



An tSeirbhís Náisiúnta Scagthástála
National Screening Service

25 March 2021

Deputy Peadar Tóibín
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Our Ref: EG/Communications

PQ14245/21: To ask the Minister for Health the position regarding the national cervical screening laboratory which was due to commence construction in January 2021; if delays in construction have been encountered; when the laboratory will open; if he plans to cease the outsourcing of CervicalCheck smears and slides to foreign laboratories when the new laboratory is opened; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy,

I refer to the above Parliamentary Question.

Construction of the National Cervical Screening Laboratory (NCSL) commenced on-site at the Coombe Women and Infants University Hospital in early January 2021 and has proceeded as planned. Construction of the new laboratory is due to be completed in the second quarter of 2022.

The NCSL was commissioned by the National Screening Service to deliver designated services associated with population cervical screening. The Coombe Women and Infants University Hospital will be the principal provider of cervical screening laboratory services for the National Screening Service. This will enable a better balance between public and private laboratory capacity provision and enable NSS to reduce the dependency on third party providers to meet the needs of the national cervical screening programme. Although there has been very good progress made, it will still take a number of years to fully implement, primarily due to the challenge of retaining and recruiting suitably qualified staff. In order to ensure resilience in the system it is planned that additional laboratory providers will be deployed as appropriate to meet operational service requirements.

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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National Screening Service



BreastCheck
An Clár Náisiúnta Scagthástála Coik
The National Breast Screening Programme



CervicalCheck
AN CLÁR NAISIÚNTA SCAETHÁSTÁLA CEIRBEACS
THE NATIONAL CERVICAL SCREENING PROGRAMME



BowelScreen
An Clár Náisiúnta Scagthástála Putóige
The National Bowel Screening Programme



Diabetic
RetinaScreen
An Clár Náisiúnta Scagthástála Retiní do Diaibéitigh
The National Diabetic Retinal Screening Programme