

How many women are diagnosed with Gynaecological cancer at the moment?

- Currently, around 1,000 women a year are diagnosed with one of the five gynaecological cancers each year in New Zealand.

How many women die from Gynaecological cancer at the moment?

- Currently, around 475 women are lost to gynaecological cancer each year in New Zealand.

How many more tests are needed?

- Because too many women aren't aware of the symptoms of gynaecological cancer, and so aren't presenting for tests, we simply don't know the size of the unmet need. That's why our first priority is to increase awareness.
- The funding provided will ensure that the additional demand for tests can be met. If more women are getting tested, and diagnosed earlier, then we will consider this policy a success.

Is this enough?

- It's not about the amount of money, it's about spending it right. We know that the evidence says that awareness is an issue and so that's the issue we want to address.

What kind of tests will be funded?

- There are five different kinds of gynaecological cancer and there are various different tests that can be used for diagnosis. For ovarian cancer this includes ultrasound and the CA-125 blood test.
- We don't want to pre-empt the development of updated clinical guidelines by determining what kinds of tests are needed, or how many more women will be receiving them, but we do want to ensure that every woman has timely access to the tests they need.

How many more women will be tested as a result of this?

- It's hard to say because the issue is that too many women are going untested and undiagnosed at the moment.
- The important thing is that women are aware of the symptoms of gynaecological cancer, that they are consulting their GPs in a timely manner, and that where appropriate GPs are referring women for testing.
- National will ensure that the money for increased testing is available, as this is ultimately about saving lives.

How many more tests will you fund with the \$12m?

- We want to ensure that every women who needs a test can get one. We plan to put aside \$3m each year which, depending on the type of test, will pay for approximately 10,000 additional tests. We expect this to be more than sufficient, but if this funding level needs to be reviewed we will do so.
- The important thing is that when women come forward with symptoms, and a GP believes a test is appropriate, there is no barrier to access.

Why are you funding access to clinical trials?

- Clinical trials are essential to improving treatments and ultimately discovering cures to gynaecological cancers.
- More access to clinical trials would also allow more New Zealand women to gain earlier access to new and promising treatments specific to their cancer type.
- Access to these trials is currently limited for New Zealand women. For example, according to the New Zealand Gynaecological Cancer Foundation, since 2005 Australian women have had access to 139 ovarian cancer clinical trials compared to just 22 in New Zealand.
- The Australian Government has recently announced a further AUD \$15 million in funding for gynaecological clinical trials (part of an overall funding package of AUD \$30 million).
- We are open to the best way to increase access for New Zealand women to clinical trials, which could either involve supporting more trials here in New Zealand, or working in collaboration with Australia.

How will the funding be split?

- The \$4m for awareness funding will be one of to raise awareness. At the end of four years, this will be reviewed to determine if the campaign has achieved its goals, and what further funding, if any, will be required.
- The \$12m for increased testing will be at \$3m a year and will be continuous going forward to fund increased demand for testing resulting from the awareness campaigns.
- The \$4m for increasing access to clinical trials will be reviewed after four years.

How will the guidelines be funded?

- The guidelines will be developed from existing policy resource baselines within the Ministry and will not require separate funding.

Why will we introduce the HPV self-test?

- The Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) causes almost all cervical cancers and cervical cancer is preventable. New Zealand has delayed the introduction of HPV testing as a primary test for several years. The current government is knowingly offering women an inferior test and there is no decision on when this will change.
- Testing for the HPV virus is now a more effective screening test to prevent cervical cancer than the current screen of cervical cytology (pap smear).

When will we introduce the HPV self-test?

- The current Government has already delayed the introduction of the HPV self-test for 3 years until 2021, and has now delayed it again.
- National commits to transitioning to the HPV self-test in our first term.