

# Indicator 5: Recall to assessment

## Recall to assessment rate

The recall to assessment rate is the proportion of all women screened in a given calendar year who were recalled for assessment by five-year age groups for women aged 40 years and over and for the target age group 50–69 years.

## The recall to assessment indicator

The recall to assessment indicator measures the rate of women who are recalled for assessment following attendance for a routine screening at a BreastScreen Australia service. In most cases, the recall is made because a woman's screening mammogram shows signs that there may be breast cancer. During assessment, a woman might undergo further tests, such as additional mammography, physical examination, ultrasound and, if required, a fine needle aspiration or a core biopsy.

BreastScreen Australia aims to maximise the number of cancers detected – in particular, the number of small cancers – while minimising the number of unnecessary investigations. Most women recalled to assessment are found not to have breast cancer (BreastScreen South Australia 2005); (BreastScreen Queensland 2005).

Women attending the program for the first time have a higher all-size cancer detection rate than those who have previously been screened. This is reflected in a higher recall to assessment rate for women who attend for their first screening round compared with those who attend for a subsequent round.

The National Accreditation Standards for recall to assessment require:

- <10% of women aged 50–69 years who attend for their first screen are recalled for assessment.
- <5% of women aged 50–69 years who attend for their second or subsequent screen are recalled for assessment.

The following table shows the recall rates for 1999, 2003 and 2004. The objectives of recalling less than 10% of women in the target age group 50–69 attending for their first screening round and less than 5% of women attending for their second or subsequent screening rounds were achieved in the three years.

**Age-standardised recall to assessment rates for women aged 40 years and over and 50–69 years, mammographic reasons, 1999, 2003 and 2004**

	Objective <sup>(a)</sup>	1999	2003	2004
<b>First screening round</b>				
Rate (%) for women aged 50–69 years	<10	7.7	9.4	9.9
95% CI		7.5–7.9	9.1–9.6	9.6–10.2
Rate (%) for women aged 40 years and over	..	7.6	9.4	9.7
95% CI		7.4–7.7	9.2–9.6	9.5–10.0
<b>Subsequent screening rounds</b>				
Rate (%) for women aged 50–69 years	<5	4.0	4.0	4.0
95% CI		3.9–4.1	4.0–4.1	4.0–4.1
Rate (%) for women aged 40 years and over	..	4.0	4.2	4.3
95% CI		4.0–4.1	4.2–4.3	4.2–4.3

(a) Performance objective for BreastScreen services as set out in the National Accreditation Standards (NQMC 2004).

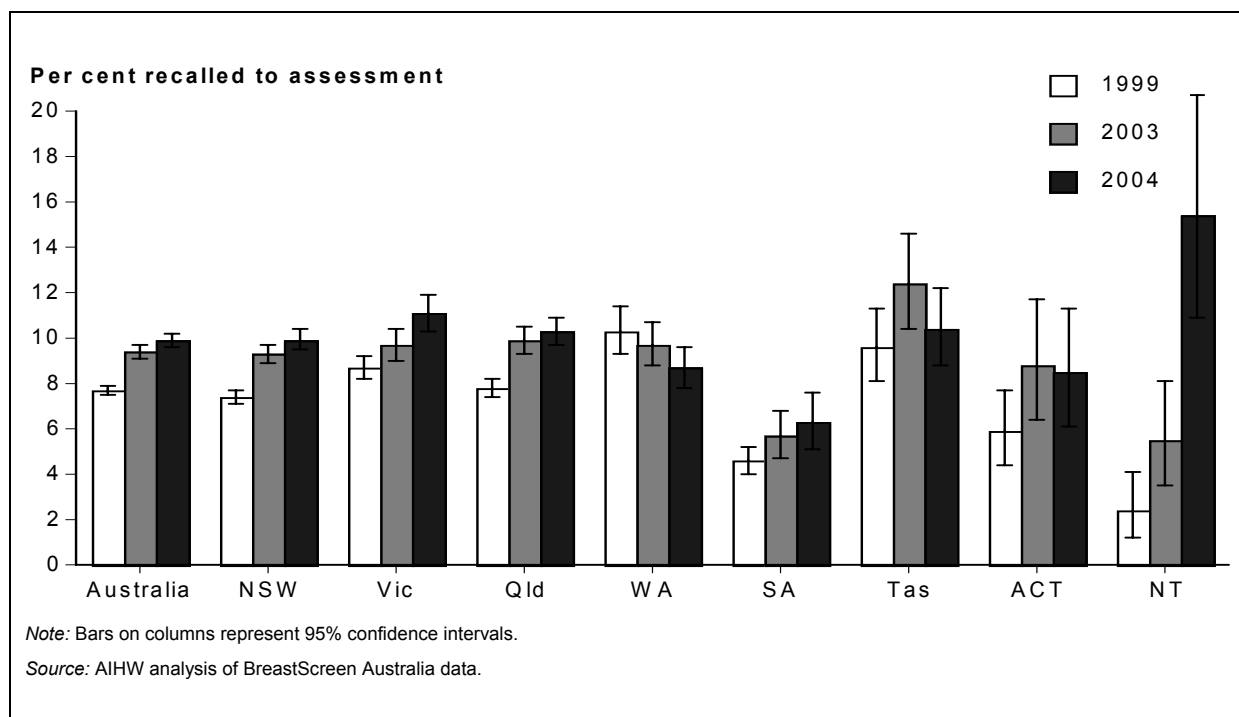
.. Not applicable.

