



An tSeirbhís Náisiúnta Scagthástála
National Screening Service

03 November 2020

Deputy Jennifer Carroll MacNeill
jennifer.carrollmacneill@oireachtas.ie

Our Ref: HM/Communications

PQ33255/20: To ask the Minister for Health his plans to resume BreastCheck screening services; if the recent move to level 5 will have an effect on the resumption of his service; 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.

Essential health appointments can continue at Level 5 restrictions. Breast screening is an essential health appointment and as such will be delivered safely adhering to NPHET infection control guidelines and social distancing. We encourage all participants to attend for screening when invited.

The infection control and social distancing will impact our capacity and ability to deliver screening as we did prior to the pandemic. We are continually monitoring the effect of the restrictions, and available capacity at all parts of the screening chain. If our ability to offer screening changes, we will let our participants know.

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

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



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National Screening Service



An Clár Náisiúnta Scagthástála Coik
The National Breast Screening Programme



AN CLÁR NAISIÚNTA SCAGTHÁSTÁLA CEIRBEACS
THE NATIONAL CERVICAL SCREENING PROGRAMME



An Clár Náisiúnta Scagthástála Putóige
The National Bowel Screening Programme



AN CLÁR NAISIÚNTA SCAGTHÁSTÁLA SEIRNÍ DE DRIBEIRIGH
The National Diabetic Retinal Screening Programme



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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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