



An tSeirbhís Náisiúnta Scagthástála
National Screening Service

11 August 2020

Deputy Catherine Murphy
Catherine.Murphy@oireachtas.ie

Our Ref: GM/Communications

PQ18462/20: To ask the Minister for Health the number of patients screened as part of bowel screening in 2019 and to date in 2020, in tabular form.

Dear Deputy Murphy,

I refer to the above Parliamentary Question.

The National Screening Service's (NSS) four programmes: BreastCheck, CervicalCheck, BowelScreen and Diabetic RetinaScreen were paused in March 2020. This move was taken on public health advice due to the situation with COVID-19. The pause in screening was put in place to protect participants and staff by complying with social distancing guidelines. In addition, the HSE temporarily redeployed staff and resources to the response to COVID-19. However, clinical staff continued to work within the programmes.

For this reason you will see in the table below that the number of people screened by BowelScreen in the first half of this year is considerably less than what might be expected.

Table showing number of people screened by BowelScreen in 2019 and in the first half of 2020:

Timeline	Numbers screened
January to December 2019	122,724
January to June 2020	21,821

BowelScreen restarted issuing invites for screening to eligible people on a phased basis on 04 August 2020. Completed kits are being processed and reported by the labs. Because of COVID-19 restrictions, services are not operating at full capacity. We are managing capacity and issuing invites on that basis.

The programme expects it will be mid-December 2020 when new referrals can be seen in endoscopy. The recommencement of screening is underpinned by the assumption that there will be no worsening of the COVID-19 situation, and that restrictions will continue to ease.

I trust this information is of assistance to you, but should you have any further queries please contact me.

Fiona Murphy, Chief Executive
National Screening Service

Teach Óstaí an Rí, 200 Sráid Parnell, Baile Átha Cliath D01 A3Y8. King's Inn House, 200 Parnell Street, Dublin 1, D01 A3Y8.
☎ 353 1 865 9300 ✉ info@screeningservice.ie www.screeningservice.ie



An tSeirbhís Náisiúnta Scagthástála
National Screening Service

