

**Chair's Note**  
**Meeting of the National Screening Advisory Committee (NSAC)**  
**Department of Health**  
**25 May 2023**

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The National Screening Advisory Committee held its second meeting of 2023 on Thursday, 25 May.

This meeting was my last meeting as Chair of the Committee, and our first in-person meeting since the COVID-19 pandemic. I want to thank the Committee for their steadfast commitment to our work and I have been privileged to Chair this expert Committee through its first four years of operation.

We welcomed four new members, Prof Deirdre Murray, Dolores Keane, Dr Alissa Connors, and Hilary McGouran, who were recently appointed by the Minister for Health, to their first meeting.

I would like to thank Minister of State with responsibility for Public Health, Well Being and the National Drugs Strategy, Hildegard Naughton, for joining us at our meeting to discuss the work of the Committee.

**Expansion of Newborn Screening**

The Committee welcomed Dr Laura Comber, HIQA, who provided us with an update on the work carried out so far on the Health Technology Assessment (HTA) for the addition of Spinal Muscular Atrophy (SMA) to the National Newborn Bloodspot Screening Programme.

The Committee was pleased to hear that work on the HTA is progressing well and we expect to receive the completed HTA report for consideration in October 2023.

**Updated European Council Recommendation on cancer screening**

The NSAC Secretariat updated the Committee on pilot projects involving Ireland on lung, prostate, and gastric cancer. The Committee also received a presentation on Epidemiology of Gastric Cancer in Ireland from the National Cancer Registry.

Implementation of the updated Council Recommendation will be a collaborative process between the Committee, the Department of Health, and national and European stakeholders. The Secretariat will liaise support the Committee to develop a process and convene a group to support consideration of the implementation of the updated Council Recommendation in Ireland.

**NSAC Work Programme**

The Committee has concluded its consideration of all proposals received in response to Annual Call 2022 and published an updated [Work Programme](#) on our website.

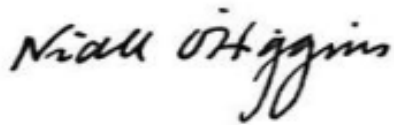
**Annual Report 2022**

We noted the recent publication of the [NSAC Annual Report 2022](#) which records another busy year for the Committee.

**NSAC Work processes**

At the meeting we spent some time reflecting on our work processes as we reviewed our Standing Orders. We have also surveyed members to review the operation of the Committee in advance of the new Chair taking up their role.

The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled for Thursday 19 October 2023.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Niall O'Higgins". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'N' and 'H'.

**Professor Niall O'Higgins**  
**Chair, National Screening Advisory Committee**