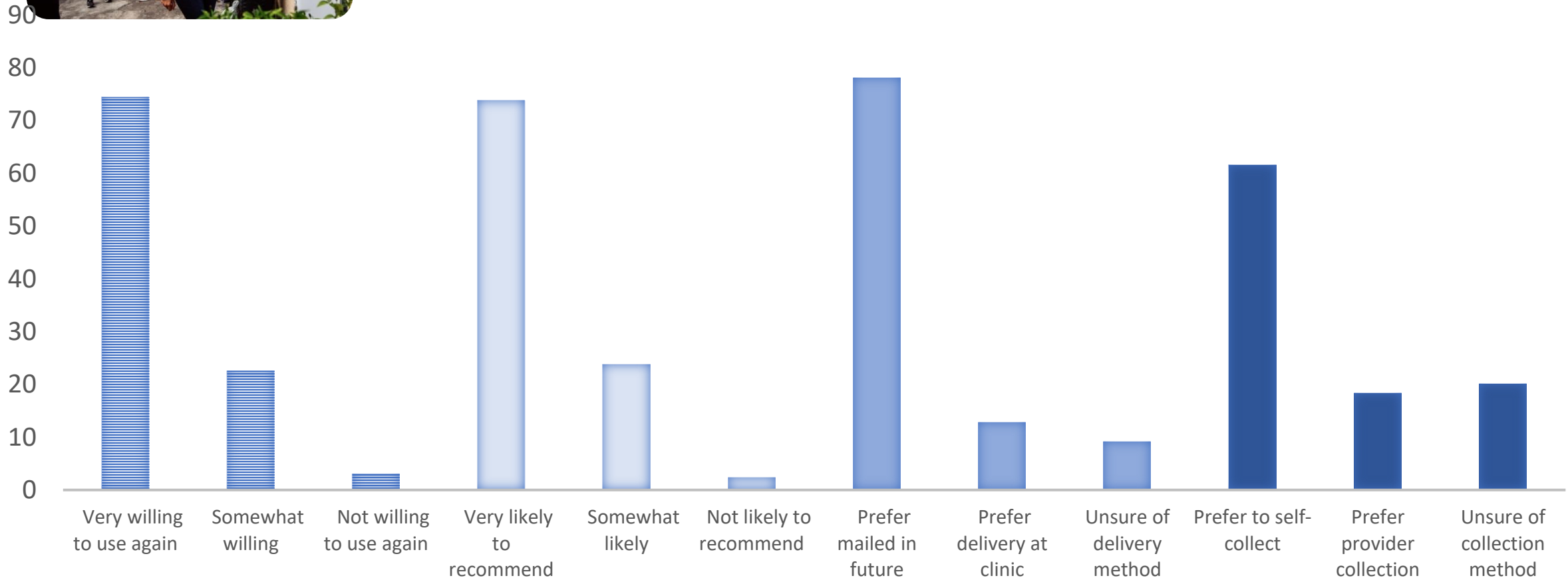


## Develop contextually-relevant strategies



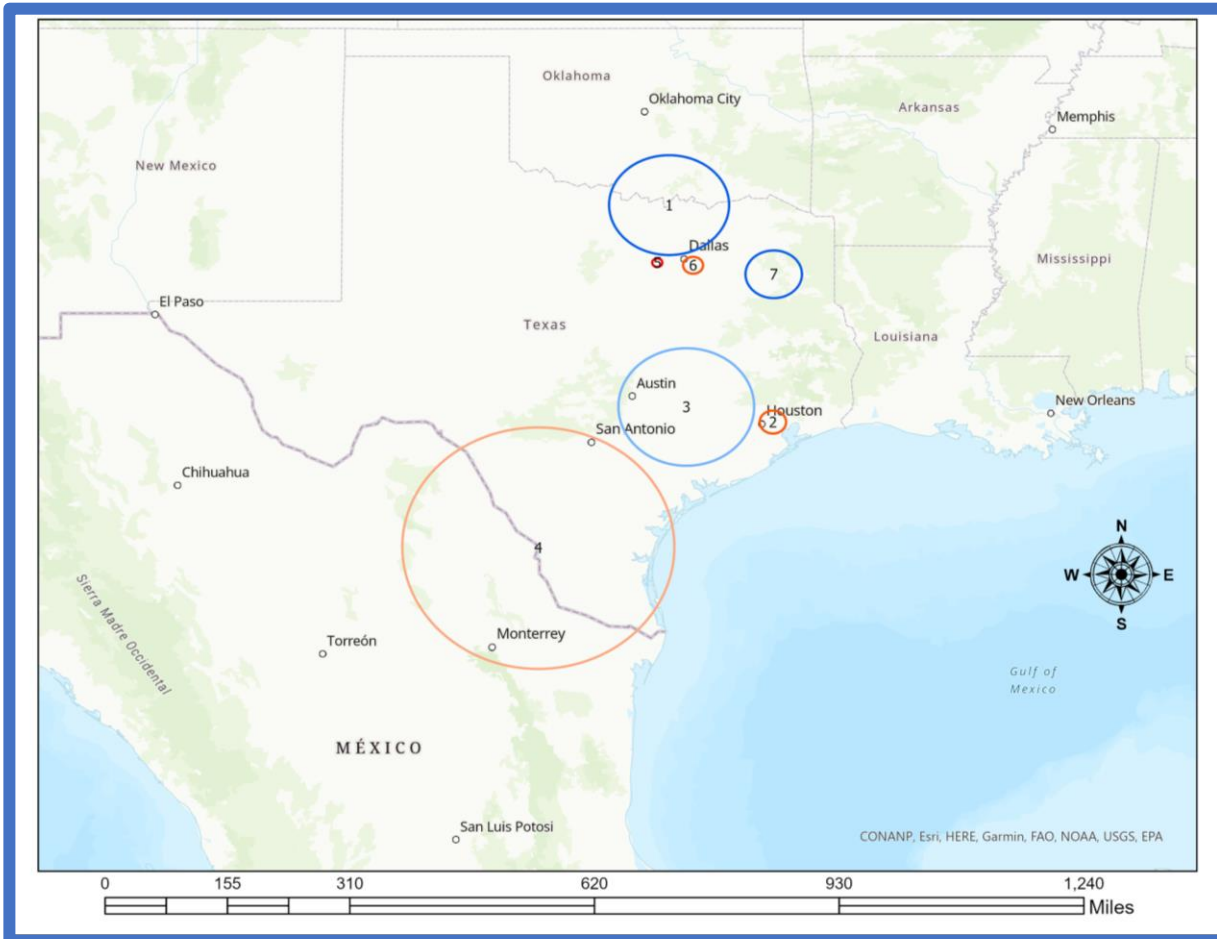


*Develop contextually-relevant strategies*





*Develop contextually-relevant strategies*



Pilot Study: Self-Sampling in Public Emergency Departments



Itunu Sokale, PhD, CPRIT Postdoctoral Fellow

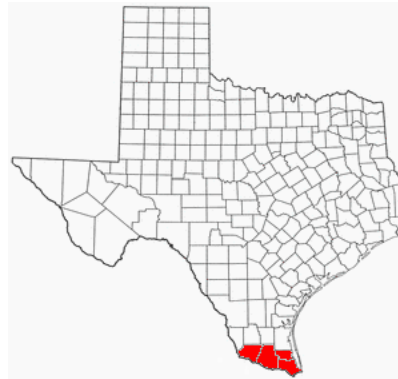


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*Develop and test contextually-relevant strategies*



Prevencción en sus Manos  
Funding: MD Anderson Community Outreach and Engagement Fund for Underserved Texans (Montealegre)



