

## Behind the Scenes

### Working as a radiographer for BreastScreen Tasmania

A radiographer is the person who performs your mammogram or breast X-ray. Here we speak with a BreastScreen Tasmania radiographer we'll call 'Sally' about her lifesaving work.



### What do you like about working at BreastScreen?

I really like the friendly, caring and professional atmosphere at BreastScreen Tasmania. I have been a radiographer for over ten years and have worked with BreastScreen Tasmania for about five years. What I enjoy most about my job is providing a lifesaving service to women.

### What training have you done?

I completed a four-year degree to become a radiographer and then specialised for another year to become skilled in taking mammograms which are breast X-rays.

### What happens at a breast screening appointment?



We take two images of each breast from different directions. The screening mammogram is a low dose X-ray of the breast that can find changes too small to feel.

You will receive your mammogram results in about 10 working days from your appointment.

### Does a breast screen hurt?

Some women find having a mammogram a little uncomfortable. If a woman feels any discomfort, I ask them to tell me because I can stop the procedure at any time. I always ensure the experience is as comfortable as possible. The discomfort only lasts a few moments.

## **Why should I have a breast screen?**

Breast cancer is the most common cancer affecting Tasmanian women. That's about 400 every year. Early detection is the key to surviving breast cancer. I encourage all eligible women to attend for a mammogram every two years so that small changes can be found early. Something that surprises a lot of women is that 90% of women who are diagnosed do not have a family history of breast cancer.

## **I don't have time for a breast screen?**

A lot of women who have their first mammogram are surprised at how quickly they are in and out. The whole appointment just takes about 20 minutes. This makes it easy to pop in during a lunch break or after work.

## **Who can attend BreastScreen for a free mammogram?**

If you are aged 50-74 screening has the greatest potential to prevent deaths from breast cancer. Women aged 40-49 and 75 years and older are also welcome. It's important to have a mammogram every two years.

## **What is breast awareness?**

Breast awareness is about being familiar with the normal look and feel of your own breasts so that when something changes you notice that change. Always report any changes to your doctor such as a lump or thickening, unusual pain, nipple changes or discharge or changes in the skin or size of the breast.

## **How do I make an appointment with BreastScreen Tasmania?**

It's easy to make an appointment for your free mammogram, just call **13 20 50**.