

MAJOR POLICY FEATURES OF THE PROGRAM

- The National Program selects women on the basis of age alone. In line with the recommendation of the SECU report, the Program is made available for women 40 years and over, but recruitment strategies actively target those women aged 50-69 years.
- Screening is made available as widely as possible to all eligible women with the objective of rescreening them every two years.
- Screening Services are provided in an accessible, non-threatening and comfortable environment - information about the screening Program, emotional support and counselling is also provided.
- Screening and assessment is carried out at accredited centres.
- General practitioners are kept informed of the results of screening, unless a woman directs otherwise. A doctor's referral is not required for screening purposes.
- Screening employs film-screen mammography as the principal screening method for reducing breast cancer morbidity.
- All mammograms are taken by a radiographer appropriately trained in screening mammography and all mammographic films are read and reported independently by two or more readers, at least one of whom is a radiologist. Both readers must be specially trained in screening mammography and both must meet the same performance criteria.
- Women are actively involved in decisions about their management, particularly in relation to further assessment and treatment.
- The Program takes a woman from screening up to and including histological or cytological diagnosis of breast cancer. Women with histologically or cytologically confirmed breast cancer are given the option of referral to a treatment clinic specialising in the treatment of screen-detected cancer or returning to their GP for referral to a specialist breast surgeon.⁴³⁹

439. Accreditation Guidelines, *op. cit.*, pp.8-9.