# Develop contextually-relevant strategies

Research and demonstration projects in this area are critical

How do we use self-sampling in outreach?

What are effective strategies to implement self-sampling?

How do we ensure clinical follow-up?

What strategies are cost-effective?

How do we integrate self-sampling in clinical settings?

What are effective communication strategies?

*Texas can and should lead the way!*

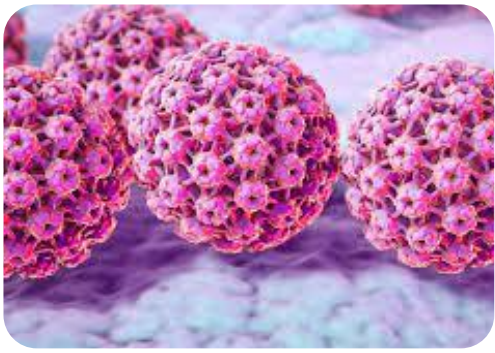


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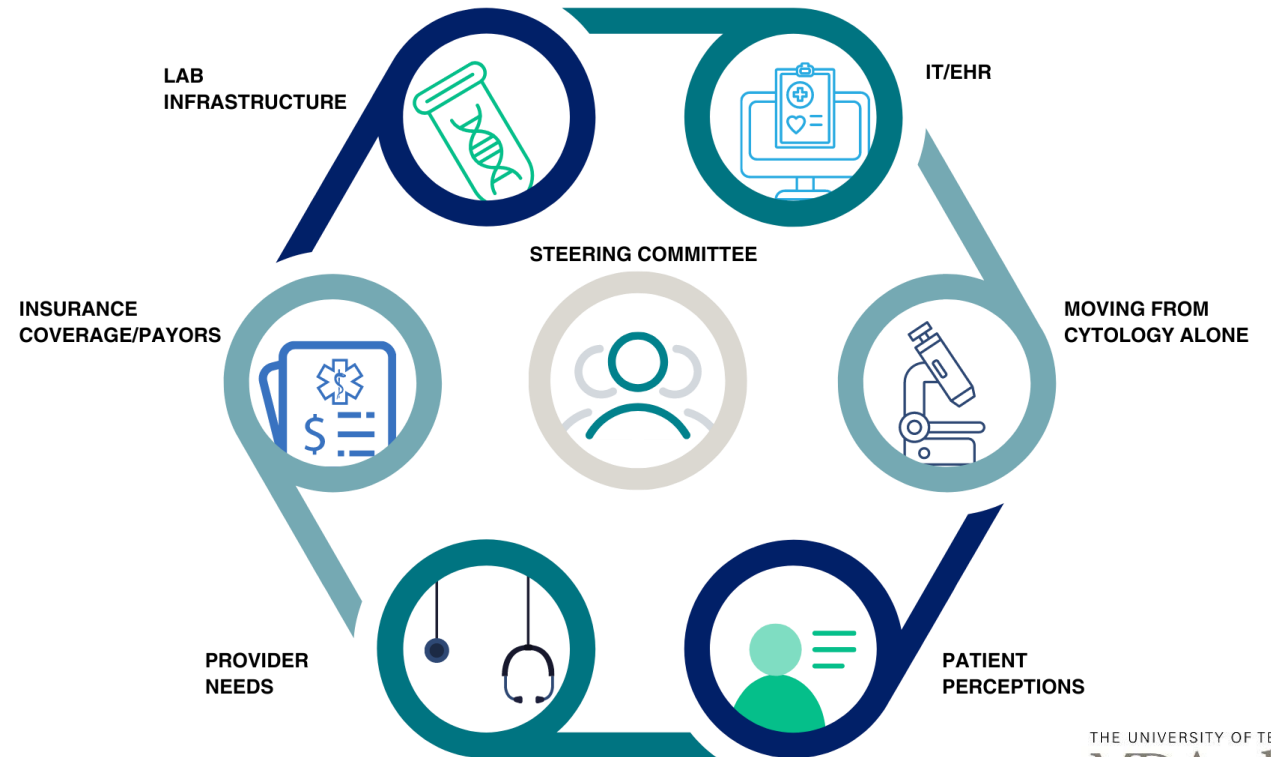


