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

Breast cancer affects one in eight 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 until 30 October with a fantastic prize pool up for grabs for competition winners.

Jill Sternfeld, Acting 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 every two years, which can detect breast cancer before it can be felt or noticed.

“Currently only half of eligible women are receiving regular and free mammograms through BreastScreen NSW. All women are encouraged to be breast aware and regularly check for changes or unusual symptoms that may arise. The earlier breast cancer is detected, the higher the chance of survival,” Ms Sternfeld said.

The ‘Bling a Bra’ competition invites individuals or groups to decorate bras using their creative flair to reflect the key message of breast awareness and the benefits of mammography screening.

Breast cancer survivor, Maria Azanza-Neill, is urging everyone to get involved to help raise awareness about breast cancer and the importance of early screening.

“It’s been three years since I was diagnosed with breast cancer through the BreastScreen site at St George Hospital. I never thought I would have breast cancer. I felt absolutely fine and wasn’t weak or fatigued, in fact, I had run the City to Surf just before my first mammogram. The only reason I went to have a mammogram was because I had finished planning my wedding, had time, and saw an ad for BreastScreen in our staff newsletter,” Ms Azanza-Neill said.

“Staff at the BreastScreen service were caring, reassuring, factual and trustworthy. Although getting the news was daunting, the team really put me at ease and I felt guided by other health professionals and my support network throughout my treatment and recovery.”

To enter ‘Bling a Bra’ competition, women need to bring a decorated bra to their closest breast screening service (Myer Bondi Junction, Royal Hospital for Women, St George Hospital, the Rose Clinic David Jones and Gibbs Street Miranda).

Winners of the competition will be announced at a free showcase morning tea event on Friday 13 November at Waverley Library Theatre at 10.30am. Reservations can be made by calling 9113 1029 or emailing boshra.hemmati@sesiahs.health.nsw.gov.au.

The ‘Bling a Bra’ completion promotional video can be viewed online at www.threadinglights.com/blingabra.

To book a free mammogram **call 13 20 50**.