

## **Heading:** Cancer Screening

### **Introduction**

Cancer screening aims to detect the presence of cancer before symptoms present themselves and the cancer grows, aiming to either prevent or ameliorate the effects of the cancer.

There are three types of cancer screening for adults in England; breast, bowel and cervical. Breast screening is offered to women between the ages of 50 to 70 years, over the age of 70 women can self-refer to the screening service. Bowel screening is offered to both men and women between the ages of 60-74 years in the form of a home testing kit or bowel scope. Cervical screening is offered to women aged 25 to 64 years.

### **National & Local Strategies (Current best practices) and Strategic Drivers/links**

In the UK any screening programme has to fulfil a number of criteria as set by the National Screening Council to be validated (UK Screening Committee, 2013a). These criteria are mirrored by the WHO's screening principles originally cited by [Wilson and Junger \(1968\)](#).

There are conditions which patients feel the NHS should be screening for, especially if they have encountered direct, family or close friend experience. The benefit from the screening process has to outweigh any psychological or physical harm introduced by the programme and the programme must be clinically and ethically acceptable to health care professionals and patients. Prostate Cancer is one of the conditions where there is public pressure to offer a screening programme but which does not adequately fit the ten principles of screening and thus there is not screened for. In response to this public pressure, the [Prostate Cancer Risk Management Programme](#) has been developed and will offer an NHS test free for men aged over 50 if both the patient and the GP agree that there is a need.

### **What do we know?**

Diagnosis of cancer at an early stage, including through effective screening programmes, together with access to optimal treatment and improvements in the management of older people, are the most plausible drivers for improved cancer survival rates (The King's Fund 2011).

The Cancer and Health Inequalities (2009) report produced by Cancer Research UK presents research findings identifying factors related to lower uptake of screening programmes: (For more information see Cancer Research UK)

- Living in a deprived area
- Age – lower at either end of the age spectrum for cervical cancer, lower at the older age group for breast cancer screening

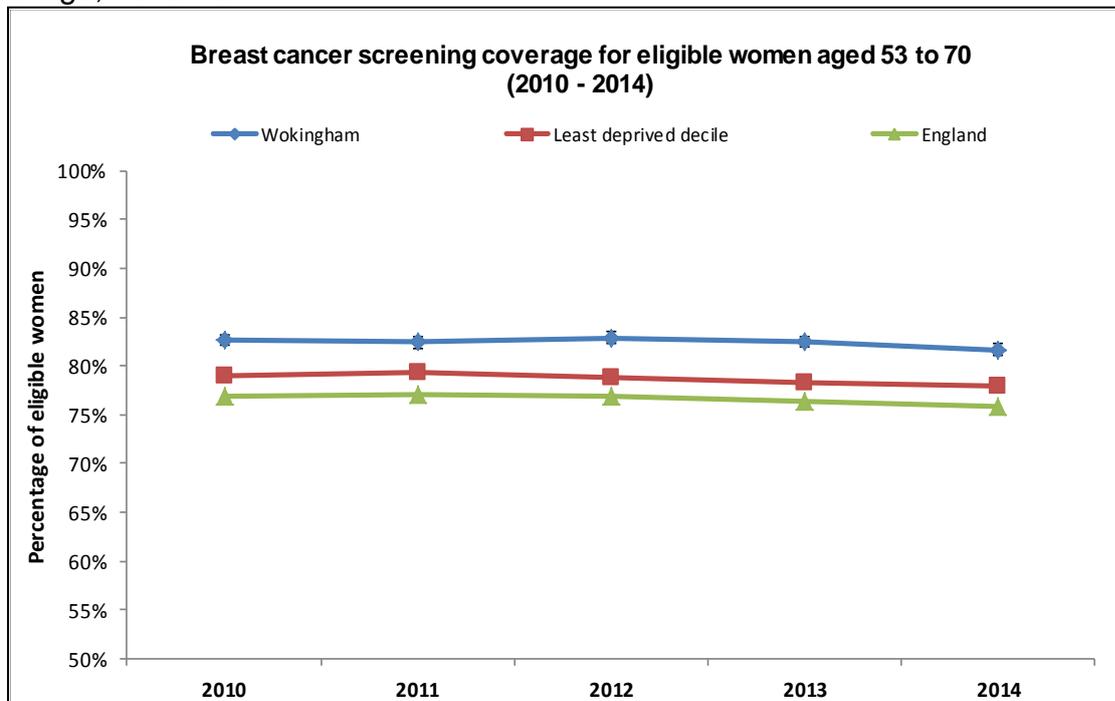
- Originating from an ethnic minority population, although research into this it is not systematic across all groups.
- People with learning difficulties
- People with mental health problems.
- People with low literacy levels –there is some evidence that literacy is a better predictor of uptake than either ethnicity or education.

## Facts, Figures, Trends

### Breast Cancer Screening

As of the 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2014 81.7% of women aged 53-70 years in Wokingham Borough had received an adequate breast screening result in the previous 3 years, which is significantly better than the national figure of 75.9%. During this time 14,027 women had been screened. Figure 1 displays the trend for Wokingham Borough compared with the national and least deprived decile.

Figure 1 – Breast cancer screening coverage for eligible women aged 53 to 70 years of age, 2010-2014



Source – *Public Health Outcomes Framework, 2014*

### Bowel Screening

In 2014/15 11,602 eligible people in Wokingham CCG were sent an invitation to receive a Faecal Occult Blood Test (FOBt) kit, of this number 66% took up the invitation and received an adequate screening outcome. This is higher than the Thames Valley average of 57.7%. Of those that took up the option for screening 1.7% had a definitive abnormal outcome.

### Cervical Screening

As of the 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2014 78.4% of women aged 25-49 in Wokingham Borough

received an adequate cervical screening result (within the previous age-appropriate previous, 3.5 years for those aged 25-49 and 5.5 years for those aged 50-64 years). This figure is significantly better than the national figure of 74.2%. During this time period 33,343 women were screened.

### **What is this telling us?**

Wokingham Borough experiences higher than average percentage of residents participating in the national breast and cervical cancer screening programme when compared with England. However there are still a number of residents not participating. When analysing the results for bowel screening Wokingham Borough does not reach the recommended 70% coverage minimum standard, but is better than the Thames Valley average.

### **What are the key inequalities?**

- There is a lack of promotion and information provided and awareness raising to the male gender regarding breast cancer.
- There are more screening services offered to females than males.
- Nationally fewer women between the ages of 25 to 29 years take up the cervical screening programme – more work is needed to see if this trend is occurring in Wokingham Borough.

### **What are the unmet needs/ service gaps?**

- Information and education to males of the signs and symptoms of breast cancer
- There is a high percentage of residents not taking up the bowel screening FOBt kits
- More work could be undertaken to understand why some residents do not take up the screening opportunities and if there are any links with socioeconomic status or wards within the Borough

**Recommendations for consideration by other key organisations such as: CCG's, General Practices, Local Authority department e.g housing and other providers.**

To work with partners to increase the uptake of bowel screening home test kits.

### **This section links to the following sections in the JSNA:**

Cancer

### **References**

**Name of Author:** Holli

**Date:**

**Update Due:**