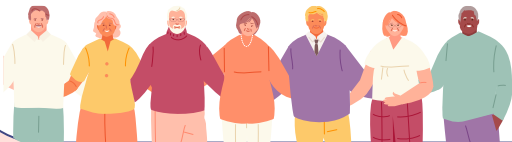


# Health technology assessment of extending BowelScreen to those aged 50 to 54 years

## Why did we complete this assessment?

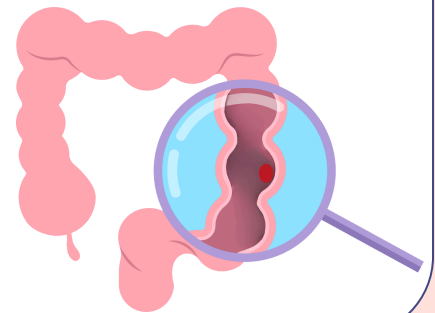
This assessment was requested by the National Screening Advisory Committee (NSAC) to provide evidence-based advice to inform a recommendation on the extension of the BowelScreen programme to those aged 50 to 54 years.



## What is BowelScreen?

BowelScreen is a screening programme for bowel cancer (colon or rectal cancer) that was launched in 2012 and currently invites those aged 57 to 71 for screening every two years.

The programme is already planning to expand to those aged 55 to 74.



## How is bowel cancer screened for in Ireland?

Blood in a person's poo could be a sign of bowel cancer. Screening for bowel cancer involves a person using a home test kit (called a 'FIT') and sending a small sample of poo (stool sample) to a lab for testing. The sample is examined in the lab and if the amount of blood is over a certain level, the person will be invited for further tests.



## Is bowel cancer common?

In Ireland, bowel cancer is the second most common cancer in men and the third most common in women. Around 2,750 people are diagnosed with bowel cancer in Ireland each year.

Bowel cancer is also the third leading cause of cancer death in Ireland. Around 1,000 people in Ireland die from bowel cancer each year.

## What did we find?

We found consistent evidence that screening from the age of 50 reduces colorectal cancer mortality compared to no screening. The assessment also found that screening from the age of 50 is likely to be cost effective compared to screening from the age of 55.

However, existing capacity issues within the services required for bowel screening should be addressed if BowelScreen is expanded to include those aged 50 to 54.