



An tSeirbhís Náisiúnta Scagthástála
National Screening Service

07 April 2021

Deputy Holly Cairns
holly.cairns@oireachtas.ie

Our Ref: GM/Communications

PQ15914/21 - To ask the Minister for Health the details of the retrospective audit that will be offered to persons affected by the CervicalCheck scandal; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy,

I refer to the above Parliamentary Question.

In 2018, Dr Gabriel Scally's *Scoping Inquiry into the CervicalCheck Screening Programme* was established, after the results of a look-back audit of the programme were poorly communicated to women who had gone on to develop an interval cancer. An interval cancer is a cancer that occurs after a previous negative screening test result, and before the next screening test is due.

In October 2020, CervicalCheck welcomed the recommendations of the Expert Reference Groups' (ERG) interval cancer reports, and committed to implementing those recommendations in full, in partnership with the people we care for, and our professional screening teams around the country. They set out a new and comprehensive approach to reviews of interval cancers in people who have been screened by Ireland's breast, bowel and cervical cancer screening programmes.

The National Screening Service (NSS) is committed to a full disclosure of interval cancer reviews for all participants in screening. Sadly, we cannot say that interval cancers will not happen to other people. Screening detects or prevents most, but not all, cancers.

As part of our implementation of the ERG reports we have begun designing how we disclose look-back information to patients who develop an interval cancer.

We have established a steering group and five subgroups to implement the recommendations. The steering group will communicate our progress to the NSS Quality, Safety and Risk Management (QSRM) Committee, and HSE management.

Membership of our groups is diverse. They include representatives from patient and public advocacy groups, primary care, cancer screening experts, public health, legal experts, communication specialists, medical ethics and health economics. We have agreed terms of reference for the steering group and its subgroups. Our subgroups have developed high-level draft implementation plans and these have been reviewed by the steering group.

We are putting in place a new process for reviewing interval cancers. We will be inviting patients and experts to design with us this patient-centred process for disclosing information on interval cancer.

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



An tSeirbhís Náisiúnta Scagthástála
National Screening Service





An tSeirbhís Náisiúnta Scagthástála
National Screening Service

We are taking time to get the review process right. Anyone interested in the review process can contact us on:

- Freephone 1800 83 21 88 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm)
- info@cervicalcheck.ie

Individuals will be asked to provide their name and contact details and we will keep them up to date about when this new process is ready. For those who have already requested a review of their screening history, we will be in touch with them as soon as practicable.

I trust this answers your query sufficiently. If you have any further queries please contact me.

Fiona Murphy
Chief Executive
National Screening Service

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



An tSeirbhís Náisiúnta Scagthástála
National Screening Service

