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Tuesday 30 October, 2012

CANCER RESEARCH UK'S RESPONSE TO THE INDEPENDENT BREAST SCREENING REVIEW PANEL RESULTS

Dr Harpal Kumar, chief executive of Cancer Research UK, said: "The independent review shows screening saves lives.

"Screening remains one of the best ways to spot the very early signs of breast cancer, at a stage when treatment is most likely to be successful.

"Yet, as the review shows, some cancers will be diagnosed and treated that would never have caused any harm. Clearly, everyone wants to minimise this.

"But because we can't yet tell which cancers are harmful and which are not, we cannot predict what will happen in an individual woman's case.

"We think it's vitally important for women to have access to clear information about breast screening, the balance of benefits and harms and the fact that they could be diagnosed with and treated for a cancer that might not cause them harm.



“So, on balance, taking all the evidence into account, Cancer Research UK recommends that women go for breast screening when invited.

“Research is advancing at pace and we hope that in the future there will be a number of new techniques that we can use alongside the screening programme to make it more sophisticated and reduce the numbers of women having unnecessary treatment.

“Until this is possible, we’d recommend women who have had something unusual picked up through screening to seek full advice and discuss all possible options with their breast cancer specialist team.

“We urge the screening programme to update the breast screening information leaflet in the light of the findings of the independent review.”

- ENDS-

For media enquiries please contact the Cancer Research UK press office on 0203 469 8300 or, out-of-hours, the duty press officer on 07050 264 059.

Cancer Research UK nurses are available for women to speak to 9-5pm on freephone: 0808 800 4040

Please click on the link below to access the following information;



- **Cancer Research UK infographic:** ‘Breast screening: what you need to know’
- **Cancer Research UK science information blog:** ‘How can we improve breast cancer screening’
- **Lancet press release:** Independent panel concludes that breast cancer screening reduces deaths, but overdiagnoses
- **Independent Breast Screening Review press release:** Screening reduces breast cancer deaths – at the cost of overdiagnosis
- **Lancet paper:** The benefits and harms of breast cancer screening: an independent review. Marmot et al. The Lancet Oncology. doi.org/10.1016/PII
- **Full Independent Screening Panel report:** The benefits and harms of breast cancer screening: An Independent Review
- **Cancer Research UK video**
- **Cancer Research UK case study profiles**

Embargoed press material site

<http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/cancer-info/news/pressoffice/securepressarea/>

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About Cancer Research UK

- Cancer Research UK is the world’s leading cancer charity dedicated to saving lives through research



- The charity's pioneering work into the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of cancer has helped save millions of lives.
- Cancer Research UK receives no government funding for its life-saving research. Every step it makes towards beating cancer relies on every pound donated.
- Cancer Research UK has been at the heart of the progress that has already seen survival rates in the UK double in the last forty years.
- Cancer Research UK supports research into all aspects of cancer through the work of over 4,000 scientists, doctors and nurses.
- Together with its partners and supporters, Cancer Research UK's vision is to bring forward the day when all cancers are cured.

For further information about Cancer Research UK's work or to find out how to support the charity, please call 0300 123 1861 or visit www.cancerresearchuk.org. Follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#)