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A systematic review of barriers and enablers to South Asian women's attendance for asymptomatic screening of breast and cervical cancers

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Although cancer incidence rates are often lower in ethnic minority groups than in the general population of England, rates are rising in some minority groups to equal or exceed general population prevalence. Mortality and morbidity are reduced through early detection, but South Asian women are less likely to participate in cancer screening programmes for breast and cervical cancer than the general female population of the UK. Low screening rates and delayed symptom reporting in South Asian women are attributable to culturally-related factors such as communication barriers, fear of cancer, stigmatism and embarrassment over medical procedures/screening practices. In depth, information is required to understand precisely how these barriers are experienced by women, how they influence behaviour, how they vary between different cultural subgroups and how they can be overcome. The purpose of this review is to collate information on studies of asymptomatic screening attendance by South Asian women for breast and cervical cancer. We will synthesize the literature concerning cultural and individual beliefs and attitudes and their effects on individual women's screening attendance. This review aims to inform policy on targeting relevant public health messages to the South Asian communities about screening for cancer and be useful for healthcare commissioners to decide how best to invest resources in areas with large ethnic groups.

Biography

Pooja Saini has completed her PhD from University of Manchester and Post-doctoral studies from University of Liverpool. She is a Knowledge Exchange and Implementation Manager for NIHR CLAHRC NWC. She has published more than 10 papers in reputed journals and has been serving as the Co-Principal Investigator for the systematic review, Co-Founder of Women Reach Women CIC and is an active member of the Asian Breast Cancer Support Group promoting improvements in healthcare, health promotion & research in the UK's South Asian communities.

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