

PE2062/H: Introduce a National Screening Programme for Prostate Cancer

Petitioner written submission, 26 February 2026

The response from the First Minister is predicated on the recommendations of the UK National Screening Committee "UK NSC". Within his response, he states that it is essential that this matter is driven by the evidence.

The evidence gathered by the UK NSC was from an economic modelling study carried out by Sheffield University, who, in turn, gathered its information from the Department of Health in England.

An FOI response from the Department of Health and Social Care revealed that:

- the economic modelling generated a measure of the benefits, harms and costs of offering prostate cancer screening in the UK.
- The economic evaluation data was generated by Sheffield Centre for Health and Related Research
- UK NSC makes screening recommendations that cover all four UK countries and there was no assessment of rates of advanced prostate cancer between the countries

The recommendation by UK NSC is primarily about cost. The value for money figure in the economic modelling study appears to be £20,000. Does the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care accept this is an appropriate amount for men in Scotland?

No evidence was considered from Scotland, despite the fact that men in Scotland, according to Prostate Cancer UK, are three times more likely to have advanced prostate cancer than the rest of the UK. No recommendations or considerations were made by the UK NSC to address this aspect, possibly because the information used by Sheffield University came from England alone, and no other part of the UK.

How can the screening recommendation cover "all four UK countries" if the data is only from England?

Health is a devolved matter under the Scotland Act. What is the point of devolution if we cannot make decisions that address the healthcare needs of the people of Scotland?