Source: AIHW analysis of BreastScreen Australia data.

The age-standardised recall to assessment rate for women attending for their first screening round rose from 7.7% in 1999 to 9.9% in 2004. This increase was statistically significant. The age-standardised recall rate for women aged 40 years and over attending for their first screening round also rose significantly from 7.6% in 1999 to 9.7% in 2004.

## States and territories

### Recall to assessment rate for women aged 50–69 years, mammographic reasons, first screening round, 1999, 2003 and 2004



	Australia	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT
<b>2004 rate (%)</b>	9.9 <sup>#</sup>	9.9 <sup>#</sup>	11.1 <sup>#</sup>	10.3 <sup>#</sup>	8.7	6.3	10.4	8.5	15.4 <sup>*#</sup>
<i>95% CI</i>	9.6–10.2	9.4–10.3	10.4–11.9	9.8–11.0	7.9–9.6	5.2–7.6	8.8–12.2	6.1–11.3	10.9–20.7
<b>2003 rate (%)</b>	9.4	9.3	9.7	9.9	9.7	5.7	12.4	8.8	5.5
<i>95% CI</i>	9.1–9.6	8.9–9.7	9.0–10.4	9.3–10.5	8.8–10.7	4.6–6.8	10.4–14.6	6.4–11.6	3.5–8.2
<b>1999 rate (%)</b>	7.7	7.4	8.7	7.8	10.3	4.6	9.6	5.9	2.4
<i>95% CI</i>	7.5–7.9	7.0–7.7	8.2–9.2	7.4–8.2	9.3–11.3	4.1–5.3	8.1–11.3	4.4–7.8	1.2–4.0

\* Statistically different from the 2003 rate.

