



The Future of Cancer in Ireland

Cancer screening and early diagnosis

Dr Alan Smith
21 September 2023



An tSeirbhís Náisiúnta Scagthástála
National Screening Service





Summary

- The past – some context
- The future - ????????????
- The present – how are we doing



Some context.....



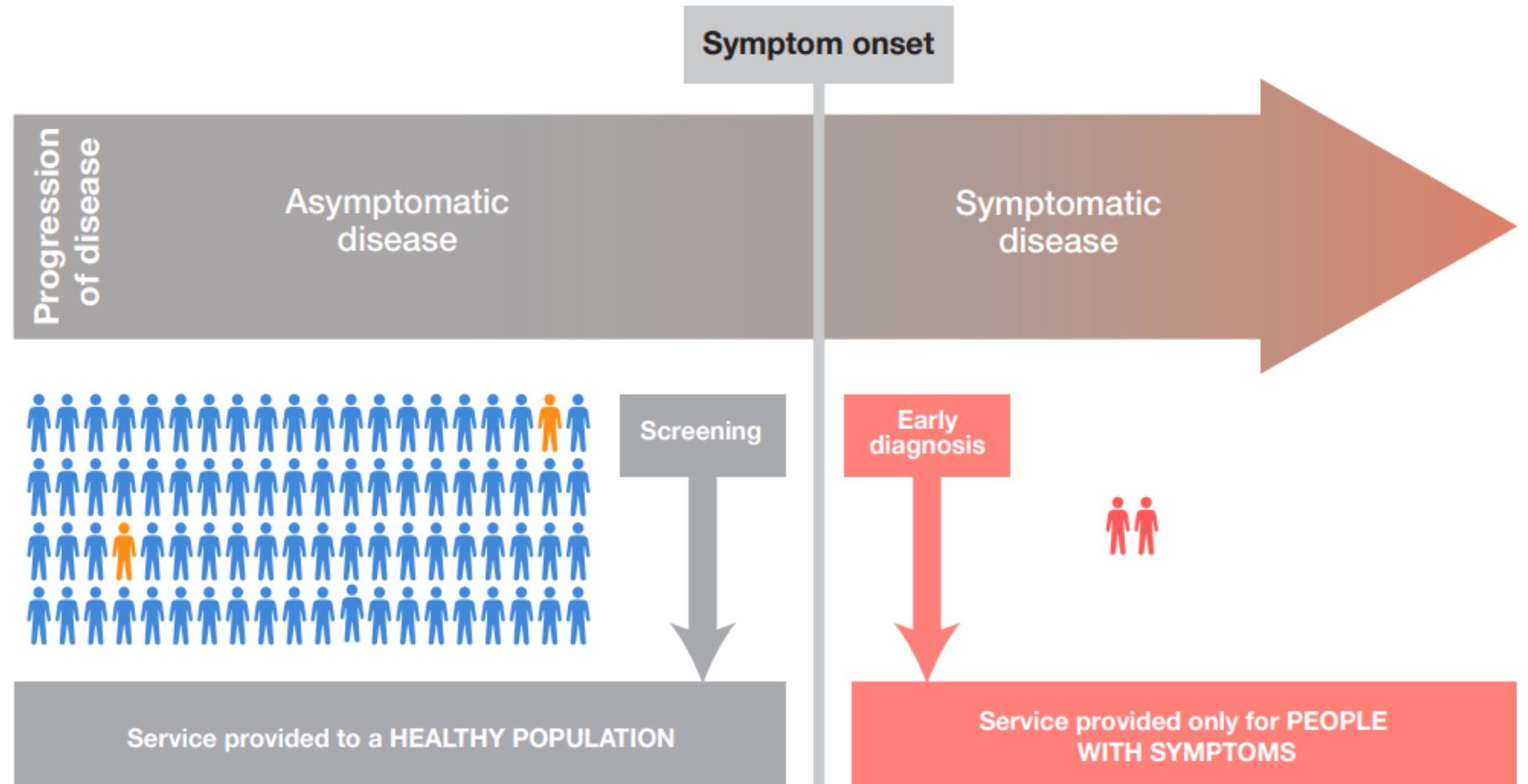
An tSeirbhís Náisiúnta Scagthástála
National Screening Service



Where does screening sit in disease progression.....

