

Breast screening and Victorian women with an intellectual disability

health

Fact sheet issued October 2011

Women with an intellectual disability are less likely to be screened for breast cancer

According to the *Victorian Population Health Survey of People with an Intellectual Disability 2009* (VPHS-ID 2009) only 55.2 per cent of women with an intellectual disability were reported to have had a mammogram in the past two years. This is much lower than women from the general Victorian population (75.9 per cent).

How often should breast screening occur?

Every two years all women on the electoral roll aged between 50 and 69 years are offered free screening for breast cancer (breast x-ray). It should be noted that women with an intellectual disability who are not on the electoral roll miss out on this invitation to participate.

BreastScreen Australia recommends a screening mammogram once every two years for women aged 50–69 years. Women aged 40–49 years and 70 years and over are also able to be screened.

Linking in to breast screening

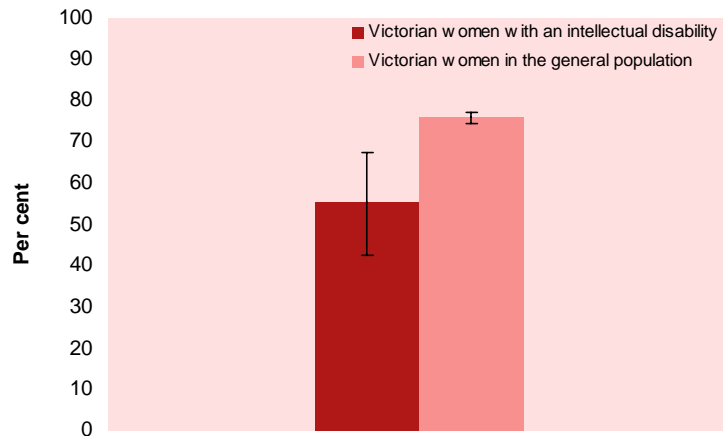
For a woman with an intellectual disability, her GP may suggest breast screening as part of an annual health review. Alternatively the woman or her support network can organise a free screening mammogram by phoning 13 20 50 (for the cost of a local call). BreastScreen is free and a doctor's referral is not required.

BreastScreen Victoria services

If a woman with an intellectual disability has not been screened, or if there have been difficulties with screening, BreastScreen Victoria can offer advice and resources to assist.

BreastScreen Victoria provides breast x-ray screening at over 40 centres and 16 mobile sites throughout metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria.

Figure: Breast screening and Victorian women



For further information

The VPHS-ID 2009 is a statewide survey the Department of Health undertook to collect information on the health and wellbeing of people with an intellectual disability in Victoria. This is the first time the survey has been carried out in Victoria.

The full report of the VPHS-ID 2009 is available at:
<http://www.health.vic.gov.au/healthstatus/>

Further information about BreastScreen Victoria can be found at: <http://www.breastscreen.org.au/>

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