

National Screening Service (NSS) update – November 2022

New interim director for the National Cervical Screening Laboratory

Dr Cillian De Gascun has been appointed interim director of the new National Cervical Screening Laboratory (NCSL). The NCSL (pictured right) is being developed by the HSE and the Coombe Women & Infants University Hospital and is designed to be a national centre of excellence for cervical screening. It will be commissioned by CervicalCheck to process women's cervical screening samples.



Dr De Gascun will lead the final phase of development at the laboratory as it becomes operational. He will work closely with the

laboratory manager in the commissioning of the NCSL's services, including the operation of its HPV and cytology services. The NCSL began construction in January 2021 and is on track to begin operations by year-end. You can read more about the NCSL [here](#).

DRS pilots pregnancy pathway

The Diabetic RetinaScreen programme will this month begin piloting its pregnancy pathway, which will provide extra screening for women with diabetes who become pregnant. The pilot, which received funding from the Women's Health Fund, will begin in the east of the country this month, before rolling out nationally in early 2023.

Professor David Keegan, Clinical Director of DRS said: "Women with diabetes who are pregnant are at higher risk of sight loss. This investment will allow a specific diabetic retinal screening pathway for patients who are pregnant. This new pathway improves equality and quality of access to eye care for women at risk of sight loss." You can read more about the funding of the pregnancy pathway [here](#).

BreastCheck's first Radiography Study Day since 2019



BreastCheck held its Radiography Study Day on Friday 30 September; its first since the easing of public health restrictions. The day was organised by the programme's clinical training team. It included seven talks with representatives from each unit. The event was held at the Catherine McAuley Centre on Dublin's Eccles Street.

Among the speakers was Dr Laura Murphy (pictured left), a consultant radiologist in the BreastCheck Eccles Unit, who delivered a talk on the diagnosis and management of B3 lesions of the breast.

BreastCheck encourages uptake for Breast Cancer Awareness Month 2022

BreastCheck marked Breast Cancer Awareness Month in October with a campaign encouraging women who have never had a breast screen to check the register and take up their invitations. The campaign featured press advertising (see right) and digital activity, and is supported by the distribution of breast cancer detection and prevention leaflets, and a poster campaign which encourages women who have never come for screening to find out more.

The leaflet titled Breast cancer prevention and early detection information from BreastCheck, was developed in partnership with the National Cancer Control Programme and highlights the steps women in the screening age range can take to reduce their chance of developing breast cancer. It also outlines risk factors, breast cancer symptoms, and how to self-check.

The poster, which is being sent out to GP clinics along with the leaflets, outlines what happens at screening and reminds women who have never been screened to check they are on the register.

BreastCheck Programme Manager Suzanne Lynch said: “We’re keen to deliver good, trusted information to women where they are – and where better than their GP surgery or health clinic? The poster explains breast screening in easy-to-understand language, and prompts women to find out more.” For a copy of the poster or leaflet contact communications@screeningservice.ie.

NSS projects recognised in awards competitions

Two NSS entries have been shortlisted for the HSE Excellence Awards. They include a co-design of easy-read materials for breast, and for bowel screening by the Public Health department; and a project focused on improving information governance by the Quality, Safety and Risk department.

Director of Public Health Caroline Mason Mohan explained that developing the easy-read resources has been an important part of the NSS's work to improve equity and access to screening. They have recently been used in a collaboration between NSS and Pavee Point to give training on screening to Traveller healthcare workers.

Information Governance (IG) Manager Dr Eimhin Walsh said the IG project enhanced the NSS's understanding and practices around maintaining confidentiality, the integrity of NSS data, and the development of a framework around its governance.

Separately, three NSS projects have been shortlisted for Irish Healthcare Awards. The Public Health department was recognised again for its easy-read resources for BowelScreen and BreastCheck; CervicalCheck for its *LGBT + Cervical Screening Study* report; and DRS partners, NEC Software Solutions, for its work with the programme. The winners of the Irish Healthcare Awards will be announced on 1 December.

We value your feedback on our work; please contact us with any questions or suggestions at communications@screeningservice.ie

Teach Óstaí an Rí, 200 Sráid Parnell, Baile Átha Cliath D01 A3Y8. King's Inn House, 200 Parnell Street, Dublin 1, D01 A3Y8.
☎ 353 1 865 9300 ✉ info@screeningservice.ie www.screeningservice.ie