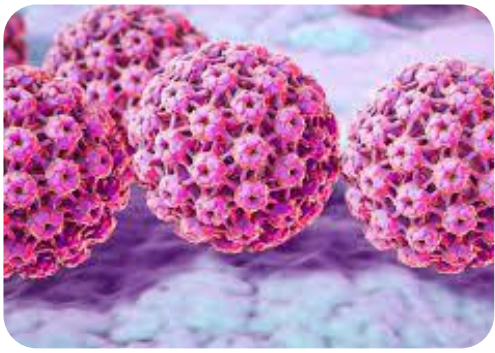
# Adopt and Integrate Primary HPV Testing




## Primary HPV Screening Initiative


- Create a **comprehensive roadmap with recommendations and tools** to support the transition to primary HPV screening in the United States over the coming years as described in the ACS Cervical Cancer Screening Guideline (2020)
- Determine the actors who will be responsible for implementation








# Adopt and Integrate Primary HPV Testing

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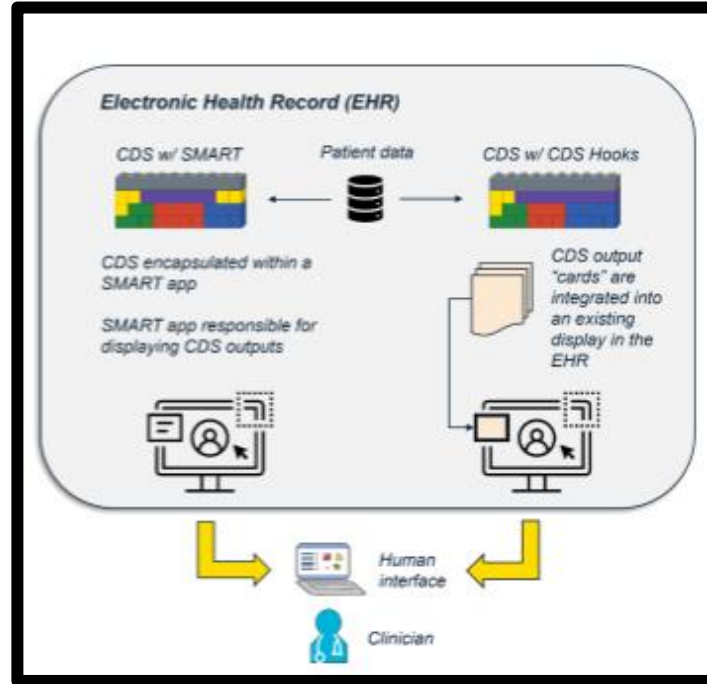
**Patient/Consumer Education (51.62%)**
- 

**Provider/Clinician Education (51.11%)**
- 

**Stigma (46.51%)**
- 

**Primary HPV/ Self-Sampling Prep (45.94%)**
- 

**Access (44.44%)**



**Results:**  
If your HPV test is negative, you are at very low risk of precancer or cancer. If you have never had an abnormal Pap or positive HPV test before, then no more testing is needed for 5 years. If your test is negative but you have previously been treated for a precancer or had an abnormal screening test result, I will let you know when to return depending on your history. If the HPV test is positive, more testing may be required, such as a Pap test. Depending on those results, you will need to be seen again soon for a closer look at your cervix or in a year for another HPV test.

**Addressing specific patient questions:**

**Q: What if my HPV test is positive?**  
A: It is still unlikely there is anything wrong with your cervix and it does not mean that you have cervical precancer or cancer. More testing may be done from the same sample if available in the lab. The HPV test result along with other test results will determine if you need another office visit soon to look at your cervix more closely, or if you need a repeat test in one year.




**Q: Does a positive test mean my partner is/was unfaithful?**  
A: No. Positive HPV tests are common even in people who are in long term, committed relationships. The reason is because previously inactive (old, undetectable) infections may reactivate, sometimes for unknown reasons. That means it may not be a new infection, and that you may have gotten infected with HPV in the past. The result of your HPV test should not be considered in deciding whether your partner is faithful to you or not. The HPV test is only good for cervical health screening.



