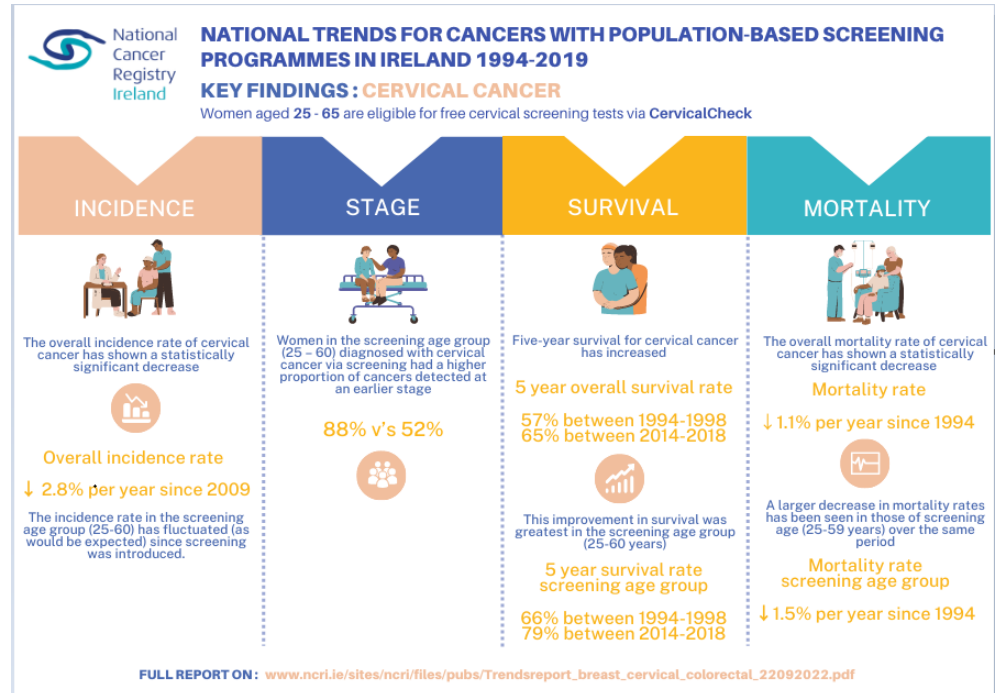


National Screening Service (NSS) update – September 2022

NCRI report shows positive impact of cancer screening programmes

A new report published by the National Cancer Registry Ireland (NCRI) shows the positive impact of BreastCheck, CervicalCheck and BowelScreen on cancer detection in Ireland. The key findings of the report, published on 22 September, titled *Breast, cervical and colorectal cancer 1994-2019: National trends for cancers with population-based screening programmes in Ireland*, show a noticeable increase in earlier diagnosis, and a demonstrable reduction in mortality rates.

The report finds that cancers detected via screening were, on average, found at much earlier stages in the screening age groups than in the non-screening groups; decreases in mortality rates for the three cancers were, in general, more substantial in the age-groups eligible for screening; and survival is now higher and has improved more markedly in the screening age groups for all three cancers. To view the report, please click [here](#), and [here](#) for the NSS's statement on the report.



Campaign begins to promote Breast Cancer Awareness Month (BCAM) 2022

To mark the beginning of BCAM on 1 October, BreastCheck is urging women to take up their invitation for screening. We are asking women who have not yet received their first screening appointment to check they are on our register at breastcheck.ie; and we are asking all women to let us know if they can't attend; and to learn the ways to reduce their risk of breast cancer; all at breastcheck.ie. We are doing this through a social media campaign; media reporting and advertorials; and a GP surgery poster and leaflet campaign. The key messages include advising women to be aware of the symptoms of breast cancer; the importance of screening to reduce the risk of breast cancer; and a reminder that screening won't find every cancer.

Additional Women's Health Fund investment for BowelScreen, DRS and BreastCheck

Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly TD announced an additional €760,000 in funding for screening services through the Women's Health Fund, on 23 September. This funding will provide investment to research low uptake in BowelScreen among women in some at-risk populations; new technologies to enable the BreastCheck programme to listen and respond to women's experiences through a real-time platform; and piloting a new national screening pathway for women with diabetes who become pregnant. The funding will enable the programme to begin a pilot project in the Dublin region in November.

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BreastCheck offers breast screening to women who turned 70 during 2020 and 2021

BreastCheck routinely invites all women for screening at regular intervals between the ages of 50 and 69. However, breast screening was impacted by COVID-19 during 2020 and 2021 and appointments have been delayed by up to a year. This means some women who were aged 69 and due a screening test in 2020 or 2021 may have turned 70 before we could invite them for their final screen. We are now writing to these women to invite them for this screen. The programme is offering these appointments in line with our capacity to screen, and the location of our mobile and static units. We hope to have offered an appointment to all women who are eligible by the end of 2022. We have more information on this [here](#).

Revised CervicalCheck targets for 2022

The NSS's Programme Evaluation Unit has changed its prediction for the number of screening tests CervicalCheck will carry out in 2022. Last year the unit predicted that 295,000 unique women and people with a cervix would have one or more satisfactory cervical screening tests in a primary care setting in 2022. We have now revised that figure to 261,000 women, following a predictive modelling exercise we carried out in May of this year. You can read more about this [here](#).

DRS multi-language videos

For people whose primary language is not English, the Diabetic RetinaScreen (DRS) programme has created videos in 29 languages explaining how people who have diabetes can use its services. The videos can be viewed by clicking [here](#).

New research project aims to boost bowel screening uptake

BowelScreen has begun a research project aimed at improving bowel cancer screening uptake. The CRITICALS (Creation of an Innovative Intervention for Improving Colorectal Cancer Screening) project is developing screening information materials that will be sent to a sample population of BowelScreen participants. It will then assess attitudes and participation in screening among those who received the new information, and among other BowelScreen participants who did not. The project is funded by the Irish Cancer Society's Social, Nursing, and Allied Health Sciences Post-Doctoral Fellowship. You can read more about the CRITICALS project [here](#).

New appointment for Dr Caroline Mason Mohan

The NSS's Director of Public Health Dr Caroline Mason Mohan took up the post of Consultant in Public Health Medicine at the NSS on 20 June. This NSS post was one of the first tranche of 34 priority posts appointed within the HSE, along with other public health senior leadership roles.



UCC honours NSS clinicians

CervicalCheck Clinical Director Dr Nóirín Russell (left), and lead surgeon at Southern BreastCheck unit Martin O'Sullivan (right) have been awarded honorary professorships by University College Cork (UCC). Among the matters considered by the Clinical Professor Board at UCC was Dr Russell's work for CervicalCheck. Professor O'Sullivan is the lead breast clinician with the National Cancer Control

Programme, the Chair of the BreastCheck surgical group and President of the Society of Irish Breast Surgeons. The honorary professorship was made in recognition of his long-standing commitment to teaching, lecturing and research.

We value your feedback on our work; please contact us with any questions or suggestions at communications@screeningservice.ie

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