



Erin McGreehan TD
Fianna Fáil
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

email: erin.mcgreehan@oireachtas.ie

28/05/2025

PQ 24957/25: To ask the Minister for Health to outline the HSE guidelines that Breast Care clinics must follow when a woman in her 20s or 30s attends a Breast Clinic appointment after being referred by her GP with signs of breast cancer.

Dear Deputy McGreehan

The NCCP have developed a National Breast Cancer GP Referral Guideline (2021) outlining which patients with signs and symptoms should be referred to a symptomatic breast disease clinic. These guidelines are not age specific. They can be found here:

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/5/cancer/profinfo/resources/gpreferrals/gp-guidelines.html>

The NCCP have developed a HSE National Clinical Guideline: Diagnosis and staging of patients with breast cancer (2024). These guidelines are for all adult patients, they can be found here:

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/5/cancer/profinfo/resources/gpreferrals/gp-guidelines.html>

Referrals to SBD clinics are triaged by clinicians. Within the SBD clinics, a patient may receive a triple assessment. This means they are assessed by a breast surgeon and may receive additional tests including a mammogram and/or ultrasound, a core biopsy or fine needle aspiration. What tests are performed depends on the clinical findings of the initial assessment. It should be noted that not all patients who attend the SBD clinic require triple assessment.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Eve O'Toole
Head of Evidence and Quality Hub
National Cancer Control Programme