



**REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS
MINISTRY OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES**

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Press Release, 20 October 2023
Majuro, Marshall Islands

Minister & Secretary of Health endorses RMI Cervical Cancer Elimination Policy with support of Women Leaders

On October 6, 2023, Recognizing the high rates of cervical cancer in the RMI, the Ministry of Health and Human Services, Honorable Minister Ota Kisino and Secretary Francyne Wase-Jacklick, together signed the Cervical Cancer Elimination Policy and Strategy framework at Majuro International Conference Center (ICC). Event was organized by the MOHHS Cancer Prevention Program after the presentation and validation of the policy during the 34th Women United Together Marshall Islands (WUTMI) Conference.

This serves to build upon a National Comprehensive Cancer Control Plan 2022 - 2023, that is aligned with recent developments in cervical cancer prevention, screening, management, and treatment.

With Marshall Islands being known to have the highest incident of cervical cancer called Human Papillomavirus (HPV) affecting women in their late 30s to early 40s in the world, the document outlines a vision for the elimination of cervical cancer in the Marshall Islands and set of strategies and actions to move toward the elimination of new diagnoses of cervical cancer, including vaccination of girls and boys, screening of women for HPV, treatment for HPV positive, and management of those women with cervical cancer.

According to National Cancer Registry (MHHS, 2022) reported between the year 2017 – 2021 there were 61 women diagnosed with cervical cancer over five-year period. This includes 12 cases in 2017, 9 cases in 2018, 11 cases in 2019, 14 cases in 2020, and 15 cases in 2021. Of these cases the youngest woman diagnosed with aged 27 and the oldest was aged 69, and the average age of diagnosis was aged 47.

Therefore, the Cervical Cancer Elimination Policy and Strategy is in coalition with national policy frameworks, to provide roadmap for progress of national priorities in the Republic of the Marshall Islands, with the goal plan of “healthy lives and well-being of all ages” and objective as “Strengthened response and resilience to communicable disease, environmental health, and health emergency preparedness and “Provision of quality health care infrastructure, especially cancer care for all Marshallese”.

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