



Australian Government
Department of Health and Ageing

**BreastScreen Australia Evaluation
Progress and Status Report
March 2008**

BreastScreen Australia Evaluation Advisory Committee (EAC)

- The third EAC meeting was held in December 2007. Members were updated on the progress of individual projects and considered the interim report of the Participation Qualitative Study.
- The fourth meeting of the EAC is scheduled for 25-28 March 2008. Members will consider the final report of the Participation and Qualitative Study and progress reports on all other projects. Member will conduct site visits of BreastScreen Australia services in South Australia and Victoria including metro and regional sites as well as a mobile unit.
- Members will participate in a workshop with state and territory BreastScreen Australia Program Managers to discuss the Evaluation as well as operational aspects of the Program.
- Stakeholder organisations have been invited to take part in a workshop with EAC members to provide input on the Evaluation and discuss issues which are of importance to their members in relation to breast cancer screening.
- The stakeholder organisations attending the workshop include:
 - The Australian Women's Coalition
 - The Breast Cancer Network Australia
 - The Cancer Council of Australia
 - DES Action Australia
 - The National Breast and Ovarian Cancer Centre
 - The National Breast Cancer Foundation
 - The Office for Women
 - The National Rural Women's Coalition



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BreastScreen Aotearoa

- The EAC has agreed to the inclusion of BreastScreen Aotearoa in the Australian Evaluation. In particular, BreastScreen Aotearoa is interested in replicating the Mortality (Ecological) Study and Economic Evaluation and Modelling Project in New Zealand.
- The inclusion of BreastScreen Aotearoa will provide a suitable international benchmark against which to measure the impact of BreastScreen Australia on breast cancer mortality. The New Zealand program is a particularly useful comparison due to the similarities across the breast cancer screening programs and similar breast cancer incidence and mortality rates.
- Dr Madeleine Wall, Clinical Director, BreastScreen Aotearoa has been appointed to the EAC as an observer.

BreastScreen Australia Evaluation Projects: Status Report March 2008

| Project Title | Project Objectives and Methodology | Current Status | Due to Report |
|--|---|---|------------------|
| 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 final report recommended completing two separate studies: an ecological study and a case-control study. | Completed by the National Breast Cancer Centre. | Completed Feb 07 |
| 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. | In progress. Contracted to the National Breast and Ovarian Cancer Centre. | Nov 2008 |
| 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, and 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. | In progress. The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare completing under MOU with DOHA. | July 2008 |

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| Project Title | Project Objectives and Methodology | Current Status | Due to Report |
|--|--|--|---------------|
| 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, while yet to be finalised, is expected to 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 wide ranging 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. | Contract negotiation in progress. | Sept 2008 |
| 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. | In progress. Contracted to HDG Consulting Group. | July 2008 |
| 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. It should identify issues with the existing system and recommend options to address these. | Request for Tender closed 27 February 2008. | Oct 2008 |

BreastScreen Australia Evaluation Projects: Status Report March 2008

| Project Title | Project Objectives and Methodology | Current Status | Due to Report |
|---|---|---|---------------|
| Review of BreastScreen Australia Accreditation System (continued) | The methodology, while yet to be finalised, is expected to include 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. | | |
| Participation Qualitative Study | To explore the views of participants and non-participants within the target and eligible population, and health practitioners, to determine the program'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 implications 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 and 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. | In progress. Contracted to Blue Moon Research and Planning. | March 2008 |
| Economic Evaluation and Modelling Study | To model the impact of the BreastScreen Australia Program on breast cancer mortality; to determine whether the Program is delivering cost-effective outcomes compared to no screening program and a range of policy alternatives; and to provide cost-effectiveness data to inform future policy decisions. This project will also use BreastScreen Australia performance data to model the impact of Program participation on breast cancer mortality. The methodology, while yet to be finalised, is expected to include an analysis of the most suitable model to assess the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of the BreastScreen Australia Program and calibrate and run the model to estimate the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of the current screening Program against a range of policy alternatives. | Request for Tender closed 1 February 2008. Tender evaluation in progress. | Nov 2008 |

BreastScreen Australia Evaluation Projects: Status Report March 2008

| Project Title | Project Objectives and Methodology | Current Status | Due to Report |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|---------------|
| Program Governance and Management | 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, while yet to be finalised, is expected to include 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. | Request for Quote closes 14 March 2008 | Sept 2008 |
| 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. The project aims to estimate, to the extent possible, mammographic screening for breast cancer occurring outside the BreastScreen Australia program. The methodology for this project is yet to be finalised. | In progress. Internal project. | Aug 2008 |
| Final report | To produce a final report synthesising the conclusions and recommendations 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. The methodology, while yet to be finalised, will involve Evaluation Advisory Committee (EAC) sponsors from each individual Evaluation project providing input to a final report writing group. The draft final report is expected to be discussed in depth at the December 2008 meeting of the EAC. | In progress. Internal project: EAC final report sponsor group supported by the secretariat. | Dec 2008 |