**Introduction**

The Ovarian Cancer Awareness Measure is a validated tool based on the wider Cancer Awareness Measure developed by Cancer Research UK, University College London, King’s College London and Oxford University. It has been used by Target Ovarian Cancer as part of their Pathfinder study in 2009, 2012 and 2016.

**Methods**

Telephone interviews were carried out by Opinion Leader using their in-house research team between 5 February and 1 March 2016. In total 1,343 women took part in the survey.

**Results**

**Awareness of the symptoms of ovarian cancer**

Chart 1 shows that while there has been some improvement in awareness of the symptom of bloating, overall there has been little change in awareness of the symptoms of ovarian cancer since the first Ovarian Cancer Awareness Measure in 2009.

- **20%** of women able to name bloating as a symptom of ovarian cancer

**Low and misplaced confidence in spotting symptoms**

Women were asked how confident they were at spotting a symptom of ovarian cancer and in 2016, 27 per cent said they felt confident, including four per cent who were very confident they could spot a symptom. This is little changed from 2009 and 2012.

However, as Table 1 shows, while women’s ability to correctly identify a symptom does increase with their confidence in doing so, in many cases this confidence is often misplaced.

**Continued confusion with cervical cancer**

More women now understand the distinction between cervical and ovarian cancer but as Table 2 shows, too many continue to wrongly believe that cervical screening also safeguards against ovarian cancer.

**Conclusions**

- Overall awareness of the symptoms of ovarian cancer among women in the general population remains low.
- The one symptom that has seen a small increase in awareness is bloating. This may reflect investment in local and regional pilots of Be Clear on Cancer awareness campaigns for ovarian cancer.
- Self-reported confidence in an individual’s ability to spot cancer symptoms may not be an accurate measure of their ability to do so.
- There is still widespread confusion over the role of cervical screening and which cancers this covers.
- As National Institute for Health and Care Excellence guidelines on ovarian cancer are refreshed, and reflecting changes in the general Cancer Awareness Measure, the Ovarian Cancer Awareness Measure should be evaluated with a view to updating it.