

Appendix 1. Interview Schedule

Clinician characteristics

1. Firstly could you please just confirm your role, so you're a _____?
2. Can you describe the setting where you work?
 - Urban, regional or remote area?
 - Solo or group practice?
 - Public (bulk-billing) or private?
3. How long have you been a practicing GP?
4. Do you have a special interest area of practice? (e.g. women's health etc)
5. How many patients would you see each week?
6. What proportion of your practice would you say are women over the age of 40?

Breast screening:

7. Before I get into the questions specifically about breast density, can I just ask: in general, how do you approach advising women about breast screening?

Knowledge and understanding of breast density

8. To start off, have you heard of the term breast density?
 - a. Where have you heard (or read) it from?
 - What have you heard/read about what breast density is?
 - What is your understanding of how breast density is measured?
 - Why might breast density be of interest or relevant to women?
 - b. How well do you feel you understand breast density as a clinical issue at the moment?
 - What would you like to understand better?
 - c. How important do you think breast density is as an issue for women?
Prompts: breast cancer risk, age, family history.
 - d. From your perspective, what do you think women should or shouldn't know about their density after each mammogram?
 - As a whole at a population level? Why?
 - To individual woman? Why?
 - e. What would be the pros and cons (downsides or consequences) of women knowing more about their breast density after each mammogram?
 - As a whole? Why?
 - To individual woman? Why?

Experience with discussing breast density with women

7. Have you had any experience discussing breast density with patients?

If **YES**:

- a. Could you think back to the last women you had this conversation with and describe that interaction in a non-identifying way?
 - What was the age for this women?
 - What was the women's socioeconomic background?
 - How did the subject of density come up for discussion?
- b. Is that pretty typical do you think, or are you having density conversations with a wide range of women?
 - How many times (approximately) or how often would you say you've had this discussion and what were the circumstances?
 - What was the age group for women?
 - Have these discussions been more recent or were they a while ago or have they been consistent across the years?
 - How did the subject of density come up for discussion?
- c. Could you tell me about your approach to explaining to patients what breast density is, or trying to help them understand it?
- d. How do you feel about women's ability to understand what breast density is and the implications it has for them?
- e. (*if not already discussed*) How do you approach advising breast screening when breast density is discussed?
 - How does your approach to advising breast screening compare to when breast density was not discussed?
- f. What would you say are the key challenges for communicating about breast density to women?
 - Risk factors?
 - Recommendations for supplemental screening?

If **NO**:

- a. Why do you think that conversation has never come up with any of your patients in the past?
- b. If this conversation were to come up, how would you approach explaining breast density to women?
- c. What do you think would be some of the challenges for communicating about breast density to women?

Communicating about breast density

8. Do you think primary care clinicians are adequately equipped to discuss breast density with women at this time?

9. If you felt like you needed additional information, support or training in talking about breast density, where would you go to find this?

Options might include:

- Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) education programs like webinars and online Continuing Professional Development (CPD) courses
- RACGP conference workshop
- Other conferences
- Own reading/ research
- Speak to specialists
- Other???

- a. What information or skills development would you like to be included in any support or training that was offered?

10. Are there any communication materials in particular that GPs can use with patients and you think would work? Or do you think at this time this isn't really needed?

- Leaflets or brochures?
- Online reading or viewing materials?
- Communication or decision aids?
- Anything else?

Views about current breast density notification/legislation

As you may or may not be aware, in recent years there has been quite a bit of advocacy, largely from consumer groups, to have women routinely notified about their breast density during screening.

11. What are your views on this?

In the United States they have now passed federal law which makes it illegal for screening services not to inform women if they have dense breasts.

12. What are your views on this?

We don't have any legislation like this in Australia, and Breast Screen Australia decided after an evidence review that density shouldn't be tested or recorded.

However in Western Australia (WA), Breast Screen has been notifying women of their density for years, and private screening services often promote their ability to inform women about their breast density, and a number of Australian consumer groups have been running campaigns to inform women about density and push for notification.

13. What do you think about these broader legal, social and political issues around density?

14. What are your views on the current landscape of breast density notification in Australia?

There are also a number of consumer groups in Australia that have been using campaign messaging, for example posters in shopping centres, to inform women about what breast density is and push for widespread notification.

15. Just out of curiosity, have you seen any of these campaigns?

- a. What are your views on them?

- b. Do you think they are a good thing or not? Why?

Future directions

16. If you controlled Australian policy around breast screening specifically in terms of breast density notification, what would you do?
- Why would you focus on that message or action?
 - Who do you think that would have implications for screening or managing women?

Closing

Now we're coming to the end of the interview, but before we wrap up do you have anything else that we didn't discuss that you would like to say about breast density in general, the implications of discussing breast density with women or the current landscape of breast density in Australia? Or do you have any questions for me at this point?

Thank you very much for your time.