
BreastScreen Queensland Pre-Booked Appointment Strategy

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Service Improvement

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Summary

BreastScreen Queensland Brisbane Southside Service is implementing targeted strategies to address declining participation in the Program, particularly among new women (who have never screened). High participation rates are required to achieve the Program's aims of reducing the impact (mortality and morbidity) of breast cancer on women in the community. This will contribute to

BreastScreen Queensland's progression towards the overarching goal of meeting the National Accreditation Standard of 70 per cent or greater participation and ensuring equitable access to the program.

Key dates

Jul 2018

Aug 2018

Implementation sites

All eight BreastScreen Queensland clinic locations (QEII Jubilee Hospital, Browns Plains, Coorparoo, Inala, Logan, Mt Gravatt, Redlands and Wynnum) within Metro South HHS

Partnerships

Cancer Screening Unit, Preventive Health Branch (DoH)

Key Contacts

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Aim

To motivate and encourage women aged 50 (who have never screened) to participate in the BreastScreen Queensland Program.

Benefits

- Engages with and prompts women aged 50 to take action on their breast health and attend for their first breast screen appointment.
- Increases screening activity to assist with meeting annual target (a Key Performance Indicator in Hospital and Health Service, Service Agreement with the Department of Health)
- Data cleaning in BSQR3 (BreastScreen Queensland database)

Background

Breast cancer is a common cause of cancer death among Queensland women, second only to lung cancer. Higher uptake and regular participation by women in target age group 50-74 years is critical to success as a population screening program. This is a significant challenge as BSQ Brisbane Southside Service (BSS) has experienced a declining trend in participation particularly among new women in the target age group, for the past five years. Following participation in the successful statewide BSQ pre-booked appointment trial in 2014, BSQ BSS decided to rollout the pre-booked appointment strategy across all eight locations to stem this decline. In doing so, BSQ BSS became the first service in Queensland to rollout a pre-booked appointment strategy.

Solutions Implemented

As a part of the strategy an opt-out letter containing a pre-booked breast screen appointment is sent to women around the time of their 50th Birthday, with the aim of motivating women to prioritise their own health and attend their free breast screening appointment. This replaced the usual Electoral Roll BSQ 50th Birthday Letter, a passive (opt-in) letter that invites women to make an appointment.

Evaluation and Results

After 5 months of implementation the attendance rate (women aged 50 attending their pre-booked appointment) is 35 per cent. This is a 6-fold increase on the results usually achieved from the Electoral Roll (ER) BSQ 50th Birthday Letter at 5.8 per cent. Overall, the pre-booked appointment strategy has encouraged 366 new women aged 50 to attend for their first breast screen appointment. In comparison, the previous ER BSQ 50th Birthday Letter would have resulted in only 60 women attending their breast screen appointment (based on the average uptake).

Lessons Learnt

1. This opt-out strategy prompts women to take action with the added benefits of increase screening activity to meet annual target and data cleaning in BSQR3.
2. Implementation of the strategy requires a dedicated workforce and screening appointment capacity and support from staff, Hospital and Health Service (HHS) executive and the Cancer Screening Unit Department of Health (DoH).