

Our ref: TO00000542287

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Mr Doug Gray  
3 East Camps Bay  
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Torpoint  
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5 October 2010

Dear Mr Gray,

Thank you for your letter of 13 September to Andrew Lansley about a national screening programme for prostate cancer. I have been asked to reply on Mr Lansley's behalf.

I note your concerns about the UK National Screening Committee's (UKNSC's) provisional conclusion regarding whether there should be a national screening programme for prostate cancer in the UK.

I also note the statistics you have provided on the complications that occur per death for prostate cancer compared to breast cancer. However, as you are aware, it is the role of the UKNSC to advise ministers in the four countries in the UK on the suitability of screening programmes based on best evidence and using internationally recognised criteria in assessing that evidence. Specific concerns about the UKNSC's consideration of evidence would be best raised directly with that organisation. I include the contact details for your convenience:

UK National Screening Committee  
Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust  
Mint Wing, Centre Block G  
South Wharf Road  
London W2 1NY

Telephone: 020 33126927

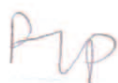
Website: [www.screening.nhs.uk](http://www.screening.nhs.uk)

Nonetheless, I can assure you that the Department of Health is actively engaged in the UKNSC's work. The Department, as sponsor for the UKNSC, is

responsible for ensuring that it gives clear policy advice on screening to ministers and the NHS in all four countries in the UK. It provides the secretariat for the UKNSC and is responsible for ensuring that due process is followed and full account is taken of all the evidence. The terms of reference and membership of the UKNSC is regularly reviewed to ensure that it is fit for purpose to deliver on its objectives. Representatives from the Department regularly attend UKNSC meetings and are involved in policy discussions with the UKNSC between meetings.

I hope this reply is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'RVP', is positioned above the typed name.

Rahul Patel  
Customer Service Centre