Screening is popular

“early detection results in cure”





Screening can do no wrong.....

- Endorsed by celebrities
- Politicians use it to get votes
- Promoted by cancer charities & advocacy groups

“A stitch in time saves nine”

“An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure”

Three quarters of the US population would choose a total body CT scan over
\$1000 gift voucher

Schwartz, JAMA 2004;291:71

HF Add a pinch of a crisis and a dash of a headline...

Smear test waiting list at three months

By MARY SMITHWICK
Politics Editor

SOME Cork women are still

ported on within two weeks. Routine smears are reported on within six weeks.

women were waiting up to nine months for the results of smear tests. That backlog was sent to a laboratory in "Droghda" in the UK to be

LONG WAIT IS KILLING WOMEN

■ CAITRIONA GAFFNEY

THE long wait for cervical smear test results is

of national screening programmes have led to a significant decline in cervical cancer mortality rates. Health Minister Mary Harney

Woman forced to wait seven months for smear test results

A WOMAN with a family history of cervical cancer by Mary Regan

Cancer smear test results delayed up to six months

By MARIE KIERANS

WOMEN in Louth and Meath are having to wait for up to six months for the

that is if our government are serious about equality and equity in our society. 'Medical screening in

Nine months of hell for Cork mum Trish

By EDEL O'CONNELL

Health Correspondent

A CORK mother with a previous

has announced it is to send hundreds of smear tests to the US this month to clear a backlog which it describes as an urgent

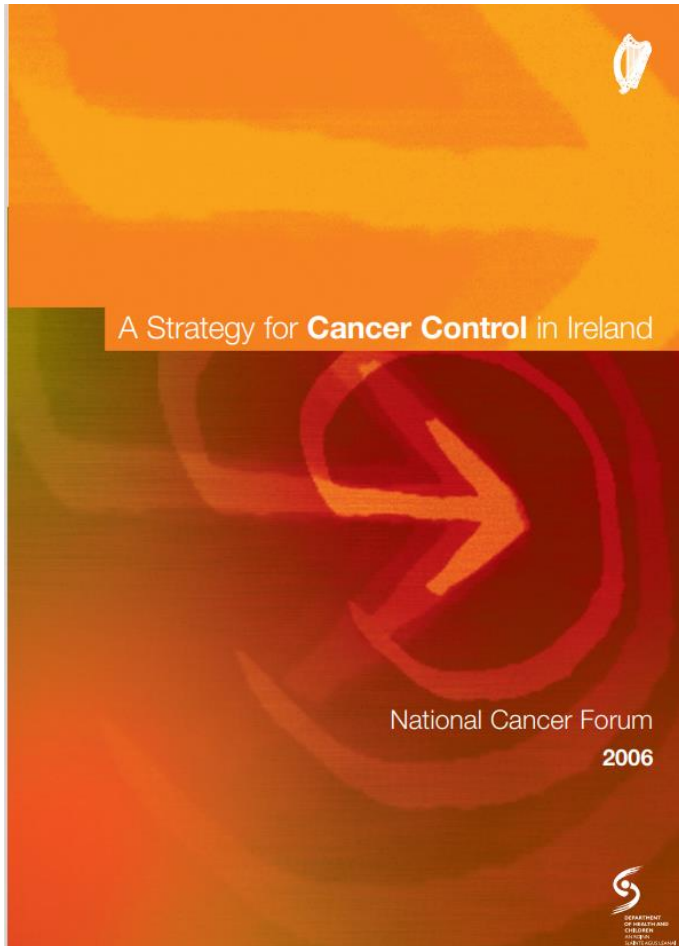
O'Rourke criticises delay in smear test results

ALISON HEAL

Delays in getting results from cervical smear tests have been criticised by the Dáil deputy, and former health minister Mary



...you get a policy tipping point (2006)



Breast screening should be extended to include all women aged between 50 and 69.

The national roll-out of the Irish Cervical Screening Programme should be completed as quickly as possible.

