



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Health and Ageing**

**BreastScreen Australia Evaluation  
Progress and Status Report  
April 2009**

**BreastScreen Australia Evaluation Advisory Committee (EAC)**

- The sixth meeting of the EAC was held on 13 October 2008. Updates on all Evaluation projects and the following presentations were considered by members:
  - the draft final report of the Participation and Performance Trends Project presented by Professor David Roder;
  - interim reports on the Economic Evaluation and Modelling project; Medicare Mammography Analysis project; Infrastructure and Capacity project; Mortality (Ecological) project; Review of the BreastScreen Australia Accreditation System; and the Program Governance and Management Project.
  
- The seventh meeting of the EAC was held on 8-11 December 2008. Updates on all Evaluation projects and the following presentations were considered by members:
  - the draft final report of the Mortality (Ecological) project presented by NBOCC;
  - the draft final report of the Economic Evaluation and Modelling project presented by IMS Health;
  - the draft final report of the Medicare Mammography Analysis project presented by Professor David Currow;
  - the draft final report of the Review of BreastScreen Australia's Infrastructure and Capacity presented by Access Economics;
  - the draft final report of the Review of the BreastScreen Australia Accreditation System presented by KPMG; and
  - the draft final report of the Program Governance and Management Project presented by the Nous Group.
  
- At the December 2008 meeting members participated in a workshop to discuss and finalise the Evaluation Final Report, discuss and develop conclusions, and agree recommendations for submission to AHMAC.

- All evaluation projects have now been reported to the EAC.
- A further meeting of the EAC was held by teleconference in January 2009 to refine and agree the final recommendations.
- The Final Report of the BreastScreen Australia Evaluation brings together the findings of the ten individual Evaluation Projects, addresses the Evaluation's terms of reference and provides recommendations to the Australian Health Minister's Advisory Council.
- The Final Report is due to be considered by the Australian Health Minister's Advisory Council in June 2009.
- The Final Report has not been released and as yet a date has not been set for its release.

## BreastScreen Australia Evaluation Projects - Current status report – April 2009

Project Title	Project Objectives and Methodology	Consultant
Mortality Study (1) Methodology	To review and rank the design options for evaluating the impact of the BreastScreen Australia program on breast cancer mortality in the population, with regard to feasibility and quality of evidence. The methodology involved an extensive literature review and ranking of studies against an agreed set of criteria by an expert panel. The findings were used to inform the Mortality (Ecological) Study.	National Breast Cancer Centre
Mortality (Ecological) Study	To determine the association by residential Statistical Local Area (SLA), or SLA aggregation, of BreastScreen Australia participation with time-lagged (subsequent) breast cancer mortality for women in the target age group of 50-69 years as well as women aged 40-49 and over 70 years, who are eligible for screening. The methodology is an ecological study with adjustment for mammograms provided outside of BreastScreen Australia and socioeconomic differences at the SLA level. The study is utilising data from BreastScreen Australia, state and territory cancer registries, Australian Bureau of Statistics and Medicare mammography data.	National Breast and Ovarian Cancer Centre
Participation and Performance Trends Project	To undertake an analysis of the BreastScreen Australia Program data to determine the performance of the Program across population sub-groups, service types and jurisdictions; identify trends in participation and performance within sub-groups, service types and geographic areas over time; and identify indications of any trends in morbidity, including benefits and harms, associated with participation in the Program. Population sub-groups include women in rural areas, Indigenous women and women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, women in eligible and target age groups, women with symptoms who present for screening, and women with a family history or a past history of breast cancer. Morbidity associated with participation in the Program will be examined as reflected by: waiting time in the assessment pathway; recall for assessment; invasive procedures; true/false positive outcomes; and true/false negative outcomes. BreastScreen Australia performance indicators and other routinely collected Program data will form the basis of the analysis. Program data from 1996-2005 will be used.	The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare under MoU with Department
Review of BreastScreen Australia Infrastructure and Capacity	To review the capacity of BreastScreen Australia in meeting current and future demand, in the context of the availability and distribution of infrastructure and workforce. The review will assess current demand and identify future demands for screening and assessment services due to population growth and/or policy changes, and best practice management of infrastructure and workforce to meet identified future demands. The review will also identify the potential benefits from the introduction of digital mammography to the BreastScreen Australia Program. The methodology will include a review of current capacity, services and workforce; identify service demands; literature review; data analysis; modelling of current and future demand and capacity; and consultation with key stakeholders, including state and territory Programs. BreastScreen Australia Program data and Medicare data will be used as part of the data analysis.	Access Economics

