

**Sent on behalf of**  
**Dr. Samantha Fienberg, Dr. Anna Chiarelli, Dr. Jonathan Isenberg,**  
**Judy Linton and Dr. Chris Simpson**

Dear colleagues,

Ontario Health (Cancer Care Ontario) is pleased to announce that on **October 8, 2024**, the Ontario Breast Screening Program (OBSP) will be expanding to offer breast cancer screening to people ages 40 to 49. As part of expansion, people ages 40 to 49 will be able to self-refer to the program.

Regular screening can find cancer early when treatment has a better chance of working. This expansion will provide people ages 40 to 49 with access to high quality breast cancer screening and the benefits of participating in an organized screening program (e.g., mailed normal result letters). In addition, eligible Ontarians ages 40 to 49 will be able to self-refer to any OBSP screening location, which supports access to screening for people without a family doctor or nurse practitioner.

The OBSP eligibility criteria and screening recommendations for people ages 40 to 49 are the same as those for people ages 50 to 74. Similar to people ages 50 to 74, most people ages 40 to 49 will be screened with a mammogram every two years. People at increased risk of breast cancer due to their medical history or family history of breast or ovarian cancer will be recalled annually; people who have Breast Imaging Reporting and Data System (BI-RADS) breast (chest) density category D or if an earlier recall was recommended by a radiologist will be recalled in one year.

Family doctors and nurse practitioners play a key role in supporting their patients to make an informed decision-making about breast cancer screening. Having conversations with patients about breast cancer screening is important because people ages 40 to 49 have a lower chance of getting breast cancer and the balance of potential benefits to potential harms of breast cancer screening may be different than for people ages 50 to 74. Therefore, the OBSP encourages people ages 40 to 49 to make an informed decision about whether breast cancer screening is right for them based on their individual risk for breast cancer, the potential benefits and potential harms of breast cancer screening, and what matters most to them in taking care of their health.

The following resources have been developed to support family doctors and nurse practitioners to prepare for the upcoming changes to the OBSP:

- **Provider conversation guide (available in English and French):** To support breast cancer screening conversations with people ages 40 to 49, this includes information on a breast cancer risk assessment tool (My CancerIQ), the potential benefits and potential harms of breast cancer screening, and reminders to consider what matters most to them in taking care of their health. This tool is currently available as a PDF and will be available online on the [Screening Resources for Healthcare Providers | Cancer Care Ontario](#) webpage in time for program launch on October 8, 2024.

- **Frequently Asked Questions (available in English and French):** Frequently asked questions to support questions from patients about the OBSP expansion to people ages 40 to 49.

If you have any questions, please contact Ontario Health toll free at 1.866.662.9233 from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday to Friday or email us at [cancerinfo@ontariohealth.ca](mailto:cancerinfo@ontariohealth.ca).

Thank you for supporting the successful expansion of the Ontario Breast Screening Program.

Sincerely,




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