

# Improving the breast cancer screening program through a health democracy principle: a citizen & scientific consultation



TYPE  
STATUS

A national consultation open to all publics concerned by breast cancer screening

LAST  
UPDATE

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FRANCE • NATIONAL  
Breast cancer screening

## PROBLEM & OBJECTIVE

**PROBLEM** Given the French context, it was a primordial objective to understand the participation rate stagnation from population perspective and not only from scientific and institutional points of view.

**OBJECTIVE** The objective is to improve the French breast cancer screening program in applying health democracy principles.

## KEY COMPONENTS / STEPS

- Creation of an independent scientific committee to discuss which topics must be evocated in the consultation
- Launch of a public website dedicated to the citizen & scientific consultation.
- Workshop and constitution of the "citizens' conference": A panel of women from diverse social origins, produced a collective view on what they think about the program and their expectations.
- Workshop and constitution of the "professionals' conference": A panel of health professionals, not experts in breast cancer but implicated in the program in their daily practice.
- Audition of experts and analysis of other contributions submitted.
- Drafting a joint contribution arising from the scientific committee.
- Public meeting of the citizen and scientific consultation closing (reporting results).
- Implementation of the Breast Cancer screening renovation's plan; with new actions in public health, organization, research and communication.

## KEY CONTEXTUAL FACTORS

- In France, breast cancer is the leading cause of cancer mortality in women. After a past decade of the national breast cancer screening implementation, the program had to be evaluated and questioned in order to continuously improve.
- Aware of the aversion feeling from general population concerning the controversy (benefits/harms ratio), as well as the lack of general information in breast cancer, the French National Cancer Institute has been mandated by MoH and has set up a scientific and citizen consultation, to give the floor to all the women and health professionals.

## MAIN IMPACTS / ADDED VALUE

- The main added value in using an independent and participatory process, permits to gather brakes straight from the public concerned by screening.
- By the mean of a citizen consultation, the ministry was able to take into account the general population feeling concerning the need of a better information and transparency related to the benefits and harms trade-offs in breast cancer screening and to adapt the public policy.

## LESSONS LEARNED

- Gain in credibility thanks to the outsourcing process of doing a citizens' consultation.
- Taking into account the needs of citizens, with neutrality.
- Benefits from the multifocal approach.
- Complete overhaul of the information's book intended for women and health professionals.
- Current development of decision-aids (starting with the creation of a special website dedicated to the program).
- Improvement of the quality and the accessibility to the program.

## CONTACT

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## REFERENCES & DOCUMENTATION

- Final report of the consultation (in French)
- de Montgolfier, Sandrine, et Nathalie Catajar. « Démocratie participative et évolution d'une politique de santé publique ? », Santé Publique, vol. s2, no. HS2, 2019, pp. 43-51
- Plan d'action pour la renovation du programme de dépistage du cancer du sein

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