



Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-668  
Ein cyf/Our ref RE/05426/16

Mike Hedges AM  
Chair - Petitions Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
Ty Hywel  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

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26 September 2016

Dear Mike,

Thank you for your letter regarding petition P-04-668 and the estimated cost of introducing screening for ovarian cancer in Wales using the CA125 blood test.

I am not in a position to provide you with an estimated cost for introducing screening for ovarian cancer in Wales using the CA125 blood test.

A full economic evaluation would only be undertaken if there was evidence that an asymptomatic population screening programme offered improved outcomes to women, and this is not the case.

Any economic evaluation would normally be commissioned from expert advisors by the UK National Screening Committee (UK NSC), which provides impartial advice to UK Health Ministers.

The economic evaluation of a programme to introduce screening for ovarian cancer in Wales using the CA125 blood test would be extremely complex. It would need to assess the opportunity costs of the programme against the expenditure on medical care as a whole, taking into account factors such as the frequency of screening test, the age cohort to be screened, diagnosis and treatment, administration, quality assurance measures and training needs.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

The UK NSC reviews conditions against set criteria in order to appraise the viability, effectiveness and appropriateness of a population screening programme. There are 20 points to the established criteria covering the condition, the test, the intervention, the screening programme and implementation. A summary of the criteria can be found on the UK NSC website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/evidence-review-criteria-national-screening-programmes/criteria-for-appraising-the-viability-effectiveness-and-appropriateness-of-a-screening-programme>

The UK NSC has recently reviewed its recommendation about ovarian cancer screening and their existing recommendation remains for no population screening at this stage but this decision will be reviewed if new evidence becomes available. The UK NSC requires the highest-quality evidence about population benefits before a new programme is recommended. This is vitally important to ensure screening programmes do more good than harm and to ensure NHS funding and staff resources are used in the most effective way possible.



**Rebecca Evans AC/AM**

Gweinidog Iechyd y Cyhoedd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol  
Minister for Social Services and Public Health