

ATTACHMENT 7 –

STEP BY STEP APPROACH TO INTRODUCING SAVS IN YOUR OFFICE

- Familiarize yourself with the swabs (transport mediums) available in the labs you work with. Often the Hospital swabs are different than the Valley lab or Life Lab swabs.
- Make sure you understand what the swabs are for, for example, in Kelowna with Valley lab, we send 2 'red top' (COPAN M40 sample package) and 1 'yellow top' (COBAS PCR Female swab sample package) for recurrent vaginitis and STD screening, knowing that the 3 swabs will test for chlamydia, gonorrhea, trichomonas, bacterial vaginosis and yeast (and a yeast culture if there are yeasts).
- Follow the transport medium's recommended technique for obtaining the samples.
- Display the availability of the self-administered vaginal swabs (selfies) to your patient by putting up posters on your waiting rooms and bathrooms. You can also advertise on your web site - if you have one, or have a patient information pamphlet to hand out.
- Instruct your MOA on the value of the self-administered swabs, the indications, and how to book these patients: if they have symptoms of vaginitis, and concerns about an STD as soon as possible, but not so urgent when testing for cure or reinfection. You have to be in the office that day to answer any questions (for example: what swabs should the patient self-collect, or what to do if the fluid runs out of the sample package, to name a few).
- Have a written protocol for your MOA for when the patients call for it. We suggest to the patient to ask for a selfie, self-swabs or self-administered vaginal swabs.
- Have a protocol for communicating results to the patient. We always let the patient know the results. If the patient agrees to use email, we send negative results by email. If there is an STI, we phone the patient and give them an urgent appointment.
- Have patient's handouts for your patients to communicate:
 - What test were done. It is not uncommon for patients to say, "my doctor took a Pap" while there were swabs, or vice versa.
 - A general pamphlet for "screening or testing for STDs", and the Pap smear, the reasons for them (infection vs cancer detection), and the frequency recommended.
- Review cases with your MOA frequently, especially at the beginning, as there is always a learning curve.