**Q: Does my partner need care if my HPV test is positive?**  
A: -Partner with a cervix: Your partner should have cervical cancer screening.  
-Partner without a cervix: No. There is no need for that unless your partner is having specific problems of their own. HPV testing only checks for whether you are at risk of cervical cancer. Therefore, partners without a cervix do not need to be tested for these HPVs.

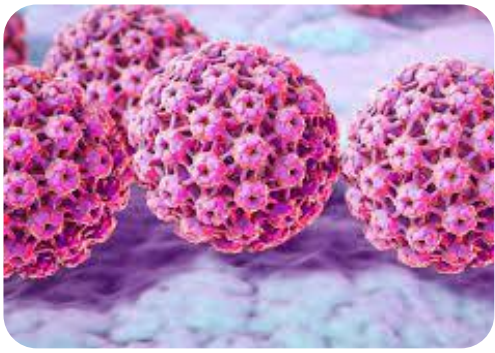
**Q: Do we need to use condoms or stop having sex if I test positive for HPV?**  
A: No. If you are in a long term, committed relationship, you do not need to change anything you are doing during intimacy. As always, use protection like condoms or other barrier protection if in a new relationship in order to prevent all sexually transmitted infections.

**Q: If I have a positive result, can I still get the HPV vaccine if I am eligible by age?**  
A: Yes. Even if you already have one type of HPV, you could still benefit from the vaccine because it can protect you from other types. However, the vaccine cannot treat an existing HPV infection. HPV vaccination works best when given before any exposure to HPV.

**Q: Should I have an HPV test whenever I undergo screening for sexually transmitted infections?**  
A: No. HPV testing is FDA approved only for screening for cervical cancer. HPV screening tests for only 14 HPV types that cause cervical cancer, not all types that infect us. A negative test does not mean you do not have HPV. There are many other HPV types besides the ones tested for. Also, the test detects levels of the more dangerous HPVs when they are "active" and place a person at risk. A negative result does not mean that the viruses are not there.

 <p>What CPT code is used for high-risk HPV testing for primary screening?</p> <p><b>CPT code 87624.</b></p> <p>Decisions about the specific code(s) to report are the responsibility of the performing laboratory.</p>	 <p>Is CPT 87624 a Category I code?</p> <p><b>Yes, CPT 87624 is a Category I CPT code.</b></p> <p>Other categories of codes (e.g., Category III) may not be recognized by all payors and could create coverage and reimbursement challenges.</p>	 <p>What is the 2023 Medicare Payment Rate for CPT code 87624?</p> <p><b>The 2023 Medicare Payment Rate for CPT code 87624 is \$35.09.</b></p> <p>Medicaid and private payer reimbursement rates may vary.</p>
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<p><b>DO'S</b></p>  <p>DO highlight technology and research advancements to support moving towards primary HPV screening.</p>	<p><b>DON'TS</b></p>  <p>DON'T stress that there is a test being taken away from the traditional screening paradigm (the Pap test).</p>
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## *Adopt and Integrate Primary HPV Testing*

Iterative process of developing an implementation roadmap:

- Demonstration projects in safety net health systems



CPRIT



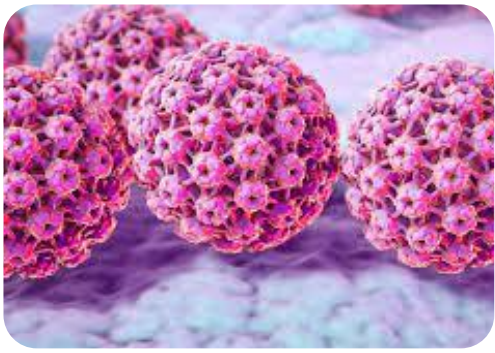
Serve a large proportion in of socioeconomically disadvantaged individuals in the U.S.



Often serve predominantly racial/ethnic minority populations



Socioeconomically disadvantaged, racial/ethnic minority women shoulder a disproportionate burden of cervical disease.



# Adopt and Integrate Primary HPV Testing

## Why safety nets?

### Patient-level barriers:

- ❖ Language barriers
- ❖ Low literacy
- ❖ Unstable housing
- ❖ Distrust of healthcare system
- ❖ Access and economic barriers

### System-level barriers:

- ❖ Significant resource constraints
- ❖ Patients with complex health needs (i.e., competing priorities)
- ❖ Unique payer mix
- ❖ High proportion of uninsured patients

If we don't design for safety nets health systems, they will be left behind and disparities will become exacerbated.

Implementation plans must be focused on equity.

