

A radiographer-delivered intervention to promote early presentation of breast cancer among women as they leave the routine protection of the NHS Breast Screening Programme

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Background: Older age is a risk factor both for developing breast cancer and delayed presentation of the disease. Routine breast screening on the NHSBSP, however, ends at age 70.

Aim: Our aim was to develop a radiographer-delivered psycho-educational intervention to delivered at the point when the women leave the routine protection of the NHSBSP in order to:

- increase women's knowledge about breast symptoms and risk
- promote disclosure of symptoms to someone close
- reduce perceptions of barriers and increase intentions to seek help
- counter the interpretation by older women that their risk of breast cancer diminishes once routine screening ends.

The ultimate aim of the intervention is to reduce the proportion of older women with breast cancer who delay their presentation, and thereby save lives.

Procedure: Drawing on empirical evidence (*Ramirez et al, Lancet 1999; Grunfeld et al, British Journal of Cancer, 2002*) and psychological theory (*Bish et al, Journal Psychomatic Research 2005*) two variants of the intervention were developed: (i) a booklet and (ii) a ten-minute, radiographer-delivered interview plus the booklet.

Results: Both variants of the intervention have been piloted within the NHS Breast Screening Programme and shown to be acceptable and feasible to women and the Programme.

Conclusion: A randomised controlled trial is **required** to assess the effect of the intervention on delayed presentation and survival.

References: (1) Ramirez A et al (1999) Factors predicting delayed presentation of symptomatic breast cancer: A systematic review. *Lancet* **353**: 1127-31; (2) Grunfeld E et al (2002). Women's knowledge and beliefs regarding breast cancer. *British Journal of Cancer* **86**: 1373-78; (3) Bish A et al (2005) Understanding why women delay in seeking help for breast cancer symptoms. *Journal of Psychosomatic Research* **58**: 301-326