



An tSeirbhís Náisiúnta Scagthástála
National Screening Service

9 December 2022

Ms Honor Dunphy
Meetings Administrator
Metropolitan District of Waterford City and County

Our Ref: GM/Communications

hdunphy@waterfordcouncil.ie

Request from Councillors of the Metropolitan District of Waterford City and County for Minister to address the provision of a mammogram service in Waterford, and to outline the reasons the BreastCheck unit has moved from the Cork Road, Waterford.

Dear Ms Dunphy,

I refer to your letter to the Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly TD of 27 October 2022, received by this office on 23 November.

There are four regional centres responsible for the delivery of BreastCheck throughout the country: Eccles Street and Merrion Road in Dublin; Newcastle Road in Galway; and Infirmary Road in Cork.

However, not all eligible women wish, or are able, to travel to one of these regional units. An important principle for the BreastCheck programme, is to offer screening services locally to women in counties and locations convenient to where they live. To achieve this, each of the four screening units operates in tandem with mobile units. The majority of women participating in BreastCheck have their mammogram in one of these units.

BreastCheck screens on an area-by-area basis every two years. We call this process a screening 'round'. In each screening round we carry out screening from two sites in Waterford: Waterford City (Waterford Regional Sports Complex on the Cork Road), and Waterford County (Dungarvan Community Hospital). We have been offering screening from these sites in county Waterford since the national expansion of BreastCheck in 2008.

The Waterford City mobile screening unit conducted its most recent screening round between 04 November 2020 and 01 April 2022. It is due to begin screening again in the city in early 2023. A second unit was screening in Dungarvan from 06 December 2021 until it completed its round in July 2022. It, too, is due to return in 2023.

BreastCheck is very grateful to Waterford City & County Council for its continued support of breast screening in Waterford City by facilitating the BreastCheck mobile site at the Waterford Regional Sports Complex since 2010.

We note that there was inaccurate media coverage of this matter recently. We contacted the newspaper concerned and it has printed a correction.

I hope you are in a position to share this information with councillors, who may find it useful in discussing breast screening with constituents and colleagues.

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We continue to ask women of every age to look out for symptoms. If a person has any concerns or symptoms concerning their breasts, they should contact their GP who will give them the appropriate advice.

It is important that every woman is breast aware. This means knowing what is normal for her, so that if any unusual change occurs, she will recognise it. The sooner she notices a change the better because if cancer is found early, treatment is more likely to be successful. We recommend women get into the habit of looking at, and feeling, their breasts, at least once a month. There is more information on techniques for checking one's breasts on breastcheck.ie.

For other queries, participants can call the Freephone information line on 1800 45 45 55, email info@breastcheck.ie or contact their clinic directly.

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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