*Texas can and should lead the way!*



CPRIT

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*Build collaborative networks*

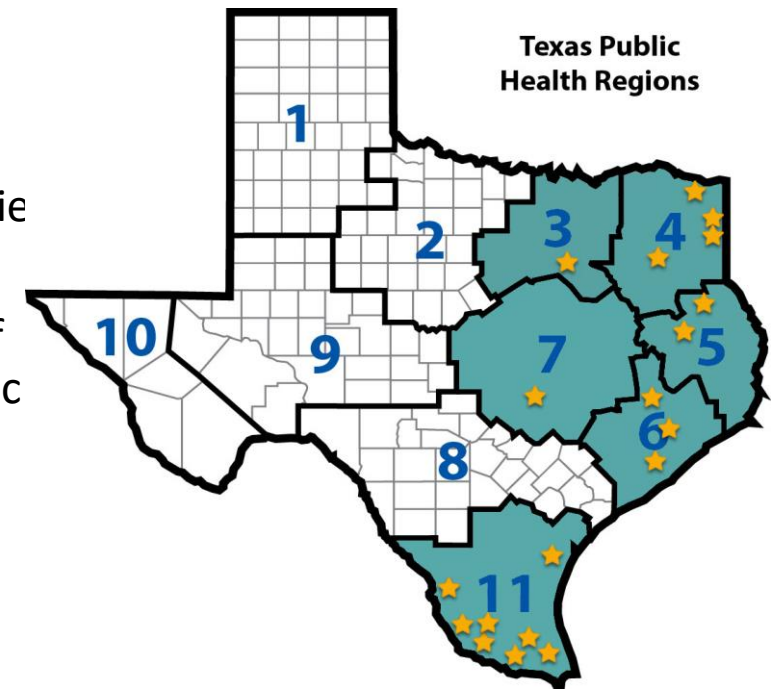
## CPRIT Investments have already started this Program for Reducing Cervical Cancer



- Thirteen collaborating Federally Qualified Health Centers/Community Clinic/Mobile Clinic systems with 24 individual clinics Located in 16 counties in six Public Health Regions in Texas
- Five academic partners from UT System: UTHSC at Tyler, UTRGV School of Medicine, UTHSC School of Public Health Houston, UTHSC School of Public Health - Brownsville Regional Campus, UT Dell School of Medicine



Drs. Kathleen Schmeler, Ellen Baker, and Melissa Varon  
CPRIT PP150012, PP190014, PP220037





Build and decentralize capacity



### Project ECHO

Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes

Capacity building through telementoring



CPRIT

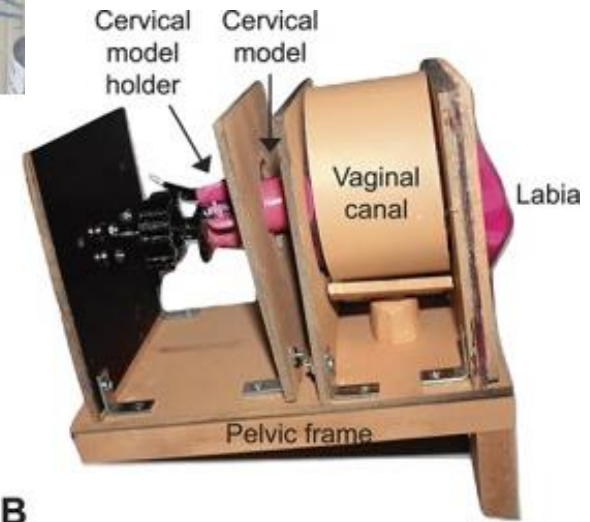
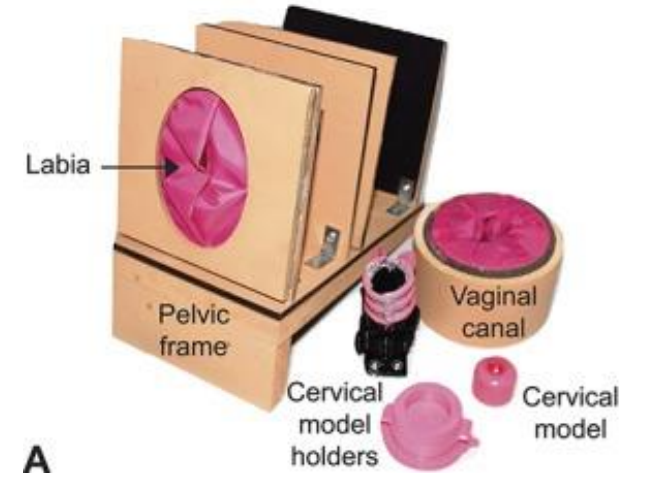
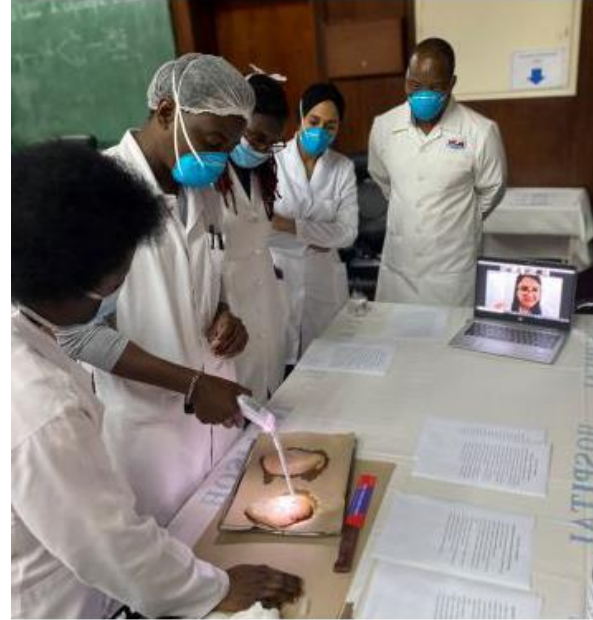




