

Media Release

Fifty per cent of women in South Eastern Sydney overdue for breast screening

Wednesday, 1 October 2025

This Breast Cancer Awareness Month, eligible women in the South Eastern Sydney Local Health District are being urged to book a free mammogram, with 49 per cent of women overall, and 56 per cent of culturally and linguistically diverse women overdue for their two-yearly breast cancer screening.

For women aged 50-74, a breast screen every two years through a population-based screening program like BreastScreen NSW is still the best way to detect breast cancer early – before it can be seen or felt.

Laura Hutchinson, Director of BreastScreen NSW, South Eastern Sydney Screening Assessment Service, said with more than 750 local women expected to be diagnosed with breast cancer this year, women need to put themselves first and book a screening.

“If you’re aged 50 to 74, make breast screening a priority. It only takes 20 minutes and no doctor’s referral is needed,” Laura said.

“Early detection significantly increases a person’s chance of survival and can greatly reduce the need for invasive treatment like a mastectomy.”

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month and BreastScreen NSW is encouraging clients, staff and the community to *Tell a Friend* about the importance of regular screening and how to book an appointment.

A record 36,500 women booked their breast screen in October 2024. This year, the *Be A Friend, Tell A Friend* promotion will encourage more conversations so more women across NSW book this potentially lifesaving appointment.

Professor Tracey O’Brien AM, NSW Chief Cancer Officer and CEO of the Cancer Institute NSW said as a community we need to take the threat of breast cancer seriously.

“We all have a role to play in lessening the impact of breast cancer. Talk to the women in your life and support them to be screened,” Professor O’Brien said.

“In one simple moment, our lives could be turned upside down. That’s why I urge all women not to take their health for granted and to make time for the simple screening test that could save your life.”

Multicultural communities face barriers to cancer screening for various reasons including language barriers, low health literacy, cultural beliefs and stigma. BreastScreen NSW is supporting women from multicultural communities to screen with new videos in Arabic, Cantonese, Korean, Mandarin

and Vietnamese, on the BreastScreen NSW website providing a walk-through experience of the screening process.

Breast cancer is the most common cancer in women with age and being female the biggest risk factors – not a family history of breast cancer.

Women aged 50 – 74 years are recommended to have a breast screen every two years. BreastScreen NSW recommends Aboriginal women start screening at 40 years. New videos by Aboriginal women which explain why breast screening is important are available on the BreastScreen NSW website.

Any woman who has noticed a change in their breasts, like a lump, should see their doctor without delay.

For more information and to make an appointment at a local BreastScreen NSW clinic or mobile van, call 13 20 50 or book online at www.breastscreen.nsw.gov.au.

For more information about the Be A Friend Tell A Friend promotion visit <https://www.breastscreen.nsw.gov.au/breast-cancer-awareness-month/>

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