

National Bowel Cancer Screening Program (NBCSP)

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National Bowel Cancer Screening Program (NBCSP)

Identifying and definitional attributes

Item type: Data Source

METEOR identifier: 394277

Description: The National Bowel Cancer Screening Program (NBCSP) began in 2006. It aims to reduce morbidity and mortality from bowel cancer by actively recruiting and screening the eligible target population for early detection or prevention of the disease. In 2014, the Australian Government announced that the program would be expanded to offer free 2-yearly screening for all Australians aged 50–74.

The target population list is compiled from those who were registered as an Australian citizen or migrant in the Medicare enrolment file, or were registered with a Department of Veterans' Affairs gold card. A phased roll-out was used with different age groups being invited to screen across different years (as shown in the following table). Two-yearly screening (with all relevant age groups included) was fully rolled out from 2020.

NBCSP phases and target populations

Phase	Start date	End date	Target ages (years)
1	7 August 2006	30 June 2008	55 and 65
2	1 July 2008	30 June 2011(a)	50, 55 and 65
2(b)	1 July 2011	30 June 2013	50, 55 and 65
3	1 July 2013	Ongoing	50, 55, 60 and 65
4	1 January 2015		50, 55, 60, 65, 70 and 74
4	1 January 2016		50, 55, 60, 64, 65, 70, 72 and 74
4	1 January 2017		50, 54, 55, 58, 60, 64, 68, 70, 72 and 74
4	1 January 2018		50, 54, 58, 60, 62, 64, 66, 68, 70, 72 and 74
4	1 January 2019		50, 52, 54, 56, 58, 60, 62, 64, 66, 68, 70, 72 and 74

(a) Eligible birth dates, and thus invitations, ended on 31 December 2010.

(b) Ongoing NBCSP funding commenced.

Note: The eligible population for all Phase 2 and 3 start dates incorporates all those turning the target ages from 1 January of that year onwards.

Eligible Australians are sent an invitation to complete a free immunochemical faecal occult blood test (iFOBT) in the privacy of their own home and mail it to a pathology laboratory for analysis. Participants with a positive iFOBT result will be advised to discuss the result with their doctor, who will generally refer them for further investigations, usually a colonoscopy.

Link to data source: <http://www.cancerscreening.gov.au/internet/screening/publishing.nsf/Content/bowel-screening-1>

Collection and usage attributes

Frequency: 6-monthly (register snapshot)

Source and reference attributes

Data custodian: Prior to 1 November 2019, Medicare Australia (Medicare Australia merged with the Department of Human Services in 2011). From 1 November 2019, the Department of Health and Aged Care.

Data custodian contact details: Department of Health and Aged Care, GPO Box 9848, Canberra ACT 2601, Australia