A colorectal cancer programme should be established

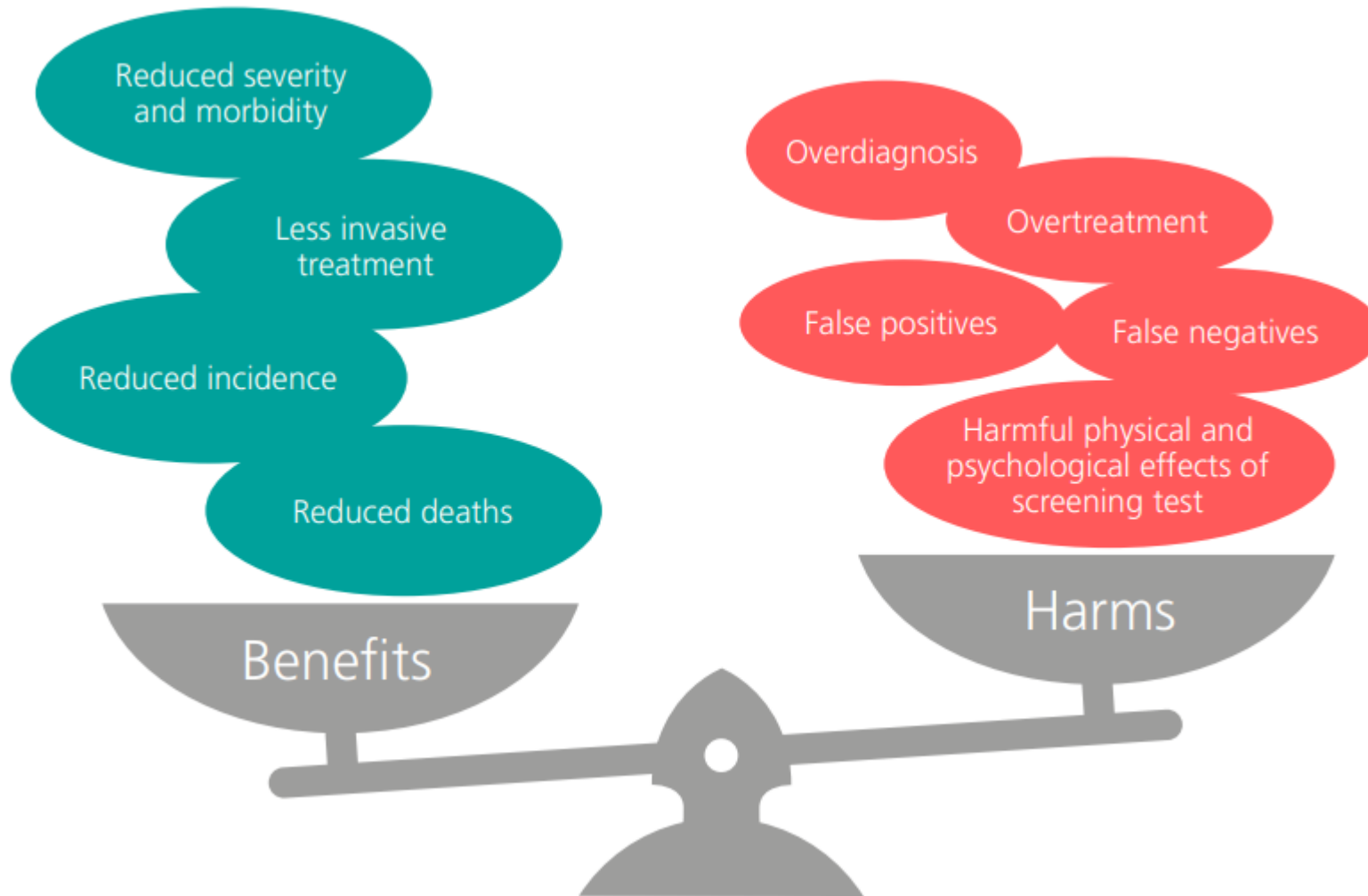


Ireland's National Cancer Screening Programmes





Screening....sure what's the harm?



