

# Protocol: Health technology assessment of the introduction of population-based screening for familial hypercholesterolemia in children

## What is familial hypercholesterolemia?

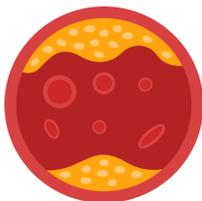
Familial hypercholesterolemia (FH) is an inherited condition that causes very high lifelong levels of total cholesterol, and specifically, low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol.

High levels of LDL cholesterol can lead to the development of atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease, which includes coronary artery disease, heart attack, stroke, and peripheral artery disease.

## How could screening help?

Without screening, FH is often only diagnosed opportunistically (such as from routine blood tests) or after a person experiences a cardiovascular event.

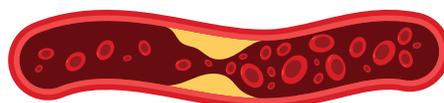
Screening for FH in children may enable earlier detection and management of FH.



## What are we doing?

We are reviewing international practice on screening for FH in children.

We are also looking at how common FH is in Ireland, how effective early intervention is, and the ethical considerations associated with this type of screening.



## Why are we carrying out this review?

The National Screening Advisory Committee requested this health technology assessment to inform their recommendation to the Minister for Health on whether or not to introduce population-based screening for FH in children.

## What are we publishing today?

Today we are publishing our protocol, which explains what we are assessing and how we are going to carry out our review.

This will be followed by a report summarising the findings which we expect to publish later this year.