

DUBLIN NORTH EAST

Beaumont Hospital, Beaumont Road, Dublin 9.
Mater Misericordiae Hospital, Eccles Street, Dublin 7

DUBLIN MID LEINSTER

St James Hospital, James's Street, Dublin 8.
St Vincents University Hospital, Elm Park, Dublin 4.

HSE SOUTH

Cork University Hospital, Wilton, Cork.
Waterford Regional Hospital, Dunmore Road,
Waterford.

HSE WEST

Limerick Regional Hospital, Dooradoyle, Limerick.
University College Hospital, Newcastle Road,
Galway (with additional outreach service delivery in
Letterkenny).

The potential to meet the needs of cancer patients in Donegal through North-South Initiatives, such as the Belfast Radiation Oncology Service, Belfast City Hospital, will be optimised and fully facilitated.

Europa Donna Ireland acknowledge the concerns of a number of local community groups, but are convinced that patients with breast cancer have a much better chance of survival if treated in specialist centres.

Issues relating to travel to these centres are also of real concern and Europa Donna Ireland is calling for an urgent review of the common expenses and issues encountered by patients travelling for breast cancer treatment.

It is imperative that the HSE effectively involves local communities, charities and advocacy groups in the planning and monitoring of the implementation process. The need for education and public awareness around the importance of centralising breast cancer services is also paramount to successful implementation.

What everyone needs to know about Breast Cancer

The ***Irish Breast Cancer Charter***, developed by Europa Donna Ireland sets out 23 principles which centres should meet and which women should be entitled to.

>>To get a copy and more information on risk factors and facts and figures on Breast Cancer in Ireland, visit our website:

www.europadonna.ie

Any Queries?

We hope that this information is helpful, but if you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact us at:

Europa Donna Ireland
P.O. Box 6602
Dublin 8
Tel/Fax: 01 4960198
e-mail: edi@iol.ie

Europa Donna Ireland: The Irish Breast Cancer Campaign

One of 40 member countries of EUROPA DONNA
- The European Breast Cancer Coalition.

Our vision

That women of all ages in Ireland will know what they can and should expect in terms of risk, diagnosis, treatment, recovery and support in order to improve early detection rates and survival rates.

Our mission

To bring the voice of the woman with experience of breast cancer

- To raising awareness of the need for screening and access for all women to best quality specialist centres, and
- To campaign for evidence-based, best practice health policy changes to ensure this happens.

www.europadonnaireland.ie

Specialist Breast Centres

Working for better
breast cancer
services nationwide



Specialist Breast Cancer Centres

In September 2007, The Health Services Executive announced the location of 8 designated Specialist Cancer Centres in Ireland and confirmed that these centres will provide treatment for all forms of cancer, involving diagnostic, surgical, medical (systemic) and radiation oncology services.

The HSE further confirmed that the treatment of symptomatic breast disease will be best delivered at all of the 8 designated Specialist Cancer Centres. Transition of breast cancer services from current settings will occur on a planned basis, with patients reassured that each transfer will be carried out in a planned manner.

[The following 8 centres have been designated >](#)

What happens next?

The majority of women referred to a Specialist Breast Centre do **NOT** have Breast Cancer. However, if a woman is diagnosed with Breast Cancer, then her treatment programme is planned at a Multidisciplinary Conference.

Multidisciplinary Teams have special expertise and training in breast cancer and are made up of

Breast Surgeons who specialise in breast diseases.

Radiologists who specialise in the study of X-Rays, including mammograms and ultra-sound scans.

Pathologists who examine breast tissue.

Breast Care Nurses who specialise in breast care.

Medical Oncologists specialising in the treatment of cancer by drug therapy (Chemotherapy).

Radiation Oncologists specialising in the treatment of cancer with radiation therapy.

Following the conference you will meet with the appropriate specialists to discuss your individual treatment plan. This may include a **Plastic Surgeon** if you need and wish to discuss reconstruction.

Can I bring someone with me?

Yes, please feel free to bring someone with you; partners, family members or friends are welcome.

What can I expect at these Centres?

Whatever your symptoms are you may have some or all of the following investigations. Together these are known as



Triple Assessment

Clinical Examination This involves the surgeon or a member of his/her team taking a history of your symptoms and carrying out an examination of your breasts and underarm area.

Radiology This involves a mammogram (X-ray examination of the breast) and maybe an ultra-sound scan of your breast.

Breast Tissue Sampling This involves a doctor using a needle to remove a small sample of breast tissue for examination under a microscope.

How soon will I know the results?

Results of the test may be available on the same day or may require a return visit to the clinic within two weeks.

What is a Specialist Breast Centre?

A Specialist Breast Centre offers specialist services to women who have been referred by their doctors. International research has shown that diagnosis and treatment in specialised centres improve survival rates for women diagnosed with breast cancer by 25 to 30%. The centres must see a large number of patients in order that personnel maintain expertise. All doctors and nurses in specialist centres have specific training in dealing with breast disease. National Quality Assurance Standards have been developed and HIQA (Health Information and Quality Authority) will be accrediting centres based on these standards.

Where are these Centres located?

Check with your doctor where the nearest Specialist Breast Centre is located. You may also contact us or check our website. The centres are usually separate areas within hospitals and the people you meet there will all have special expertise in breast cancer.

Why would I need to go to a Specialist Breast Centre?

If you have a problem with one or both of your breasts go to your doctor.

If you or your doctor are still concerned then your doctor should refer you to a Specialist Breast Centre. Problems that require urgent attention include a lump or thickening in the breast, changes in the surface of the breast including dimpling, orange peel appearance or any unusual change in size or texture, changes to the nipple such as recent inverted nipple, or discharge, especially if bloodstained.