

**Mark Drakeford AC / AM**  
**Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol**  
**Minister for Health and Social Services**



**Llywodraeth Cymru**  
**Welsh Government**

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-668  
Ein cyf/Our ref MD/03536/15

William Powell AM  
Chair - Petitions Committee  
Welsh Government

[Petition@Wales.gov.uk](mailto:Petition@Wales.gov.uk)

8 January 2016

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter dated 4 December regarding petition P-04-668.

All population-based, pre-symptomatic screening programmes are developed and delivered using the best available evidence and are subject to regular review. The UK National Screening Committee (UK NSC) provides independent, expert advice to all UK Ministers about screening. Population screening programmes should only be offered where there is robust, high-quality evidence that screening will do more good than harm and be cost effective within the overall NHS budget.

The UK NSC does not currently recommend routine screening for ovarian cancer. However, it agreed that screening for ovarian cancer would be reviewed against the agreed criteria for the development of national screening programmes, following the publication of the UK Collaborative Trial of Ovarian Cancer Screening (UKCTOCS).

The results of the UKCTOCS trial were published on 17 December. They showed that screening based on an annual blood test may help reduce the number of women dying from ovarian cancer by around 20%. The study also concluded that longer follow-up is needed to establish more certain estimates of how many deaths from ovarian cancer could be prevented by screening. These future outcomes, together with health economic analyses, will assist the UK NSC in its future deliberations about whether to recommend the introduction of an ovarian cancer population screening programme.

Best wishes,

**Mark Drakeford AC / AM**  
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**Minister for Health and Social Services**

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay  
Caerdydd • Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

English Enquiry Line 0300 0603300  
Llinell Ymholiadau Cymraeg 0300 0604400  
Correspondence.Mark.Drakeford@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.