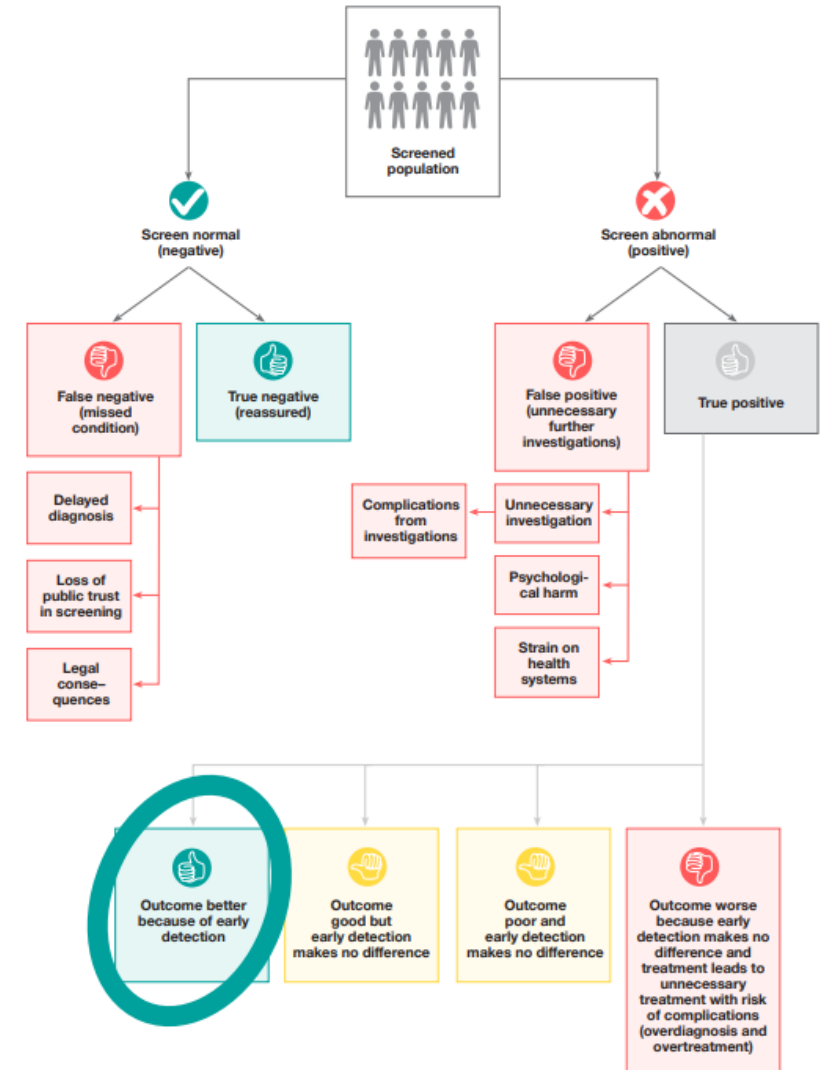


Medicine has become the art of managing extreme complexity

(Atul Gawande)



SPORTSFILE 3 February 2017, Wayne Piv McManus kicks the ball to start the game. (Image: NYT, Christian CA, Hollier's Express, Cedar Park, Dublin, Premier credit: David White) / SPORTSFILE





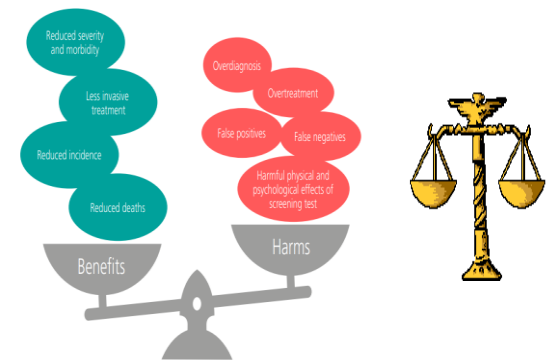
The future....



An tSeirbhís Náisiúnta Scagthástála
National Screening Service

HF From 'one size fits all' to 'precision cancer prevention'

- Understanding the population and risk-based associations with cancer
 - behaviour, socioeconomic, epidemiology
- Understanding the mechanisms of tumorigenesis
 - genetics, epigenetics, signalling, tumour microenvironment, immune factors
- Leveraging Artificial Intelligence





Creating a high-performance culture in screening

- A team sport
- Past events are reviewed, and changes implemented
- Collect, analyse and report on performance
- Top managers/leaders create a reporting culture
- Top managers/leaders create a safe environment
- Top management/leadership is proactive
 - Seeks out error
 - Eliminates error producing factors
 - Empowers and devolves responsibility
- And when the ball is dropped.....
 - Acknowledge what happened
 - Apologise for what happened
 - Learn the lesson





The elephant in the room

- The level of litigation in screening in Ireland is unprecedented with no equivalent anywhere else in the world.
- The **legal framework in Ireland is simply not fit for purpose** when it comes to addressing legal liability for errors in cancer screening programmes.

