



Breast
Screen
SA



15 March 2024 | 12:40-1:00 PM
BreastScreen Australia Conference

Sensory friendly screening clinics



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BreastScreen SA Sensory clinic project



Aim: to improve the breast screening experience for women with sensory sensitivities, and subsequently increase participation rates within this group.

Multidisciplinary team approach including:

- BreastScreen SA staff
- Consumers with lived experience of sensory sensitivity and their carers
- Occupational Therapist who specialised in sensory processing.

What is sensory processing?

The way a person perceives, processes and organises the information received through their senses²

Everyone's sensory processing profile is different.



Sight
(Visual)



Smell
(Olfactory)



Hearing
(Auditory)



Taste
(Gustatory)



Touch
(Tactile)



Balance & Movement
(Vestibular)



Body Awareness
(Proprioception)

Types of atypical sensory processing

- Sensory over-responsiveness
- Sensory under-responsiveness
- Sensory-seeking behaviour

Studies show:

- between 69% and 95% of individuals with autism have atypical sensory processing¹
 - Predictable, self-controlled sensations are generally perceived positively
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Disability expo

An opportunity to talk to organisations, and people with lived experience about ways to improve breast screening for women with sensory sensitivities

Have your say: Sensory sensitive breast screening

Have you had a breast screen? Yes No

Please share your ideas to make your screening experience more comfortable:

Have the client to bring their own gown for comfort + do mamm with gown

Are you happy to be contacted for further discussion? Yes No

If yes, please provide your details below:
Name: _____

Have your say: Sensory sensitive breast screening

Have you had a breast screen? Yes No

Please share your ideas to make your screening experience more comfortable:

A flip book/video on website + sent early with photo step by step instructions. Each clinic. Physically visiting early.

