

RESULTS OF THE PROJECT „FIRST MAMMOGRAPHY“ IN THE TERRITORY OF THE AUTONOMOUS PROVINCE OF VOJVODINA FROM 2019-2023 YEARS

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Background: Breast cancer is the most common malignant tumor in women around the world and in our country. Regular breast cancer screening can detect small tumor changes and reduce mortality risk. Still, screening mammography assessments are often limited due to a lack of medical providers and distance from medical facilities.

Methods and Objectives: The research was conducted as a cross-sectional study from 2019-2023 years as a part of the Project “First Mammography” supported by the Provincial Secretariat for Health. The research instrument was a specially designed questionnaire. Mammographic examinations with a mobile mammogram were carried out simultaneously in two buses in 18 municipalities of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, of which 12 municipalities were included in the second cycle of mammography.

Results: The analysis included 16,691 women. The average age of the respondents during the observed period ranged from 56.06 to 57.4 years. A total of 19,898 mammograms were performed in two cycles. Every seventh woman (n=2,865, 14.4%) had a positive mammographic finding of BI-RADS 4a, 4b, 4c and 5. A total of 3,289 women (16.5%; of which 103 women did not respond) were invited to additional diagnostic procedures, with the highest number of women referred for US diagnostics (2,821 women, 14.2%), followed by COR biopsy (332 women, 1.7%) and vacuum-assisted biopsy (33 women, 0.2%). The diagnosis of breast cancer was confirmed in 159 women (0.8%).

Conclusions: The high screening response of women indicates the problem of availability and utilisation of healthcare services in rural areas, which can serve as a basis for decision-makers to improve and expand infrastructure for screening mammography and further investments and expansion of such programs.

Keywords: breast cancer, mammography, women, Autonomous Province of Vojvodina