

Update – July 2023

IARC report endorses Ireland’s approach to offering personal cervical screening reviews

ON 5 July, the National Screening Service (NSS) joined the World Health Organization’s International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), and Department of Health and HSE colleagues for the launch of the IARC report, [Recommendations on Best Practices in Cervical Screening Programmes](#).

The report follows the completion of the ‘CervScreen’ Project, a collaboration between IARC, the Department of Health and the HSE. The report’s recommendations focus on the audit of cervical cancers, along with the legal and ethical framework of cervical screening, communications, and workforce competencies.

At the event, NSS Chief Executive Fiona Murphy highlighted that IARC had endorsed Ireland’s approach to offering personalised reviews to women who have previously had a cervical cancer screening, and now have a cancer diagnosis.

You can read more about the project and the report in our blog [New WHO report on best practice in cervical screening programmes bears a legacy to Irish women and their willingness to share their lived experience](#).



Pictured at the IARC launch were, from left: Professor of Cancer Prevention in King’s College London, Prof Peter Sasieni; Deputy Branch Head of Early Detection and Prevention with IARC, Dr Partha Basu; NSS Chief Executive, Fiona Murphy; NSS Head of Strategy, Business and Projects, Grace Turner; Director of IARC, Dr Elisabeth Wiederpass; Director of Screening for Public Health England, Prof Anne Mackie; and IARC’s Public Health Medicine Specialist, Dr Arunah Chandran.

Capturing real-time feedback from breast screening participants

FROM late August, we will invite BreastCheck participants to give us real-time feedback following their appointments.

As part of the BreastCheck Patient Reported Experience Survey (PREMs) project, women who have a BreastCheck mammogram and receive a normal result will be sent an SMS text message inviting them to take part in the survey. This will help us learn from women’s experiences, understand what is working well, and identify potential areas where we can improve the BreastCheck service.

In 2022, this digital approach was used to gather real-time feedback from BowelScreen participants. The response rate was between 42-49%, which is considerably higher than traditional paper-based surveys.

Information on the survey will be available at BreastCheck clinics, and through our social media channels.



BreastCheck Survey

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)



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First intake of cytology students complete Molecular Cytopathology Programme

THE first three cytology students have completed the Molecular Cytopathology programme. This level 9 programme was jointly developed and delivered by the School of Biological, Health and Sports Sciences, and the Cellular and Molecular Cytopathology Training School at The Coombe Hospital, in partnership with CervicalCheck. The course was created through CervicalCheck's funding of The Coombe Hospital's training school. We are grateful to our training partners at The Coombe Hospital.

The programme provides specialist training to facilitate the extended role of medical scientists in molecular cervical cytopathology, to meet the skills needs of the cervical screening programme.

NSS delivers research seminar about barriers to cervical screening in Ireland

WE held an online research seminar for staff and external stakeholders on 7 July, which included a presentation on cervical self-sampling from Specialist in Public Health Medicine Dr Laura Heavey. Dr Mairead O'Connor and Dr Róisín McCarthy from our Programme Evaluation Unit delivered a presentation titled *Motivators and Barriers to Cervical Screening in Ireland*. This presentation was based on the findings of the 2021 Core Research survey into behaviours and attitudes to screening.

You can read more about the findings of the Core Research survey in our blog: [Over 8 in 10 adults know about the benefits of regular cancer screening](#).

Working with our partners to create new information resources for Diabetic RetinaScreen



We recently published three new leaflets about the Diabetic RetinaScreen (DRS) programme. We worked with our stakeholders to develop this information and to get their views on how our information could be improved (including graphic information, left). The leaflets have been awarded the Plain English Mark from the National Adult Literacy Association (NALA).

When developing the leaflets we focused on making sure that the information is accessible to everyone aged 12 and over, and people who might not have heard about diabetic retinopathy before. You can read more about the project in

our [blog](#), which describes how we worked with our Patient and Public Partnership group, and the feedback we received through focus groups.

The new leaflets are available to order and download at [healthpromotion.ie](#).

Read more about our work – featured blogs

[What is information governance and why does it matter?](#) In this blog, NSS Information Governance Manager Dr Eimhin Walsh explains why good information governance is a core feature of patient safety and quality.

[Continued progress with understanding self-sampling in cervical screening as field research begins in Ireland](#): This blog includes a Q&A with Dr Matejka Rebolj, a senior epidemiologist at King's College London, who has researched the potential role of self-sampling in cervical screening.

You can read all our blogs in the [Featured news](#) section of our [website](#).

We value your feedback. Please contact us at: communications@screeningservice.ie.