Are you happy to be contacted for further discussion? Yes No

If yes, please provide your details below:
Name: _____

Introducing Pam

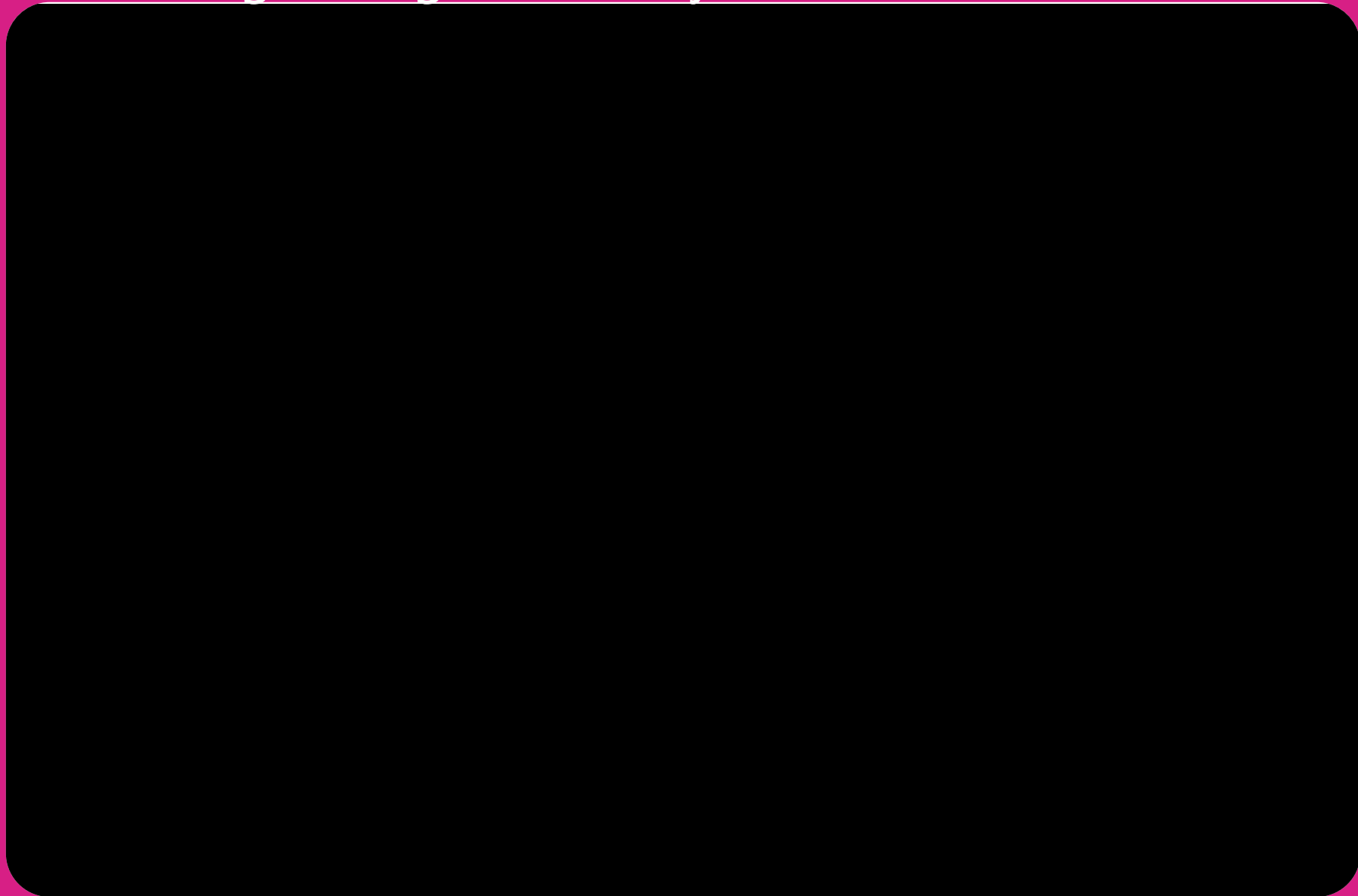


Screening clinic environmental audit

- Audit performed by an OT specialising in sensory processing
- Screening environment and processes were reviewed with a 'sensory lens'
- Recommended simple, low-cost changes to the clinics and assisted staff to adapt communications



Screening through a sensory lens..



[Watch on YouTube](#)

In the mammography room...

- What does she see?
 - What does she hear?
 - What does she feel?
 - Is this situation predictable?
 - Does she have any control?
 - Is she overwhelmed?
-



Sensory friendly environment



- Sensory sessions at clinics with direct access to outdoors
- Muted décor and plants
- Natural or dimmable lighting
- No background music
- Changed chair placement and outdoor seating
- Longer appointments

Preparing for the sensory clinic..

- Conducted all staff training workshop
 - Facebook post and sensory clinic webpage
 - Booking performed by a nurse using the client's preferred communication method
 - Client's sensory sensitivities and preferences were recorded, allowing staff to adapt the screening.
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Government of South Australia
SA Health

We're looking for women aged over 40 to book a free breast screen at our first

Sensory Friendly Clinic

on Wednesday 28 February
at our Christies Beach Clinic

Help us spread the word

We are looking for women aged over 40, especially 50 to 74, to attend our first Sensory Friendly Clinic on Wednesday, 28 February 2024.

The clinic will be held at our [Christies Beach Clinic, located at 107-109 Dyson Road](#).

Women are invited to attend even if they haven't screened with us before, and will receive a gift and the opportunity to provide feedback on their experience.

[Find out more about Sensory Friendly Clinics](#)

Contact us

Get in touch with us about our Sensory Friendly Clinic:

Call [13 20 50](tel:132050)

