

08 March 2022

Deputy Neasa Hourigan  
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Our Ref: HM/EH/Communications

**PQ9865/22: To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons that received an invitation to take part in CervicalCheck on a quarterly basis from quarter 1 2020 to date in 2022; the percentage of persons that accepted an invitation and subsequently attended a screening appointment in each of the specified periods in tabular form.**

Dear Deputy,

I refer to the above Parliamentary Question.

We are pleased to report that by the end of 2021 we had screened the same number of women and people with a cervix as in any other two-year period. CervicalCheck is up-to-date with invites for screening.

We continue to emphasise the importance of being symptom aware for all of our screening services. We encourage anyone with symptoms to contact their GP who will give them appropriate advice on follow-up care.

The following table highlights the number of invitation letters issued to eligible people for a screening appointment from Q1 2020 to Q4 2021. Letters of invite include first invite and reminder letters.

Call open date within period and notification closed call within period	Q1 2020	Q2 2020* (see Note 1)	Q3 2020	Q4 2020	Q1 2021	Q2 2021	Q3 2021	Q4 2021
No. of letters	5,432	0	102,373	324,297	174,043	84,219	99,066	106,023
Total tests taken following invite	6,899	0	88,750	123,866	105,767	54,053	48,921	42,534

\*Cervical screening was paused during this period

Note 1: The programme was paused on 30 March 2020 due to COVID-19 and resumed issuing letters on 06 July 2020.

It is important to note that CervicalCheck invites people to attend for screening. They are not provided with an appointment time as in BreastCheck, or issued a FIT kit as with BowelScreen. Women may attend their appointment whenever they choose, the programme reports that attendance as being related to the invitation only if it is within six months of being invited.



### CervicalCheck: total number of people screened

Given the time fluctuations that can occur between a woman being invited for her screening test and taking up that invitation, data showing uptake per year offers a more accurate picture of the number of women being screened.

The total number of persons screened by CervicalCheck - at either primary care or colposcopy - in each of the past two years is shown in the following table. Verified data for 2022 is not yet available.

Year	No. of persons screened
2020	168,792
2021	333,437

The programme's national target coverage rate is 80%, and the latest available figures from CervicalCheck show the five-year coverage rate (ending 31 March 2020) was 78.5%

Coverage, a key performance indicator for the programme, is a measure of the proportion of the eligible population screened within a period and indicates the effectiveness of the screening programme in reaching the target population. Coverage is measured by five-year screening round.

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

Yours sincerely,

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Fiona Murphy  
Chief Executive  
National Screening Service

