



Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1562  
Ein cyf/Our ref JMHSC/02744/25

Carolyn Thomas MS  
Chair  
Petitions Committee

petitions@senedd.wales

20 November 2025

Dear Carolyn,

Thank you for your letter of 21 October about **Petition P-06-1562 Improve breast screening uptake for women in Wales.**

Recent calls to improve breast screening uptake reflect ongoing concerns about disparities in participation, the impact of the pandemic on screening services, and the need to ensure equitable access and outcomes for all eligible women.

Uptake rates can vary across regions, age groups, and socioeconomic backgrounds. The reasons women choose not to take up the offer of breast screening are complex. Factors may include lack of awareness, fear or anxiety about the screening process and results, cultural and language barriers, access issues, and the impact of misinformation.

We are committed to maximising breast screening uptake across all communities, recognising its vital role in early cancer detection and improved outcomes. However, it is a matter of personal choice whether a woman takes up the offer of screening, and it is important that women are provided with accurate information to support them in making that choice.

The uptake standard for the breast screening programme in Wales is 70%. The uptake for the programme in Wales is currently just under this at 69.6%.

I note the petition specifically asks the Welsh Government to support, resource and enable Breast Test Wales and Public Health Wales (PHW) to deliver a breast screening awareness campaign, focusing on low uptake areas and communities. The Welsh Government works closely with PHW to understand the barriers and opportunities for improving access to screening. Breast screening uptake is lowest in the most deprived communities. The screening programme works to address inequalities in uptake by supporting targeted outreach in communities where participation has historically been lower. This includes

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

training community champions so community leaders can act as trusted voices within their communities to support people taking up their screening offer. The PHW screening engagement team works directly with community groups to identify barriers and provide support and resources to address any concerns.

Uptake is lower in the younger age groups, which aligns to uptake being lower in those who are invited to screening for the first time. To address concerns from participants who are attending screening for the first time and are anxious about what will happen during their appointment, a breast screening pathway video *Breast Screening – What to Expect* has been developed to help people understand what breast screening is and why it is important. PHW has recently delivered a social media campaign for breast screening awareness month, which included targeted communication for first-time invitees. The reach and impact of this will be reviewed to inform other targeted awareness work. The programme is also working closely with GP practices by providing information packs with information and posters to raise awareness and encourage women to take up their screening offer.

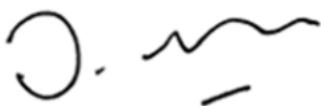
With regards to the provision of more convenient, flexible routes into breast screening services, breast screening in Wales is delivered via 11 mobile units, which rotate across more than 100 locations on a three-year cycle. Site selection is specifically guided by accessibility for the local population, considering travel distance, available facilities, and public transport links. Mobile units are located within easily accessible locations, such as supermarkets or community sites to reduce barriers in attendance. The mobile units have lifts available for accessibility and the service can offer extended appointment times if additional support is needed to attend. Women with communication needs can be supported with interpreters so their appointment can be conducted in their community language. Invitations are sent out via post to the person's registered address, and they can contact the centre to rearrange the appointment if the offered appointment is not suitable. Appointments are offered across the working week, starting as early as 8am on some sites, and some Saturday appointments are provided.

It is not currently possible to offer online appointment booking due to the constraints of the current screening information system, however, there may be opportunity to offer this in the future.

With regards to the point about data reporting, there has been a delay in data reporting across all the screening programmes and PHW is working to ensure data is published on a timelier basis. The Breast Screening Annual Statistical Report 2022-23 has been published and data for the 2023-24 report is in preparation. Scoping work is in progress to include additional determinants of screening uptake, such as ethnicity, within future iterations of the Screening Inequity Report.

As the petition mentions, the current Screening Equity Strategy is coming to an end. PHW is currently developing the next version of the strategy and will be holding a workshop to inform this later this month where input from stakeholders will be welcomed.

Yours sincerely,



**Jeremy Miles AS/MS**

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Iechyd a Gofal Cymdeithasol  
Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care