# Statistically different from the 1999 rate.

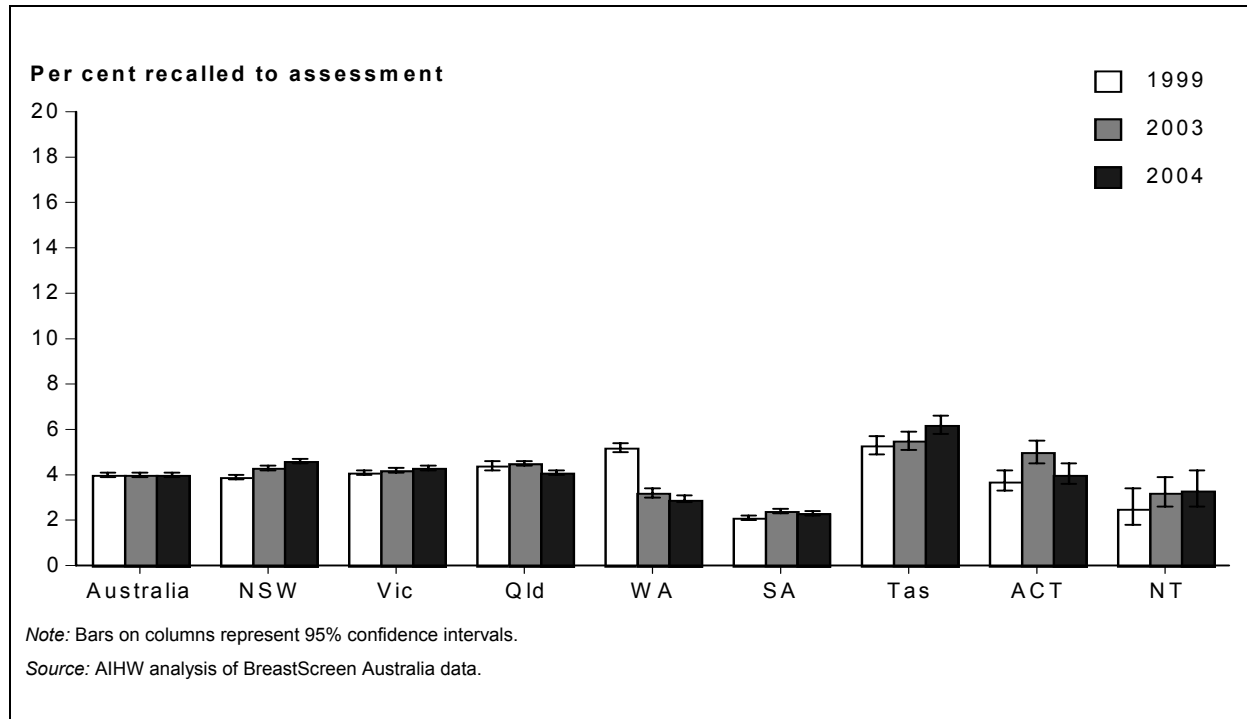
Note: Rates are the number of women recalled for assessment as a percentage of women screened and age-standardised to the population of women attending a BreastScreen Australia service in 1998.

- In 2004, 9.9% (age-standardised) of women in the target age group attending for their first screen were recalled for assessment due to an abnormal mammogram result. Between 1999 and 2004 there was a statistically significant increase in recalls due to mammographic reasons for women attending their first screen. Similar increases also occurred in New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland and Northern Territory. In other states and territories the changes between 1999 and 2004 were not statistically significant, mainly due to the number of cases being too small to measure significant change.

For more information, see: Tables 29 to 36 beginning on page 100. Tables with data other than for the latest reporting period can be found on the AIHW's website at <www.aihw.gov.au>.

## States and territories

### Recall to assessment rate for women aged 50–69 years, mammographic reasons, subsequent screening rounds, 1999, 2003 and 2004



	Australia	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT
<b>2004 rate (%)</b>	4.0	4.6*#	4.3	4.1*	2.9*#	2.3	6.2#	4.0*	3.3
<i>95% CI</i>	4.0–4.1	4.5–4.7	4.2–4.4	4.0–4.2	2.7–3.0	2.2–2.4	5.8–6.6	3.5–4.4	2.5–4.2
<b>2003 rate (%)</b>	4.0	4.3	4.2	4.5	3.2	2.4	5.5	5.0	3.2
<i>95% CI</i>	4.0–4.1	4.2–4.4	4.0–4.3	4.3–4.6	3.1–3.4	2.3–2.6	5.1–5.9	4.5–5.5	2.5–3.9
<b>1999 rate (%)</b>	4.0	3.9	4.1	4.4	5.2	2.1	5.3	3.7	2.5
<i>95% CI</i>	3.9–4.1	3.8–4.0	4.0–4.2	4.2–4.6	5.0–5.4	1.9–2.2	4.9–5.7	3.3–4.2	1.8–3.4

\* Statistically different from the 2003 rate.