Build and decentralize capacity

## Colposcopy capacity building

In local and regional safety net health systems



Parra et al, Obstet Gynecol, 2019



CPRIT

CPRIT PP150012, PP190014,  
PP220037 (PD: Schmeler)

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# Build patient navigation programs



Ensure that persons with HPV + test receive appropriate follow-up for diagnosis and treatment



Program for Reducing Cervical Cancer  
CPRIT PP150012,  
PP190014, PP220037  
(PD: Schmeler)



Maria Daher, RN and Patient Navigation Team  
Harris Health System/Community Network for  
Cancer Prevention

CPRIT PP140028, PP17004, PP210007 (PDs:  
Montealegre, Jibaja-Weiss)





*Develop new technologies*

Currently, two FDA-approved HPV tests

Expensive

Require sophisticated  
laboratory infrastructure



Roche cobas® HPV Test



BD Onclarity™ HPV Assay



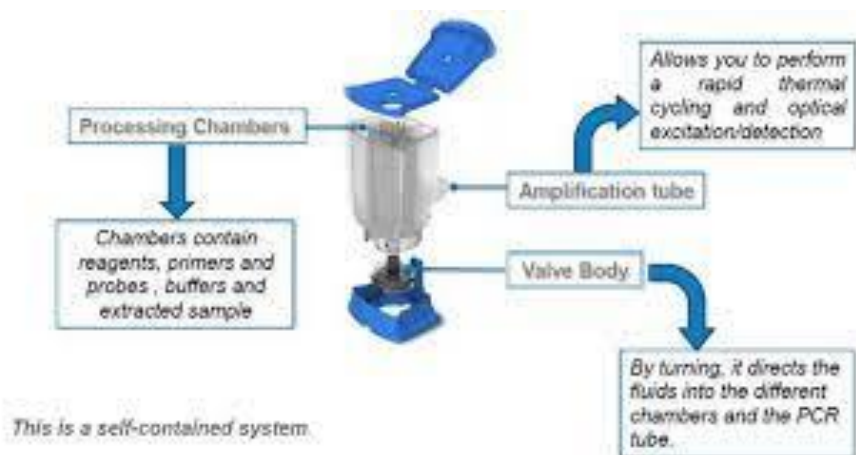
*Develop new technologies*



Critical need for point-of-care (POC) tests

Laboratory testing conducted close or at the site where patient care is provided.

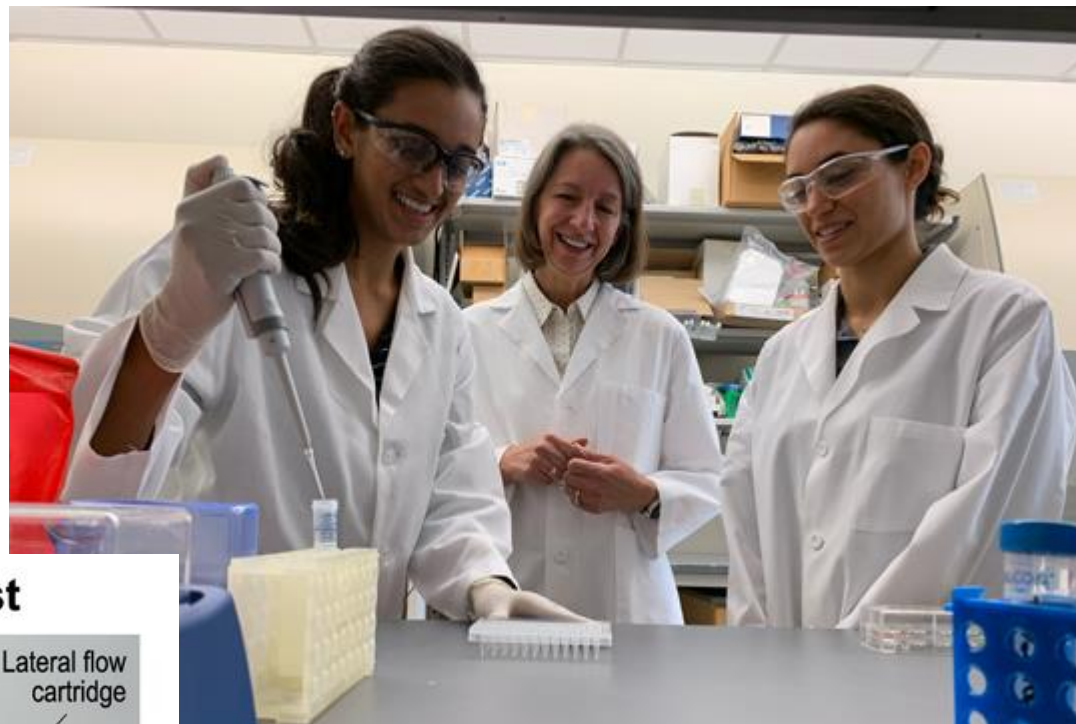
- Rapid
- Precise
- Low-cost
- Require minimal training



