

# Appendix 1

## DRAFT 15-01-2010

**Committee:** Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee  
**Date:** 10 March 2010  
**Regarding:** Breast Screening Update  
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### **Purpose of this paper**

This paper provides an update on the progress made with the breast screening programme since July 2009.

### **Background**

The local breast screening service is part of the national breast screening programme. The local programme offers screening to the registered population of 97,000 women aged 50 to 70 years across East Sussex, Brighton and Hove. Women should be offered screening at least every 3 years. NHS Brighton & Hove are lead commissioner for this screening programme across East Sussex. Brighton Sussex University Hospitals Trust provides the programme for women in East Sussex (including Brighton & Hove).

Historically the local programme has provided a high standard of care. However, since 2006/7 the performance of the programme has slipped and the screening round length has increased. This was primarily due to the shortage of radiographers in the unit, compounded by poor facilities and administrative errors.

The breast screening programme moved to new premises, The Park Centre, with digital equipment in November 2008.

Nationally from 2010/11 the age range for women to be invited to the breast screening programme is being extended over the next few years to women aged between 47 and 73 years. This will put additional pressure on the unit

### **Current position**

The screening programme's performance is reported nationally on the situation as at 31<sup>st</sup> March each year. For 2007/8 this information was released in January 2009.

The Breast Screening coverage (the percentage of women screened within the previous 36 months) for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008 for women aged 53 to 70 years was:

- England 76%
- West Sussex PCT 77%
- NHS Brighton & Hove 64%

The unofficial coverage for Brighton and Hove women for the year ending March 2009 was 67%.

The screening programme has offered screening to all eligible women in Brighton & Hove in the past 3 years. The following table details when the women were offered screening:

Area	Last screening round
Brighton central	Aug 07 - March 08
East Brighton	Feb 08 - Dec 08
North Brighton	Nov 08 - April 09
Hove and Portslade	Jan 07 -Sept 07

At the end of November 2009 73% of women aged 53 to 70 years had been screened in the previous 36 months. The screening round length for the remainder of the women in the East Sussex programme is more than 36 months.

Women from Brighton and Hove are now offered screening at The Park Centre rather than through the mobile screening units. East Sussex women are screened using the mobile units, but the possibility of using static sites is being explored.

The planned screening schedule for inviting Brighton and Hove women to The Park Centre for the next screening round is outlined below. Women from Hove and Portslade are currently being invited for screening.

Area	Planned screening round
Hove and Portslade	January 2010 – September 2010
Brighton Central	August 2010 – March 2011
East Brighton	February 2011 – December 2011
North Brighton	December 2011 – March 2012

The local programme is working to maintain this improved position for Brighton and Hove women. The programme's recovery plan is on-track to recover the 36 month screening round length across the whole programme by September 2010. The table below shows for the whole of the East Sussex, Brighton and Hove programme the number of women invited for screening during 2009 and how many attended for

screening. As can be seen from the table, with the exception of August, since March 2009 the number of women invited for screening has exceeded the monthly number required to maintain the 36 month round length, for some months by over 1000 women. This clearly demonstrates the unit's success in reducing the delay.

	<b>Number of women to be invited to maintain 36 month screening round length over 36 months</b>	<b>Number of women actually invited for screening</b>	<b>Number of women who attended for screening</b>
Jan	2708	2436	1447
Feb	2708	2428	1760
Mar	2708	3025	2377
Apr	2708	2961	2322
May	2708	2780	1975
Jun	2708	2875	2111
Jul	2708	3391	2631
Aug	2708	2079	1474
Sep	2708	3798	2953
Oct	2708	3739	2770
Nov	2708	3867	2684
Dec	2708	3238	1860

#### Screening to assessment

Women who require further assessment after their screening mammogram should be offered an assessment appointment within three weeks of their initial screen. The programme has been failing to meet this target, with the recall to assessment time running between three and six weeks.

Currently women are being invited to assessment within three weeks and the unit are looking at ways of ensuring that this time-frame is sustainable.

The delay in the time taken to carry out the assessments is mainly due to a shortage of radiologist or Advanced Practitioner Radiographer time to read the mammogram films. The unit is addressing this by increasing the number of regular radiologist sessions within the unit; training additional radiographers to film read; and investigating the options to increase mammogram reading capacity by the appointment of a Consultant Radiographer and/or Advanced Practitioner, as two recent advertisements for a Consultant Breast Radiologist have failed to attract applicants.

### **Steps taken to improve performance**

1. Successful recruitment of radiographers and assistant practitioners, but training required before post-holders will be able to fulfil role completely (recent changes to the training availability now mean that Assistant Practitioner training takes 2 years, instead of the one year which was the case when the new appointments were made). However the unit remains 4.75WTE mammographers below recommended staffing levels. Two mammographers are currently on long term sick leave.
2. Successful recruitment of programme manager who started in post December 09
3. Review of working practices including additional screening sessions already being provided on Saturday mornings at The Park Centre.
4. Increased the number of radiologist sessions for breast screening.
5. Promotion of programme to Brighton and Hove women through general practices. With the PCT's Health promotion lead for cancer screening the unit has reviewed the literature and posters sent to practices. Ongoing activity regarding increasing the uptake by traditionally hard to reach groups of women, such as ethnic minorities.

### **The HOSC are asked to note that:**

- The screening programme has offered screening to all women in Brighton & Hove in the past 3 years;
- The ongoing work to ensure the screening round length is maintained.

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January 2010