

# Breast screening programme to resume

**Patients will receive letters to reschedule appointments.**

**The Breast Screening Programme which was paused in March because of Covid-19 is to resume 'safely and carefully' from 3 August 2020.**

Anyone who was invited for a breast screening appointment before March, who was unable to attend for any reason or had an appointment cancelled will receive a letter in the coming weeks.

There will be no change to the screening test itself, however additional measures have been introduced to allow breast screening to take place in a safe environment. Staff will wear necessary personal protective equipment and appointments will be staggered to ensure waiting areas are quieter, allowing staff and patients to adhere to physical distancing.

Health Secretary Jeane Freeman said: "Pausing the adult national screening programmes was one of a series of difficult decisions we have had to make in responding to the impact of Covid-19. I am delighted breast cancer screening is resuming and I would urge everyone to attend their appointment, as screening can find early signs of cancer.

"The continued efforts we are making to limit the spread of the virus have allowed us to restart the national breast screening programme in line with expert clinical advice and the recommendations of the Scottish Screening Committee, as part of the planned safe and incremental remobilisation of NHS Scotland.

“The safety of patients and staff will continue to be our priority as all of the national screening programmes restart and expand. I want to reassure you that we are taking these precautions so that we can safely offer the right care, at the right time, in the right place.”

Marion O’Neil, Head of External Affairs (Devolved Nations) at Cancer Research UK, said:“It is great news that breast cancer screening services in Scotland are returning. Although breast cancer screening has both benefits and harms, we know cancer screening programmes saves lives.

“There may be some changes to what happens at your appointment because of COVID-19 and your results may be delayed, so it’s more important than ever that you read the information provided. Ask at your appointment how long it might take and who to contact if you haven’t heard in that time.

“It is important to remember that screening is for healthy people with no symptoms. If you notice any unusual changes to your body that don’t go away, talk to your doctor.”