



An tSeirbhís Náisiúnta Scagthástála
National Screening Service

03 November 2020

Deputy Neale Richmond
neale.richmond@oireachtas.ie

Our Ref: HM/Communications

PQ32337/20: To ask the Minister for Health his plans place resume BreastCheck services; when plans will be put in place; and if he will make a statement on the matter

Dear Deputy,

I refer to the above Parliamentary Question.

The BreastCheck programme resumed breast screening on 27 October 2020. Breast screening was paused on 16 March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The focus of our restart is to achieve a maximum screening invitation rate that is compatible with a safe and controlled follow-up assessment and our treatment capacity within the health service.

We are restarting by inviting those who have waited longest for screening:

- Invitation letters will be sent first to those who had their appointments cancelled in March
- Invitations for routine for routine screening will follow
- Screening will resume in our BreastCheck units on a countrywide basis
- We will gradually reduce our support for symptomatic services as screening increases
- We are asking all participants, including new entrants, to check their details on the register
- Capacity will be reduced due to social distancing and potential staff limitations due to COVID-19
- A new text management system is in place to maximise appointment uptake
- A targeted digital information and awareness campaign will aim to raise awareness of screening, provide information on new safety measures, and encourage those who are invited to attend for screening. Radio and other media are planned for phase 2.

For other queries patients can call the Freephone information line on 1800 45 45 55, email info@screeningservice.ie or contact your clinic directly.

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

Fiona Murphy
Chief Executive
National Screening Service

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