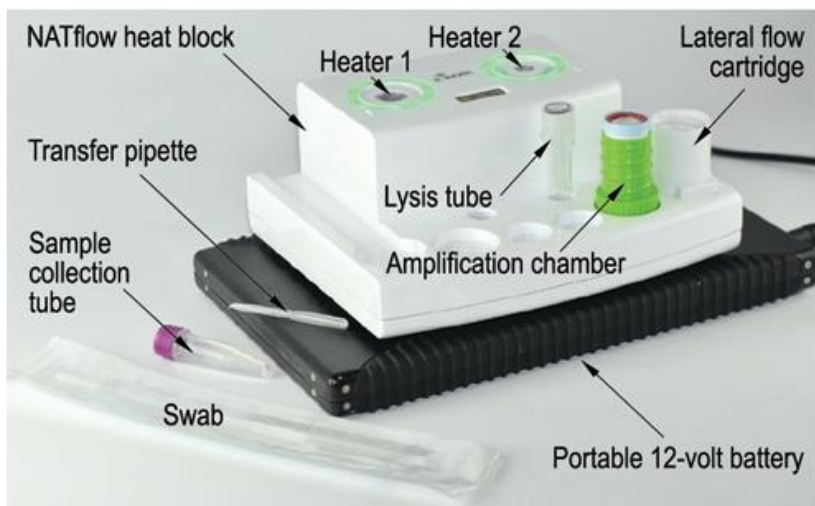
Cepheid® Xpert® HPV Test



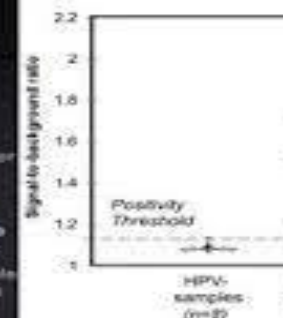
# Develop new technologies



## HPV point-of-care DNA test



Rebecca Richards-Kortum, Rice University;  
Kathryn Kunrod, White House Office of Science  
and Technology Policy



Kunrod et al, Science Trans Med, 2023  
Smith et al, Lab Chip, 2023

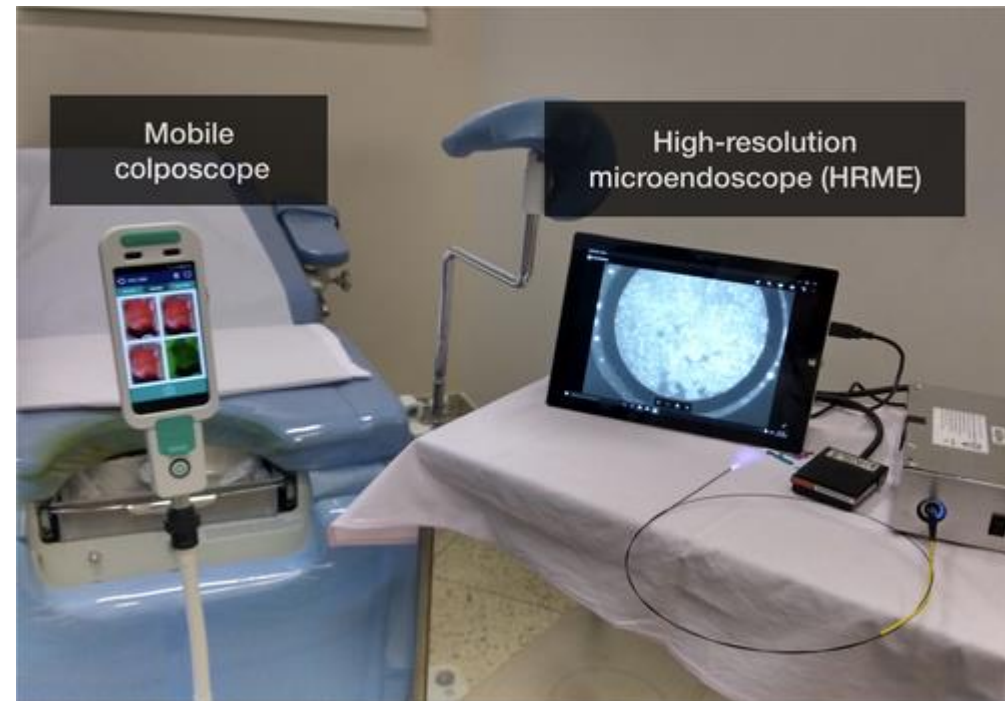


*Develop new technologies*

Need for low-cost point-of-care diagnostic technologies

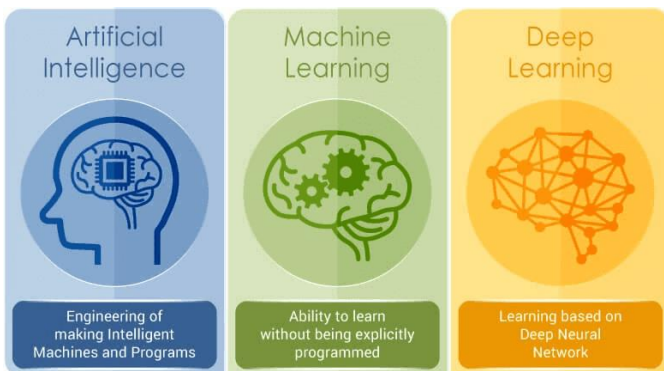


Pocket Colposcope (Beta), Duke University Global Health Institute



Drs. Rebecca Richards-Kortum and Kathleen Schmeler

Hunt et al, Int J Cancer, 2022



Role for AI



## Develop new technologies

Need for molecular triage tests in HPV screening strategies

HPV testing ↓ specificity



Need for tests to more accurately identify persons for colposcopy and minimize clinically irrelevant findings.