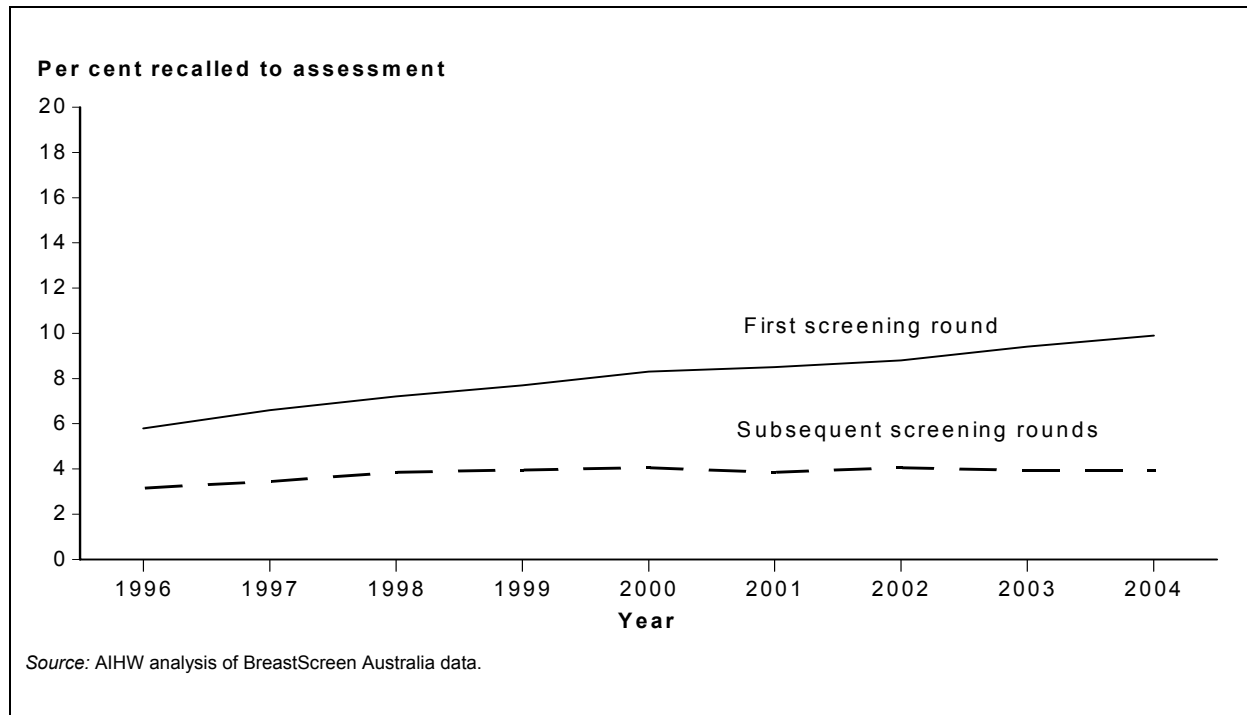
# Statistically different from the 1999 rate.

Note: Rates are the number of women recalled for assessment as a percentage of women screened and age-standardised to the population of women attending a BreastScreen Australia service in 1998.

- Of women in the target age group who were screened for a second or subsequent time in 2004, 4.0% (age-standardised) were recalled for assessment due to an abnormal mammogram result. This was less than half the rate for women attending for their first screen (9.9%).

For more information, see: Tables 29 to 36 beginning on page 100. Tables with data other than for the latest reporting period can be found on the AIHW's website at <[www.aihw.gov.au](http://www.aihw.gov.au)>.

## Recall to assessment trends for women aged 50–69 years, mammographic reasons, first and subsequent screening rounds, 1996 to 2004



	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
<b>First screening round</b>									
Rate	5.8*	6.6*	7.2*	7.7*	8.3*	8.5*	8.8*	9.4*	9.9*
95% CI	5.7–5.9	6.5–6.7	7.1–7.4	7.5–7.9	8.0–8.5	8.3–8.7	8.6–9.1	9.1–9.6	9.6–10.2
<b>Subsequent screening rounds</b>									
Rate	3.2	3.5	3.9	4.0	4.1	3.9	4.1	4.0	4.0
95% CI	3.1–3.2	3.4–3.6	3.9–4.0	3.9–4.1	4.0–4.1	3.9–4.0	4.0–4.1	4.0–4.1	4.0–4.1

\* Statistically significant from subsequent rounds.

Note: Rates are the number of women recalled for assessment as a percentage of women screened and age-standardised to the population of women attending a BreastScreen Australia service in 1998.

- There was an increase in the age-standardised rate for women recalled for assessment for mammographic reasons after their first screening round between 1996 and 2004. The rate increased from 5.8% to 9.9%.
- The age-standardised recall rate for women attending for their second or subsequent screen was relatively stable between 1998 and 2004, oscillating between 3.9% and 4.1%.

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