

## Mammography: Information

THANK YOU FOR CHOOSING TO HAVE YOUR MAMMOGRAM AT ASCOT RADIOLOGY

**The Breast Imaging Centre at Ascot Radiology now provides a choice between digital mammography and digital mammographic tomosynthesis.** You will be asked to decide between the two techniques. If you would like further information, our specialised breast radiographers are very happy to talk to you when you arrive for your appointment. You will also be asked to fill in a questionnaire when you arrive for your mammogram.

**Digital mammography** is the traditional mammographic technique, which has been available for many years at Ascot Radiology, and is used worldwide in screening for breast cancer and for assessing women and men presenting with a symptom. Screening with digital mammography has been shown in multiple studies to reduce the chance of dying of breast cancer by a third.

**The next generation of breast imaging is mammographic tomosynthesis** and we are very excited to be able to now offer this at our Ascot Central branch. Research has consistently shown that using tomosynthesis there is:

- an improvement in breast cancer detection, and
- a decrease in call backs, which may lessen anxiety for patients.

The increase in detection of cancer is shown across all age groups and all breast tissue types. Mammographic tomosynthesis is suitable for screening and also assessment of those who have a symptom. It is not possible to utilize this technology in women with breast implants.

### HOW IS IT DONE?

Traditional digital mammography produces two images of each breast. In some cases, this results in overlapping tissue, which can make it more difficult to detect cancers. Tomosynthesis is performed using a scanner that is very similar to look at and with a similar technique and compression.

In breast tomosynthesis the scanner takes many images or 'slices' of each breast, reducing the amount of overlapping tissue. The x-ray dose is the same for both tests and remains low. The time taken to obtain the images is also the same for both technologies.

### COST

There is a price difference given the level of technology and the additional time taken to interpret the many more images.

**Digital mammography is \$180** and, depending on your health insurance provider and policy, this is usually fully reimbursed. **Mammographic tomosynthesis is \$280.**

Whilst many insurance companies will reimburse both examinations, we recommend you check with your insurer. **If you are a Southern Cross member**, we would like to advise you that Southern Cross will pay the cost of the traditional mammogram, as per your policy agreement. If you choose digital breast tomosynthesis, you will be asked to cover the \$100.00 cost difference at the time of your examination. This is an additional charge to your co-payment.