

Barbara Perry MP

Minister for Local Government

Minister Assisting on Health (Mental Health and Cancer)



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Minister encourages more women to get breast screens

With today marking the beginning of breast cancer awareness month, Minister Assisting on Health (Cancer) Barbara Perry has urged more NSW women to get regular mammograms.

About a quarter of women aged 50 to 69 years, an age group with a high prevalence of breast cancer, have not had a screening mammogram within the last two years, either at a BreastScreen NSW free clinic or through a private screening centre.

“Considering the fact that there is a 97 per cent five year survival rate if breast cancer is detected early, that’s not enough women having a screening mammogram,” Ms Perry said.

“Regular screening significantly increases the likelihood that breast cancers are found as early as possible and treated most effectively.

“These odds make a mammogram every two years one of the most important things a woman over 50 can do, particularly when you consider a screening only takes about an hour.”

All women over the age of 40 are entitled to a free mammogram every two years.

While women aged between 50 and 69 years benefit most from mammograms, all women should see their GP straight away if they notice any changes in their breasts.

“We want to remind women that good health and living cancer free should be a priority for women and their families,” Ms Perry said.

Breast cancer deaths in NSW have reduced by 14 per cent in the last 10 years, due in large part to improvements to breast screening mammography and breast cancer treatment.

“While these measures have been successful there is still more work we can do. The Cancer Institute NSW estimates that last year alone there were 4200 new cases of breast cancer diagnosed in NSW and more than 900 women who lost their lives to the disease,” Ms Perry said.

“The message is simple. If you are aged between 50 to 69 years old book your mammogram now - don’t put it off until it’s too late.”

Women wanting more information should contact BreastScreen NSW by calling 13 20 50.