



Scottish Breast Screening Programme Statistics

Glossary of terms



assessment The process a woman undergoes following an abnormal mammogram, in order to obtain a definitive diagnosis.

attendance rate (see uptake rate)

benign Non-cancerous. Refers to tumours which grow slowly in one place and which, once removed by surgery, tend not to recur.

biopsy The removal of a small piece of tissue from an organ or part of the body for laboratory examination. It is an important means of confirming or excluding a diagnosis of cancer from analysis of a fragment of the tissue sample.

breast cancer A malignant tumour of the breast. Breast cancer is the commonest form of cancer in women.

core biopsy Removal (using a needle) of a piece of a breast tissue for diagnosis.

diagnostic Serving to identify and/or confirm a particular disease.

diagnostic open biopsy Surgical procedure to diagnose whether cancer is present (note: usually a core biopsy/FNA procedure is used to determine whether cancer is present).

ductal carcinoma in situ (DCIS)/Non-invasive DCIS is an early form of breast cancer, where the cancer cells are only found inside the milk ducts ('in situ') and have not developed the ability to spread either outside the ducts into the breast tissue or to other parts of the body. Because the cancer cells have not developed the ability to spread, you may hear DCIS described as a pre-cancerous, intraductal or non-invasive cancer.

early recall Recall for the next screening episode earlier than the usual interval (3 years). Early recall is normally 3 months, 6 months or 1 year. An early recall appointment is considered as 'non-routine'.

eligible women All women who are to be invited for breast screening. This currently includes all women aged 50–70 who are registered with a GP, and those women not registered with a GP but whom the screening programme is made aware of, eg women in long-stay institutions. Some women are excluded from routine invitation, for example those who have had bilateral mastectomy or who have signed a disclaimer form to remove themselves from the Scottish Breast Screening Programme call-recall system.

FNA fine needle aspiration The withdrawal of fluid, containing cells, from the body by means of aspiration/suction using a fine needle. The samples obtained are used to provide information on the cells of tumours or cysts.

GP referral The process whereby a GP has referred a woman for screening. A GP referral appointment is considered as 'non-routine'.

incident screen Any mammographic screen a woman has after her first screen. It can identify disease that has arisen since the previous screen.

invasive breast cancer Breast cancer that can or has spread from its site of origin.

NHSBSP KC62 Return The performance of the Scottish Breast Screening Programme (SBSP) is evaluated by comparing observed performance against targets. The NHSBSP KC62 Return is the main source of data used to evaluate the performance of the programme against these targets (see NHSBSP KC62 standards).

NHSBSP KC62 Performance Standards These are used to monitor and evaluate the performance of the SBSP against the UK- wide performance standards and targets. They include minimum performance standards and targets on uptake, cancer detection rates, referral for assessment and early recall rates. The data required to measure the standards are generated from the KC62 Returns (see NHSBSP KC62 Return).

malignant Cancerous. Such tumours can invade and destroy surrounding tissue and have the capacity to spread. A tumour which is the result of such spread is known as 'secondary' or 'metastatic'

mammography X-ray examination of the breast. Using low-energy X-rays, fine details of breast tissue can be visualised, particularly the presence of calcification or soft tissue masses, enabling the early diagnosis of breast cancer.

mammogram An X-ray film of the breast.

National Health Service Breast Screening Programme (NHSBSP) The UK-wide programme of free population-based screening for breast cancer Website: www.cancerscreening.nhs.uk/breastscreen

National Services Division (NSD) The division of NHS National Services Scotland with responsibility for ensuring the provision of national screening programmes and specialist services on behalf of NHSScotland. Website: www.show.scot.nhs.uk/nsd

NHSBSP See National Health Service Breast Screening Programme.

non-attenders Eligible people who do not attend following an invitation for screening.

non-invasive cancer (see ductal carcinoma in situ (DCIS)).

preoperative tissue diagnosis A diagnosis made by examining tissue of the breast obtained by a non-operative procedure, the most common examples of which are fine needle aspiration (FNA) and core biopsy.

prevalent screen A woman's first mammographic screen.

Quality Assurance Reference Centre (QARC) Collect and collate data about the performance and outcomes of the breast screening programme, organise QA visits, and provide support for the regional director of QA and the professional co-ordinators. The reference centre is the first point of contact for information about the breast screening programme.

recall The part of a screening system whereby a person is recalled for a repeat screen or an assessment appointment. This includes routine recall and early recall.

routine appointment Includes women who have been invited by the screening programme to attend a standard appointment (which normally occurs once every 3 years). Routine appointments exclude early recall and GP/Self referral appointments.

routine recall Recall for the next screening episode at the normal interval (normally once every 3 years).

Scottish Breast Screening Programme (SBSP) The programme of free population-based screening for breast cancer in Scotland. The SBSP is commissioned by the National Services Division and the screening service is provided through six regional screening centres and 19 mobile screening units across Scotland.

Scottish Government Health Department (SGHD) The Scottish Government Health Department is responsible for health policy and the administration of NHSScotland. Website: www.show.scot.nhs.uk/sehd

screening Examination of people with no symptoms, to detect unsuspected disease.

screening episode A cycle of a person's screening events.

self-referral The process whereby a woman refers herself for screening. A self-referral appointment is considered as 'non-routine'.

standardised detection ratio (SDR) The observed number of invasive cancers detected, divided by the number expected given the age distribution of the population.

uptake rate The proportion of women invited to a breast screening appointment who attend.