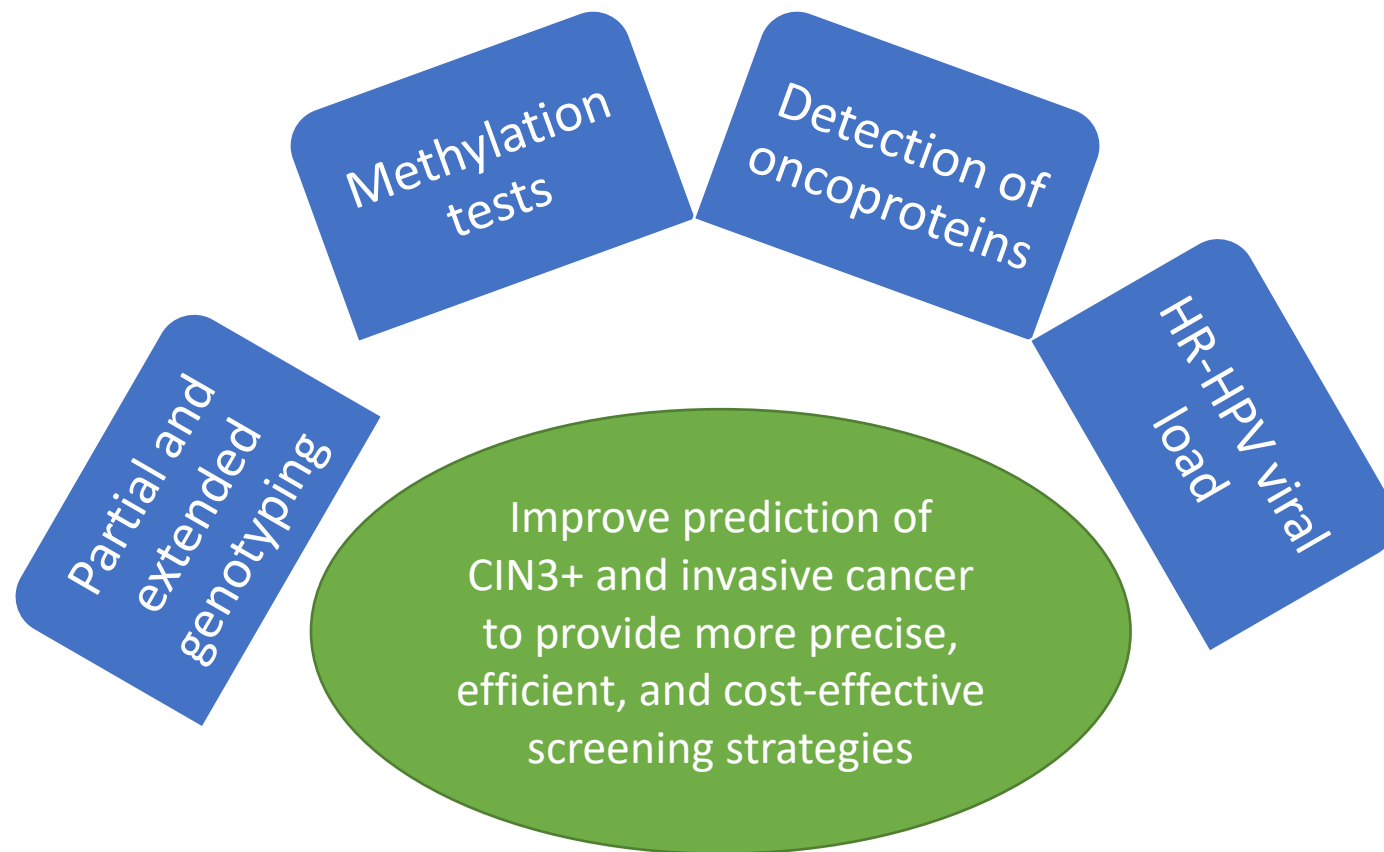
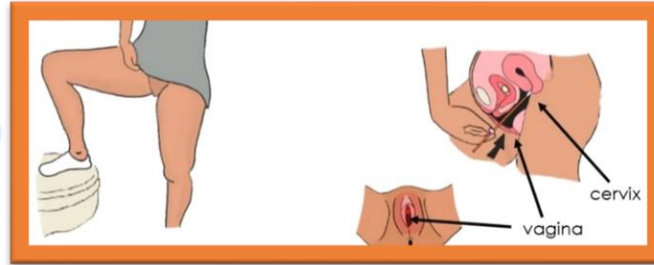




Photo credit: Felipe Lopez Photography



# A Vision for the Future

# Texas will lead the way!



HARNESS INNOVATIONS



ACCELERATE AND  
SCALE-UP IMPLEMENTATION



FOCUS ON EQUITY



CANCER PREVENTION & RESEARCH  
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Thank you!



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