



19 June 2020

Deputy Mary Butler
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Our Ref: GM/Communications

PQ11461/20: To ask the Minister for Health the position regarding the administering of results of cancer screening services for those that received tests prior to the suspension in services due to the Covid-19 pandemic (details supplied); the figures for results which have been administered; the timeline for the circulation of remaining results which may be outstanding; and if he will make a statement on the matter

Details supplied: <https://www.kildarestreet.com/debates/?id=2020-06-04a.165&s=mary+butler#g182>

Dear Deputy Butler,

I refer to the above Parliamentary Question.

The National Screening Service's (NSS) four programmes: BreastCheck, CervicalCheck, BowelScreen and Diabetic RetinaScreen were paused in March 2020. This move was taken on public health advice due to the situation with COVID-19. The pause in screening was put in place to protect participants and staff by complying with social distancing guidelines. In addition, the HSE temporarily redeployed staff and resources to the response to COVID-19. However, clinical staff continue to work within the programmes.

People who were in the system at time of pause have continued to be treated as resources allow. For example, BreastCheck women who had been screened continued to have their assessments completed and their treatment plans mapped out by the service. Surgeries continue to be scheduled and completed. For CervicalCheck, colposcopy assessments and follow-up treatments are continuing for women who had been screened before the pause.

Screening activity in the three months before the pause of cancer screening services is as follows:

BreastCheck

	Number of Women Screened	No. results outstanding
Jan 2020	15054	0
Feb 2020	16303	0
Mar 2020	6796	0

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BowelScreen

	Number of Clients who Returned a Satisfactory FIT* kit	No. results outstanding
Jan 2020	6748	0
Feb 2020	7703	0
Mar 2020	6612	0

* Faecal Immunochemical Test

CervicalCheck

	Number of Samples Received by CervicalCheck Laboratories	No. results outstanding
Jan 2020	17500	0
Feb 2020	20351	0
Mar 2020	11203	0

Because there are no test results outstanding, there is no timeline for the circulating of the remaining results.

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

Celine Fitzgerald
Interim CEO
National Screening Service

