



THE HON NICOLA ROXON MP
Minister for Health and Ageing

MEDIA RELEASE

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BREAST SCREENING BOOST WITH NEW EQUIPMENT

Australian women are more likely to have breast cancer detected with new state-of-the-art equipment being introduced at BreastScreen Australia services - part of a \$120 million national upgrade funded by the Rudd Government.

Thirteen priority projects totalling \$10 million will receive funding this financial year.

BreastScreen Australia invites women aged from 50 to 69 years to have free two-yearly screens for breast cancer. The program has proven highly successful - since its inception, it has been responsible for a 21 to 28 per cent fall in the number of deaths due to breast cancer.

While BreastScreen Australia is jointly funded by the Commonwealth and the state and territory governments, the Rudd Government provided a one-off capital injection in this year's federal budget to enable services in all locations to move to the latest technology.

The Rudd Government is determined to reduce the toll cancer imposes on Australians and the commitment to upgrade BreastScreen equipment is one component of the broader \$1.3 billion National Cancer Statement in the 2009-10 Budget, funded out of the Health and Hospitals Fund.

As well as providing new mammography equipment, the digital upgrade program will enable electronic transfer of mammography images between services. This will help reduce the time taken for images to be sent from remote locations to major cities for analysis. Radiologists will also be able for the first time to electronically manipulate and magnify the mammography images.

To further assist women with breast cancer the Government provided a grant of \$12 million over four years to the McGrath Foundation to recruit and train 44 breast care nurses, almost 90 per cent of whom are located in regional and remote Australia.

The breast care nurses - all of whom are now in place - will enable more women diagnosed with breast cancer to receive support from a nurse with specialist breast care skills and training.

The Rudd Government is investing \$560 million in ten best-practice regional cancer centres. The application process is still open and more information is available at www.health.gov.au/hhf

For all media inquiries, please contact the Minister's Office on 02 6277 7220.

BreastScreen services to receive the digital upgrade of mammography technology include:

BreastScreen Queensland sites:

'Bottlebrush' mobile van operating in the Nambour Region.

A new digital four-wheeled drive mobile BreastScreen Queensland van which will commence operation in the far northern region of Queensland within months.

BreastScreen New South Wales sites:

Bathurst

Illawarra

Mobile van operating in the Hunter New England region

BreastScreen Victoria sites:

North West

Monash

St Vincent's Hospital

La Trobe Hospital

East Bentleigh/Moorabbin

BreastScreen Northern Territory sites:

Territory-wide

BreastScreen Tasmania sites:

State-wide

BreastScreen Western Australia site:

Padbury

BreastScreen South Australia site:

Frome Road Clinic