



11 August 2025

Deputy Peadar Tóibín
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Our Ref: GM/Communications

PQ41096/25: To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons screened for cancer in the State in each of the past ten years; the types of cancer screened for; and the annual screening target in each of those years, in tabular form.

Dear Deputy,

I refer to the above Parliamentary Question. Please note that we regularly publish data on numbers screened in our [programme reports](#) and [activity and performance data](#). Annual screening targets are published each year in the HSE's *National Service Plan*, which is available on [hse.ie](https://www.hse.ie).

About BreastCheck

BreastCheck is Ireland's free breast screening programme. We screen women who have no symptoms of breast cancer so that we can find and treat breast cancer at the earliest possible stage. We provide access to appropriate care for those who need further tests and treatment. We work to make BreastCheck services accessible to all; for example, providing longer or group appointments, and information in braille and additional languages.

The following table shows the number of women screened by BreastCheck from 2015 to 2024, and the screening target for each of those years.

Table 1. Numbers of women screened by BreastCheck 2015-2024

	No. women screened	Target
2024	137,134	195,000
2023	166,532	185,000
2022	156,786	140,000
2021*	127,290	110,000
2020*	56,270	195,000
2019	170,957	185,000
2018	170,583	170,000
2017	164,187	155,000
2016	141,882	149,500
2015	144,674	140,000

* Along with many public services, BreastCheck was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The programme was paused for several months in 2020 and 2021.

CervicalCheck

CervicalCheck offers free primary HPV cervical screening every three years to women and people with a cervix aged 25 to 29; and every five years to those aged 30 to 65 years.

Once eligible, it is up to each person to make an appointment with a registered sample taker. Women can check if they are eligible for their free screening test [here](#).



The table below shows the number of women screened by CervicalCheck from 2015 to 2024, and the screening target for each of those years. The move to HPV cervical screening in 2020 involved changes to [screening intervals](#). These changes created fluctuations in the numbers of people invited for screening each year following the introduction of HPV cervical screening.

Table 2. Numbers of women screened in CervicalCheck 2015-2024

	No. women screened	Target
2024	194,884	178,000
2023	234,051	264,000
2022	248,369	295,000
2021	318,491	280,000
2020*	143,334	255,000
2019	206,315	255,000
2018**	339,161	255,000
2017	259,099	242,000
2016	253,091	255,000
2015	245,547	271,000

* Along with many public services, CervicalCheck was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The programme was paused for several months in 2020.

** Year women availed of the offer of a free out-of-schedule screening test

BowelScreen

BowelScreen offers free bowel screening to people aged 59 to 70 every two years. The primary objective of BowelScreen is to reduce people's risk of developing bowel cancer, by detecting and removing pre-cancerous adenomas in the lining of the bowel. If bowel cancer is found early through screening, it's easier to treat and there's a better chance of recovery.

The following table shows the number of people screened by BowelScreen from 2015 to 2024, and the screening target for each of those years. In October 2023, we began offering BowelScreen to people aged 59 to 69, and this year, we have expanded the age range to people aged 59 to 70. As the age range expands, target screening numbers increase.

Table 3. Numbers of people screened in BowelScreen 2015-2024

	No. people screened	Target
2024	139,758	148,000
2023	149,385	140,000
2022	125,529	140,000
2021	91,529	87,500
2020*	49,889	108,000
2019	122,724	125,000
2018	105,416	125,000
2017	120,764	106,875
2016	108,285	106,875
2015	85,585	200,000

* Along with many public services, BowelScreen was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The programme was paused for several months in 2020.



An tSeirbhís Náisiúnta Scagthástála
National Screening Service

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

Yours sincerely,

Fiona Murphy,
Chief Executive.

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