



03 October 2019

Our ref: HM/Communications

Thomas P. Broughan, TD  
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**PQ 38465/19**

**To ask the Minister for Health the position regarding the processing time for colposcopy results by hospital; the number of laboratories examining these biopsies; and if he will make a statement on the matter.**

Dear Deputy

I refer to the above parliamentary question.

CervicalCheck – The HSE National Cervical Screening Programme is a free public population based cervical screening service. Screening tests are carried out in contracted GP practices or women's health clinics, analysed in quality assured laboratories, and depending on the result, women are recalled for routine screening or referred for further investigation (colposcopy).

CervicalCheck facilitates this process up to the point where results are received from the laboratories. Where a woman is referred for further investigation, she attends one of 15 colposcopy units or clinics in the public hospital system. While under the care of colposcopy, a woman receives appointments and the results of any tests from the unit in question and not from the CervicalCheck programme. When discharged from colposcopy, the woman re-enters the CervicalCheck programme and will receive an invitation to return to routine screening.

It is important to note that colposcopy units are operated and governed by the relevant acute hospital groups and not by CervicalCheck. The units accept referrals from CervicalCheck, as well as from GPs, and CervicalCheck has agreements with the units on appointment waiting times. We may not therefore hold the specific data you seek in your parliamentary question.

In relation to the first part of your question regarding '*the processing time for colposcopy results by hospital*', please note that colposcopy results can include cytology and HPV results or histology. I would appreciate if you could clarify which results you are referring to. Please note that we cannot provide up to date result data for histology as CervicalCheck only receives these retrospectively from the laboratories.

In relation to the second part of your question regarding '*the number of laboratories examining these biopsies*', each colposcopy unit is assigned to a particular laboratory. According to our records, there are currently 12 laboratories examining biopsies for the 15 colposcopy units.

I trust this information is of assistance to you but should you have any further queries please contact me.

Teach Óstaí an Rí, 200 Sráid Parnell, Baile Átha Cliath. King's Inns House, 200 Parnell Street, Dublin 1.

☎ 353 1 865 9300 ✉ [info@cancerscreening.ie](mailto:info@cancerscreening.ie) [www.cancerscreening.ie](http://www.cancerscreening.ie)





An tSeirbhís Náisiúnta Scagthástála  
National Screening Service

Yours sincerely

Celine Fitzgerald  
Interim CEO  
National Screening Service

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National Screening Service



BreastCheck  
An Clár Náisiúnta Scagthástála Clok  
The National Breast Screening Programme



CervicalCheck  
AN CLÁR NÁISIÚNTA SCAGTHÁSTÁLA CERIBHEACS  
THE NATIONAL CERVICAL SCREENING PROGRAMME



BowelScreen  
An Clár Náisiúnta Scagthástála Póilíge  
The National Bowel Screening Programme



Diabetic RetinaScreen  
An Clár Náisiúnta Scagthástála Rannnó do Dhiabéiteigh  
The National Diabetic Retinal Screening Programme