



Summer 2017

Newsletter

National Screening Service bi-annual newsletter

Pearl of Wisdom Campaign Launch 2017

Medical experts from CervicalCheck and the IFPA, along with women with experience of pre-cervical cancer, spoke about the importance of cervical screening at a coffee morning to launch the annual Pearl of Wisdom campaign on Friday 20 January 2017 in Tallaght, Dublin.

The national campaign ran from 22 - 28 January, throughout European Cervical Cancer Prevention Week during which women were encouraged to wear a Pearl of Wisdom pin, the emblem of cervical cancer prevention and asked to support on social media using the hashtag #ShareTheWisdom.

The launch was a huge success, receiving press coverage in a number of media outlets and trending on Twitter.

The call center also experienced a significant increase in calls following the campaign which followed through to higher participation in the programme.



Dr Grainne Flannelly highlighting the achievements of CervicalCheck during the pearl of Wisdom Campaign Launch



Staff are encouraged to participate in the screening programmes when they too are invited. Check when your next cervical screening test is due [here](#)



Broadcaster Maura Derrane was the Pearl of Wisdom campaign ambassador: "We're all busy, and it's easy to put off having your smear test. Especially as women, we often put caring for everyone else ahead of looking after our own health. But this test is so important. Tell your mother, your sister, your daughter, your colleague, your friend. It only takes five minutes, and it really could save your life."

NSS Training Unit provides training on international level

Carol McNamara, Training and Education Manager, NSS and Bernadette Queally, Screening Training Coordinator, CervicalCheck have been invited to provide training in cervical screening to a group of medical practitioners in Georgia this October. The visit, organised by the International Cervical Cancer Prevention Association – (ICCPA) and facilitated by the United Nations Population Fund, will showcase the successes and achievements of Cervical Check – the National Cervical Screening Programme while supporting the development of a fledgling cervical screening programme in Georgia.



(From L-R): Charles O'Hanlon, Head, National Screening Service; Thomas O'Brien, Programme Manager, BowelScreen; Marcella Corcoran Kennedy, Minister of State for Health Promotion; Professor Diarmuid O'Donoghue, Clinical Director, BowelScreen; and Dr Stephanie O'Keefe, National Director, Health & Wellbeing.

BowelScreen publishes report from first screening round

BowelScreen – The National Bowel Screening Programme released its inaugural programme report providing screening statistics for the first screening round of the programme's operation (2012 – 2015) to an excited crowd at a launch event held at the National Screening Service during Bowel Cancer Awareness Month, which ran throughout April.

The event was attended by Minister Marcella Corcoran Kennedy, TD, Minister of State for Health Promotion, hospital staff, including clinicians and nurses, as well as partners, such as the Irish Cancer Society, and colleagues across the National Screening Service and wider HSE.

The report highlights the successes of the programme during its first screening round:

- BowelScreen invited 488,628 eligible people for screening
- 8,062 clients attended for a colonoscopy
- 521 cancers were detected, giving an overall cancer detection rate of 2.65 per 1,000 people screened
- Over 71 per cent of all cancers detected were stage I or II, meaning that disease was detected at an early stage and therefore, easier to treat
- Approx. 13,000 precancerous adenomas or polyps were removed.

The successful working relationship established between BowelScreen and its stakeholders which include clinical teams in hospital partner sites, laboratory providers, call centre and other support services has led to encouraging results in the first screening round, which will pave the way for an improved future in cancer detection.



(From L-R): Deepa Jegadish Gandhi, CNS, Mater Hospital; Aisling Carolan, CNS, St James Hospital; Lisa Heffernan, Clinical Coordinator, BowelScreen; Jenny Nugent, Administrative Coordinator, BowelScreen; and Caroline Meade, Clinical Coordinator, BowelScreen.

Screening Promotion creates links with CHO colleagues

At the start of the year, the Head of Screening wrote to the Chief Officers of the Community Health Organisations suggesting that the Screening Promotion Team would like to engage with the new Leads for Health and Wellbeing in the CHOs.

"We were delighted with the positive response we received and by the end of May the Screening Promotion Team had met with all nine leads for Health and Wellbeing. This has led to a greater understanding of screening among our CHO colleagues and a consequent desire on their part to support us in our promotion role" said Deirdre Ryan, Screening Promotion Manager.

"As an example, when we met with the Health and Wellbeing lead and other senior staff in CHO 5 (Carlow, Kilkenny, Waterford, Wexford and South Tipperary) it gave us an opportunity to highlight the low coverage of CervicalCheck in County Kilkenny. They immediately notified their GP colleagues of this issue and became very active in the promotion of the Pearls of Wisdom during the European Cervical Cancer Prevention Week in January. Since then, they have worked with us in promoting BreastCheck in South Wexford and South Tipperary – particularly among initial women.

"Such activity has been replicated in other CHOs and we look forward to working with them on other promotional events throughout the year."