Email HelloBSSA@sa.gov.au

Follow BreastScreen SA
on social media

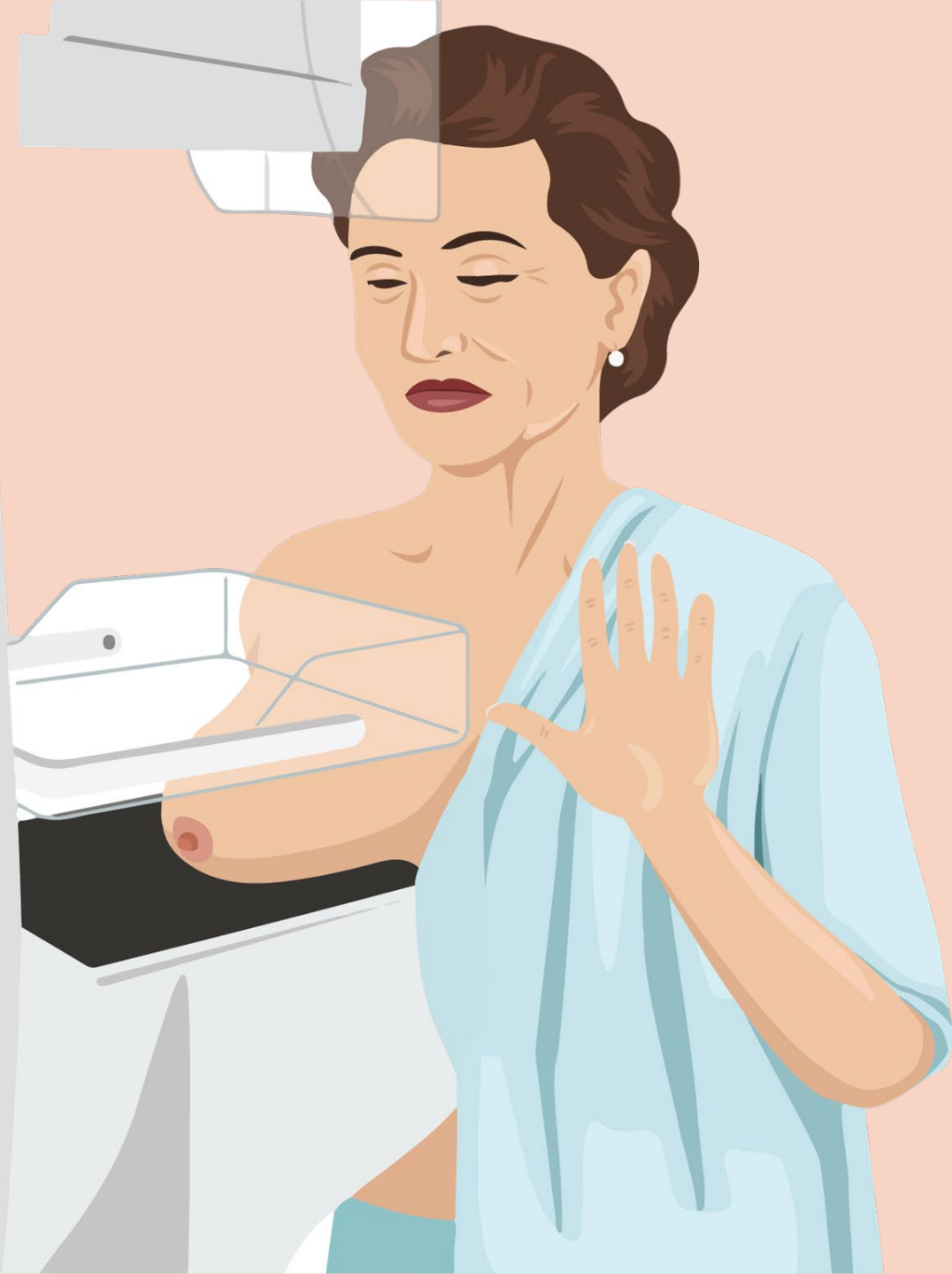


[Visit website](#)

Sensory tools

- **Fidgets and stress balls** -controlled sensory input can help regulate the nervous system, improving focus and promoting calm
 - Clients were invited to bring their own sensory tools e.g. headphones, ear plugs, sunglasses, fidgets
 - Reassured that BreastScreen staff understood and encouraged the use of sensory tools
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Tips for sensory friendly screening

- Everyone has a unique sensory profile – be accepting and adaptable
 - Limit number of staff involved
 - Assume woman's competence
 - Use literal, clear and concise communication
 - Allow client time to process and respond
 - Establish a "Stop" signal
 - If client is overwhelmed, apply the rule of one (one person, one thing at a time)
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Evaluation of the first sensory friendly clinic

- Seven new clients, aged from 40-55 years, all with autism or ADHD
 - Most requested natural or low lighting and no music
 - Some used sensory tools
 - Client and staff feedback was overwhelmingly positive
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The staff made the whole thing easy. I especially liked being able to hold a stress ball and not being rushed.

They were gentle and reassuring and explained everything so well. The dimmed lights and silence in the waiting room and xray room were appreciated. The machines are pretty quiet, and it wasn't as invasive as I'd imagined.

- Clients

Every woman who walked through the door today was grateful to be here. My first client was grateful that we were willing to turn down the lights, not have noise, and she could sit outside if she wanted to. If she goes anywhere else, she is deemed to be 'difficult', but today, she felt supported. This is the best day I've had in 19 years at BreastScreen.

- Staff

Who may benefit from sensory friendly screening clinics?

- Autism Spectrum
 - Traumatic brain injury
 - Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
 - Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (including domestic violence, sexual abuse)
 - Hearing loss/vestibular disorder/Meniere's disease
 - Anxiety disorders
 - Chronic fatigue syndrome
 - Pain disorder e.g. fibromyalgia
 - Chemical sensitivity/severe asthmatics
 - Bipolar disorder
 - OCD, agoraphobia, panic attacks
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Next steps...

- More sensory friendly clinics planned
 - Keep listening and learning, and responding to client's feedback
 - Incorporate the environmental changes into other clinics
 - Develop a video for sensory clinics
 - Partner with relevant organisations to promote the clinics
 - Continue to cultivate a culture of inclusivity.
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Thank you

Questions?

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