

13 September, 2013

## **‘Bling a Bra’ competition throws the spotlight on breast cancer awareness**

Breast cancer affects one in nine women in NSW and is the most common cause of cancer deaths among females in Australia.

In the lead up to Breast Cancer Awareness month (October), the South Eastern Sydney Illawarra BreastScreen Service is holding a ‘Bling a Bra’ competition to raise awareness of the importance of screening for breast cancer. The competition will run in September and October, with many prizes to be won, donated by local businesses.

Mr Mathivanan Sakthivel, Director of South Eastern Sydney Illawarra BreastScreen Service said Breast Cancer Awareness Month is an opportunity to urge women aged 50 to 74 years to have a free screening mammogram which can detect breast cancer before they can be felt or noticed.

“While family history of breast cancer is a risk factor for breast cancer, nine out of 10 women diagnosed do not have a family history. It is vital that women in the age groups of 50 to 74 years book for their routine mammogram,” Mr Sakthivel said.

Ms Sarah Little, Health Promotion Officer, South Eastern Sydney Illawarra BreastScreen Service said women should have a mammogram every two years.

“Women are also reminded to be breast aware by regularly checking for changes or unusual symptoms that may arise. Early detection is the key; by picking breast cancer up early women have a higher chance of survival.

“South Eastern Sydney Illawarra BreastScreen Service is a free screening mammography service that aims to detect breast cancer early before it has a chance to spread. Early detection of cancer increases treatment options available and improves the chance of survival from the disease,” Ms Little said.

The BreastScreen Service actively recruits women via an invitation when they turn 50. A reminder letter is sent every two years, however, women aged between 40 and 49 years; and 75 years and older, are also eligible to attend. To book an appointment call 13 20 50.

To enter the ‘Bling a Bra’ competition, women need to bring a decorated bra to their closest breast screening service (St George Hospital, Royal Hospital for Women, The Rose Clinic David Jones and Gibbs Street, Miranda). If needed, bras are available from these breast screening services.

Winners of the competition will be announced at a free breast cancer awareness afternoon tea event to be held on 1 November, 2013 at Club Central Hurstville from 1 – 3pm. To make a reservation email [blingabrasydney@eventbrite.com.au](mailto:blingabrasydney@eventbrite.com.au), [sarah.little@sesiah.health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:sarah.little@sesiah.health.nsw.gov.au) or call 9113 1029.