“....it should be possible to make a claim for negligence with respect to cervical screening, but the standards applied by courts in assessing such claims should accommodate and reflect the reality of cervical screening.....the determination of whether the particular screening error was serious enough to be categorized as negligent and/or serious enough to entitle the participant to compensation needs to consider the inherent limitations of cervical screening (IARC 2023)”.

- The adverse impact on patients, their families and healthcare staff can be significant and prolonged
 - We need to acknowledge and speak about the impact on healthcare staff



How to eat the elephant....one bite at a time

1. Pre-action protocols

2. Case management rules

- would bring considerable benefit and relief to participants
- early resolution of the dispute and the preservation of the therapeutic doctor patient relationship.
- The commencement of the new Part 2A of the Civil Liability and Courts Act, 2004 is long overdue



The present....how are we doing



An tSeirbhís Náisiúnta Scagthástála
National Screening Service



Ireland's National Cancer Screening Programmes



Every two years, we invite **584,000** women aged 50-69 for screening

We aim to screen **70%** of the eligible women

4 BreastCheck units with 287 staff consisting of nursing, medical, health and social care, patient and client care and admin personnel

24 mobile units



Every three to five years, we invite **1,330,000** women and people with a cervix aged 25-65 screening

We aim to screen **80%** of the eligible population

15 Colposcopy units providing colposcopies

2 Screening labs and

12 Histopathology labs



Every two years, we invite **521,000** men and women aged 60-69 for screening

We aim to screen **50%** of the eligible population

1 screening lab providing FIT kit analysis

15 participating endoscopy units providing colonoscopies

8 histopathology labs

8 National Cancer Centres providing surgery



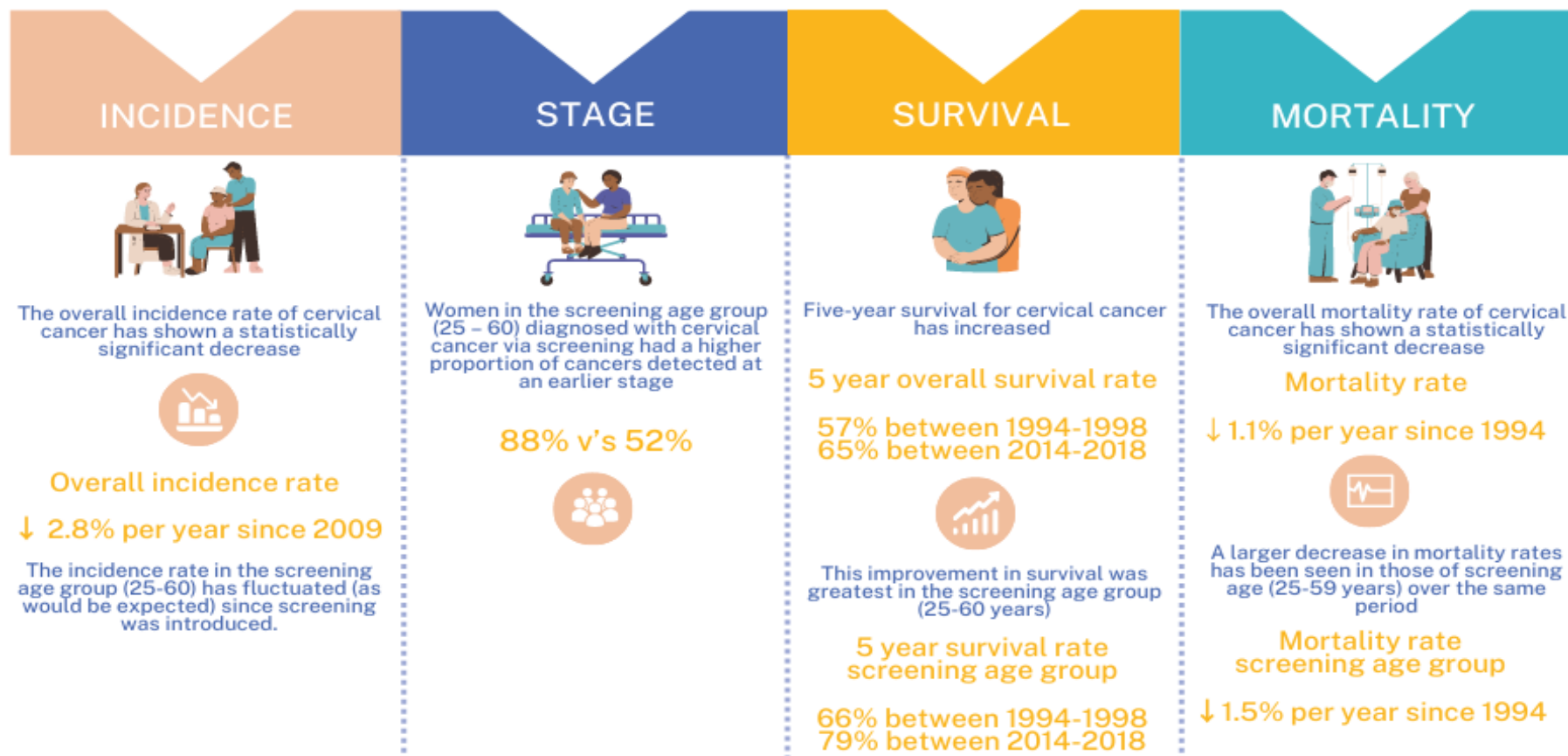
NCRI key findings: cervical cancer



NATIONAL TRENDS FOR CANCERS WITH POPULATION-BASED SCREENING PROGRAMMES IN IRELAND 1994-2019

KEY FINDINGS: CERVICAL CANCER

Women aged 25 - 65 are eligible for free cervical screening tests via **CervicalCheck**





