



An tSeirbhís Náisiúnta Scagthástála  
National Screening Service

24 October 2023

Deputy Peadar Tóibín  
[Peadar.Toibin@oireachtas.ie](mailto:Peadar.Toibin@oireachtas.ie)

Our Ref: HM/Communications

**PQ43838/23: To ask the Minister for Health the reason the Irish National Accreditation Board accreditation was not obtained before opening the new cervical screening laboratory in December 2022; the reason the laboratory was shut in March 2023; and if he will provide an update on the current status of the project.**

Dear Deputy,

I refer to the above Parliamentary Question.

The National Cervical Screening Laboratory at The Coombe Hospital resumed processing CervicalCheck screening samples on Tuesday 24th October 2023.

CervicalCheck samples go to 1 of 2 quality-assured lab providers. These are: Quest Diagnostics Inc in the US and the National Cervical Screening Laboratory at The Coombe Hospital in Dublin.

As sample processing resumes at The Coombe Hospital, women can be reassured that there will be no change in the way samples are processed. Sampletakers will send their samples to the programme in the same way and women and their GPs will continue to receive their CervicalCheck results within the usual timeframe.

The hospital had been granted Irish National Accreditation Board (INAB) accreditation for HPV and cytology sample processing in November 2022. It reported at the end of March that it had not met its filing deadline for some outstanding documents for accreditation. Its INAB accreditation for HPV and cytology sample processing was then suspended pending the completion of this process.

While the quality and safety of the laboratory service was not in question, The Coombe Hospital paused HPV and cytology sample processing for CervicalCheck. The pause took effect in April 2023, while the hospital completed its final accreditation documentation for the INAB.

The documentation has now been filed to the satisfaction of INAB and the laboratory has been reaccredited, enabling sample processing to resume.

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National Screening Service



An Clár Náisiúnta Scagthástála Ciock  
The National Breast Screening Programme



AN CLÁR NÁISIÚNTA SCAGTHÁSTÁLA CERIBHEACS  
THE NATIONAL CERVICAL SCREENING PROGRAMME



An Clár Náisiúnta Scagthástála Púitige  
The National Bowel Screening Programme



An Clár Náisiúnta Scagthástála Ráiteil do Dhiabaitigh  
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.

Yours sincerely,

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Fiona Murphy.  
Chief Executive.

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