Project Title	Project Objectives and Methodology	Consultant
Policy Analysis Project	To review the current BreastScreen Australia policy on age range and screening interval and the appropriate management of women with increased risk of breast cancer. The project will identify best practice evidence for managing women considered to be at higher risk of breast cancer such as women presenting to screening with symptoms, women with dense breasts, women with a family history, women exposed to diethylstilboestrol (DES), and women with a past history of breast cancer. In addition, the project will review the existence and impact of inconsistency in the application of national policy across jurisdictions. The methodology includes a literature review; analysis of current policy practice across jurisdictions and consultation with key stakeholders, including state and territory BreastScreen Australia Programs.	HDG Consulting Group
Review of BreastScreen Australia Accreditation System	To benchmark the current BreastScreen Australia accreditation system against Australian and international best practices for accrediting healthcare services and identify options to ensure the system's sustainability and its ability to deliver ongoing quality improvements. This project will consider whether the current accreditation system continues to be appropriate, and that the system meets or exceeds benchmarks for healthcare service accreditation and core criteria for a robust accreditation system. The methodology for this project includes a literature review; an assessment and review of the current accreditation system; and extensive consultation with key stakeholders including state and territory BreastScreen Australia Programs and the National Quality Management Committee.	KPMG
Participation Qualitative Study	To explore the views of participants and non-participants within the target and eligible population, and health practitioners, to determine BreastScreen Australia's availability and acceptance, and barriers to participation. This project will focus on factors that discourage participation and factors that support and enable participation in screening and identify strategies for achieving sustainable participation within the general population and in sub-populations where participation is low. This project will also explore women's understanding of the benefits and risks of participation in the Program and acceptance of these risks. The methodology employed is a literature review and qualitative research. The literature review will inform the design of qualitative research, which involves in-depth interviews and focus groups of participants and non-participants in the eligible age group, and general practitioners and other health professionals. Research is to be conducted across Australia, in all jurisdictions, in both metropolitan and rural areas and will include participants from Indigenous women and women of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Participants in the research will primarily be identified through market research recruitment methods and supplemented by other methods as required.	Blue Moon Research and Planning

Project Title	Project Objectives and Methodology	Consultant
Economic Evaluation and Modelling Study	To justify and implement a suitable modelling technique to determine the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of the current BreastScreen Australia Program against a baseline of no screening program and a range of policy alternatives. The model will be calibrated with Australian data to estimate the impact of the BreastScreen Australia Program on breast cancer mortality across different age groups; determine whether the Program is delivering cost-effective outcomes by conducting a cost-utility analysis; and to provide cost-effectiveness data to inform future policy decisions. Australian data will be utilised to its fullest including BreastScreen Australia performance and costing data.	IMS Health.
Program Governance and Management Project	To review and analyse the current Program management and governance structures in place for BreastScreen Australia, including an examination of strategic direction and leadership, decision-making processes, performance monitoring, reporting, accountability and funding arrangements as they relate to achieving the aims and objectives of BreastScreen Australia; and to seek to identify strategies and practices that contribute to best practice, equitable client outcomes, ongoing program improvement and accountability through appropriate governance and management arrangements and program delivery model. The methodology for this project includes a literature review; collation and analysis of information related to program governance and management at national and jurisdictional level; and consultation with key stakeholders including state and territory BreastScreen Australia Programs.	The Nous Group
Medicare Mammography Analysis	To conduct an analysis of trends in Medicare-funded mammography and other diagnostic procedures for breast cancer, including, if possible, analysis of the number of women attending for Medicare-funded mammography on a regular basis.	Department of Health and Ageing with support of EAC members
Final report	To produce a final report synthesising the findings of all ten individual Evaluation projects, and provide recommendations for the Australian Health Minister's Advisory Council (AHMAC) to consider. The final report will bring together the findings of individual Evaluation projects in the context of the overall Evaluation and prepare a consolidated report on the Evaluation of BreastScreen Australia, which comprehensively addresses the Evaluation terms of reference as agreed by AHMAC in June 2006. The final report will consider the extent to which the Program has met its aim of achieving reductions in mortality attributable to breast cancer, the extent to which the current Program objectives have been met and the appropriateness of these objectives.	EAC