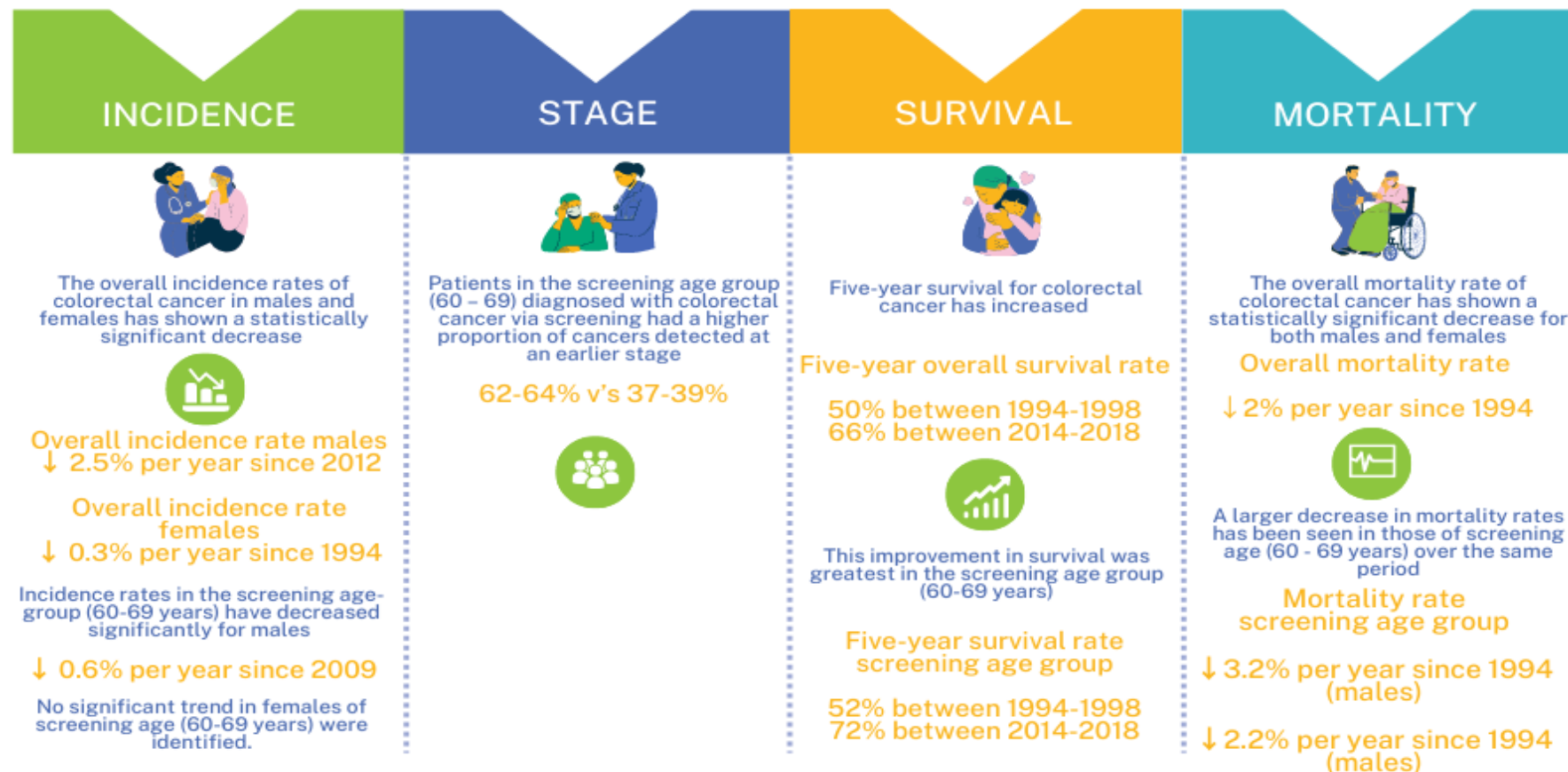
NCRI key findings: colorectal cancer



NATIONAL TRENDS FOR CANCERS WITH POPULATION-BASED SCREENING PROGRAMMES IN IRELAND 1994-2019

KEY FINDINGS: COLORECTAL CANCER

Women and men aged 60-69 are eligible for screening as part of BowelScreen every two years



FULL REPORT ON: www.ncri.ie/sites/ncri/files/pubs/Trendsreport_breast_cervical_colorectal_22092022.pdf



NCRI key findings: breast cancer



NATIONAL TRENDS FOR CANCERS WITH POPULATION-BASED SCREENING PROGRAMMES IN IRELAND 1994-2019

KEY FINDINGS : BREAST CANCER

BreastCheck invites women aged 50-69 for breast screening every two years

STAGE



The proportion of breast cancers diagnosed at the earliest stage has significantly increased in all age groups (screening and pre and post screening age groups)



This increase was greatest in the screening population



Women in the screening age group diagnosed with breast cancer via screening had a higher proportion of cancers detected at a stage 1

93% v's 74%

SURVIVAL



Five-year survival for breast cancer has increased

5 year survival overall

72% in 1994-1998
88% in 2014-2018



This improvement in survival was greatest in the screening age group (50-69 years)

5 year survival screening age group

74% in 1994-1998
94% in 2014-2018

MORTALITY



The overall mortality rate of female breast cancer has shown a statistically significant decrease

Mortality Rate

↓ 1.8% per year since 1994



A significant decrease in mortality rates has been seen in those of screening age (50-69 years) and the pre-screening group (<50 years) over the same period

Mortality rate screening age group

↓ 2.8% per year since 1994

Mortality rate pre-screening age group

↓ 2.7% per year since 1994

FULL REPORT ON: www.ncri.ie/sites/ncri/files/pubs/Trendsreport_breast_cervical_colorectal_22092022.pdf



And the final word.....our programme participants

- National Screening Service is implementing a digital **Patient Report Experience Measures (PREMs)** Programme across our cancer screening programmes
 - Response rate was **42% - 49%**
 - Eighty-nine percent (**89%**) of respondents rated BowelScreen as '**Good**' or '**very good**'
 - BowelScreen participants reported high levels of satisfaction with the programme
 - achieving a **net promoter score (NPS)** of **75%**



World leaders

- Netflix's NPS is 68, well above their competition;
- Starbucks' NPS is a decent 77;
- Amazon's NPS is a pretty high one at 62;
- Airbnb's NPS is quite strong at 74;
- Tesla's NPS is an astounding 96.