

## Having a Breast Tomosynthesis Mammogram

You have been referred for breast tomosynthesis by your doctor or health care professional. This leaflet explains what the examination involves and what to expect when you come to the hospital. It may not answer all your questions, so if you have any queries or concerns, please call the telephone number on your appointment letter.

### What is a breast tomosynthesis mammogram and what are its benefits?

Breast tomosynthesis is a procedure to visualise the breast in a 3D form. It involves taking x-rays from different angles to get the clearest view of breast tissue with reduced overlap. This information is used by the computer software to turn the x-ray images into a 3D image.

Cancer detection can be improved by using tomosynthesis. This is because the procedure helps to minimise tissue overlap that can hide breast cancer or make it difficult to distinguish normal tissue from cancers.

The examination is carried out by a radiographer, who is a trained professional in this type of exam.

### What happens during a breast tomosynthesis mammogram?

You will be asked to remove your clothes from your top half and to wear a gown. The gown will be removed before commencing the tomosynthesis examination.

Your breast will be positioned within the mammogram machine and compression (pressure) applied to the breast. A certain level of compression is needed to complete the exam. It is important to remain in the position the radiographer places you and to be as still as possible to get good quality pictures. The compression remains on the breast while the x-ray machine moves around you, taking images.

If you are experiencing pain, tell the radiographer and your position and the compression can be adjusted.

If you feel you cannot continue the examination, feel free to ask to stop. The entire examination should take no more than 5 minutes.

Once the examination is over, the compression will be released, and the pictures produced will be evaluated by the radiographer. If the radiographer feels they are not of sufficient quality further pictures may need to be taken.

The number of staff present will be kept to a minimum and is usually just the person performing the procedure (radiographer).

### **Will I feel any pain?**

You will have compression applied to the breast. There is a certain amount of compression that must be used to complete the exam. Some people find the compression uncomfortable, tell the radiographer if you are experiencing pain and positioning/compression can be adjusted.

### **What happens after your procedure?**

Once the examination is complete you should remain in the department. The radiographer will send your pictures to a radiologist to report. Only leave the department after you have been told it is okay to go and informed about how you will obtain your results.

### **When will I get the results?**

The report is available immediately after the procedure and will be discussed with you by your referring doctor or healthcare professional.

### **What are the risks?**

Breast tomosynthesis is a form of x-ray and therefore you are being given a dose of ionising radiation. Ionising radiation can be harmful and therefore every effort is made to give you a dose that is as low as is reasonably achievable while still producing an image that can help in the diagnoses of possible breast abnormalities. Your doctor feels that this is the most suitable examination and that the benefits outweigh the risks.

### **Asking for consent**

The examination only happens with your consent. The radiographer will explain the procedure and ask if you are happy to go ahead with the examination. If you do not wish to have the procedure or are undecided or have any concerns, please tell the radiographer.

Students/trainees may be present during the examination but only with your verbal consent. If you do not wish to have anyone else present during this procedure you should advise the Radiographer of this.

Please remember that you can ask the radiographer any questions you have at any time before, during or after your procedure.

**Are there any alternatives to Breast tomosynthesis?**

Your referrer has decided that a breast tomosynthesis mammogram would be the most useful in your case. The examination will help your referrer to assess you more fully and plan any further treatment that might be necessary. If you would like more information about alternative imaging tests, please speak to the doctor or health care professional managing your care.

**Image sharing**

Your images will be electronically stored on the hospital picture archiving system. This data can be accessed throughout the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust and other doctors and health care professionals who are directly involved in your care. The ability to share images and radiological reports will improve the safety and quality of your care by ensuring that the right information is available in the right place at the right time.

To improve the medical services we provide, we may also use your data as anonymously as possible for internal audit and medical education. If you would prefer that your data is not used for these purposes, please inform a member of staff when you attend for your examination.

If your data is to be used for research, then a separate consent process will be used. You will be asked for your consent, should this be the case.

**Contact us**

If you have any questions or concerns about coming for your breast tomosynthesis exam, please contact the appointments officer at the number displayed on your appointment letter.

**Feedback**

We hope you found the information in this leaflet helpful. If it did not tell you what you needed to know or you would like to provide any feedback on your experience, please let us know so that we can make any necessary improvements.

***You can provide feedback on your experience:***

Telephone: **028 9504 8000** (Monday-Friday: 9am-4pm)

Textphone: **18001 028 950 48000**

By email: [compliments@belfasttrust.hscni.net](mailto:compliments@belfasttrust.hscni.net)

By email: [complaints@belfasttrust.hscni.net](mailto:complaints@belfasttrust.hscni.net)

By completing an online form: <https://belfasttrust.hscni.net/contact-us/compliments-and-complaints/feedback-form/>

## Care Opinion



We invite you to share your experience by clicking the following link:  
<https://www.careopinion.org.uk/>

or by scanning the following QR code on your smartphone or tablet:



## Language and accessible support services

### Deaf/ Hard of Hearing

If a Sign Language interpreter is required, please either telephone **028 9615 8900** via the Sign Video remote interpreting service <https://signvideo.co.uk/deaf-community/> or email us at [BCMammography@belfasttrust.hscni.net](mailto:BCMammography@belfasttrust.hscni.net) and we will arrange one for your appointment. Please have your H&C number ready when calling or include it in your email. This can be found at the top right corner of any Health and Social Care letters you may have received.

If you are unable to hear on the phone and need to contact us with regards to your appointment you can email us at [BCMammography@belfasttrust.hscni.net](mailto:BCMammography@belfasttrust.hscni.net).

## Do you need this information in another format or language?

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format, including Braille, large print, CD, audio tape please contact the telephone number **028 9615 8900** or e-mail address [MPHAdminFOH@belfasttrust.hscni.net](mailto:MPHAdminFOH@belfasttrust.hscni.net), and we will do our best to meet your needs.

## Polish - Czy potrzebujesz tych informacji w innym formacie lub języku?

Fundusz ma dostęp do usług w zakresie tłumaczeń ustnych i pisemnych. Jeśli potrzebujesz tych informacji w innym języku lub formacie, w tym w piśmie Braille'a, dużym druku, na płycie CD, kasecie magnetofonowej, skontaktuj się z nami pod numerem telefonu lub adresem e-mail **028 9615 8900/** [MPHAdminFOH@belfasttrust.hscni.net](mailto:MPHAdminFOH@belfasttrust.hscni.net), a my dołożymy wszelkich starań, aby spełnić Twoje potrzeby.

## Arabic - هل تحتاج هذه المعلومات بصيغة أو بلغة أخرى؟

تستطيع الجمعية توفير خدمات الترجمة الفورية والتحريرية. إذا احتجت هذه المعلومات بلغة أو بصيغة أخرى، بما فيها صيغة برايل Braille أو صيغة بالأحرف الكبيرة، أو في سي دي CD أو في شريط مسموع، يُرجى الاتصال برقم التليفون أو عبر البريد الإلكتروني [MPHAdminFOH@belfasttrust.hscni.net](mailto:MPHAdminFOH@belfasttrust.hscni.net) / **028 9615 8900**، وسوف نبذل قصارى جهدنا في تلبية احتياجاتك.

## Lithuanian - Ar jums reikia šios informacijos kitu formatu ar kalba?

Tarnyba gali suteikti vertimo žodžiu ir raštu paslaugas. Jei reikia šios informacijos kita kalba ar formatu, įskaitant Brailio raštą, didelį šriftą, kompaktinį diską, garso įrašą, skambinkite telefonu arba susisiekite el. paštu **028 9615 8900/** [MPHAdminFOH@belfasttrust.hscni.net](mailto:MPHAdminFOH@belfasttrust.hscni.net) ir mes padarysime viską, kad patenkintume jūsų poreikius.

## Romanian - Aveți nevoie de aceste informații într-un alt format sau altă limbă?

Trustul are acces la servicii de interpretariat și traducere. Dacă aveți nevoie de aceste informații într-o altă limbă sau într-un alt format, inclusiv Braille, tipărire cu caractere de mari dimensiuni, CD, înregistrare audio, atunci vă rugăm să ne contactați la numărul de telefon sau la adresa de e-mail **028 9615 8900/** [MPHAdminFOH@belfasttrust.hscni.net](mailto:MPHAdminFOH@belfasttrust.hscni.net), iar noi vom face tot posibilul pentru satisfacerea necesităților dumneavoastră.

## **Tetum - Ita presiza atu informasaun ida ne'e iha formatu ka lian seluk ka lae?**

Fidusiáriu ida ne'e iha asesu ba servisu durubasa no tradusaun. Se Ita presiza informasaun ida ne'e iha lian ka formatu seluk, inklui letra Braille, letra boot, CD, kasete audio, entaun favór telefone númeru ka enderesu e-mail **028 9615 8900/ [MPHAdminFOH@belfasttrust.hscni.net](mailto:MPHAdminFOH@belfasttrust.hscni.net)**, no ami sei halo esforsu tomak atu kumpre Ita-nia nesesidade sira.