# *“There’s always hope”*

## Improving access to clinical trials for people living with secondary breast cancer




## Background

Secondary breast cancer, also known as metastatic, advanced or stage 4, is breast cancer that has spread to other parts of the body. It cannot be treated but it cannot be cured. For people living with this disease, timely access to new therapies and other treatment lines is critical. For many, clinical trials offer hope but there are enormous information barriers surrounding trials and persistent myths that patients are treated as ‘guinea pigs’ and clinical trials are only for those who have ‘run out of options’.

## Patient Trials Advocate Service

UK charity Make 2nds Count pioneered an informational and support service known as the Patient Trials Advocate (PTA) service. This free service aims to:

- Equip patients with knowledge about clinical trials
- Overcome common misconceptions
- Ensure that patients feel empowered to have clinical trials conversations.

It offers appointments with a specialist nurse, no matter where the patient lives, where they can discuss their treatment history and receive a personalised trials search report based on their eligibility. Our nurses support patients to access clinical trials available in the UK and internationally, providing them with the tools they need to push forward with trials as part of their treatment plan.

**We maintain a public registry of all UK clinical trials for secondary breast cancer: www.make2ndscount.co.uk/research/uk-clinical-trial-registry**

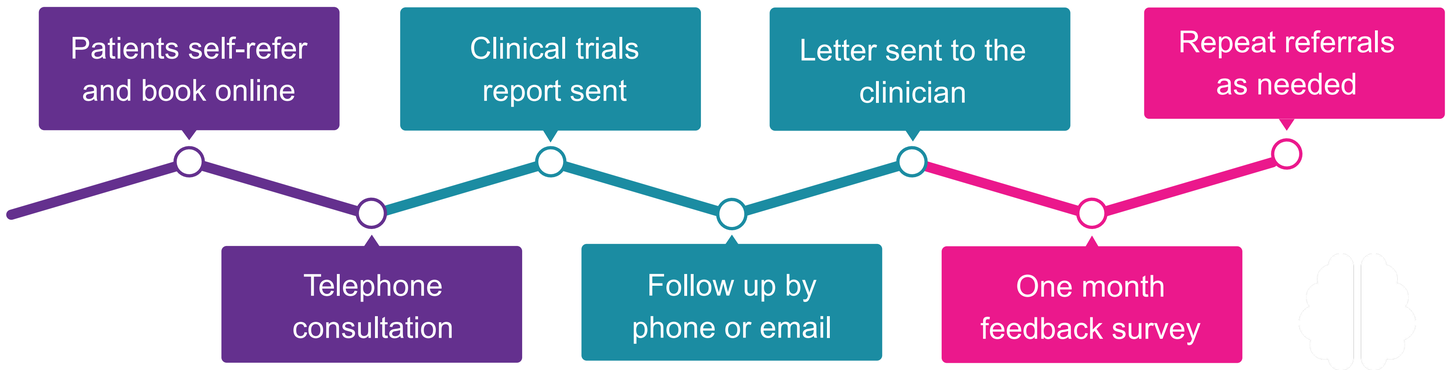






## Methodology

Working together with the patient community and healthcare professionals, we developed a 3 month pilot service matching patients to eligible clinical trials. Initially the pilot was conducted in the Lothians, Borders, Livingston, Fife and Dumfries and Galloway, and subsequently rolled out across Scotland and UK-wide.

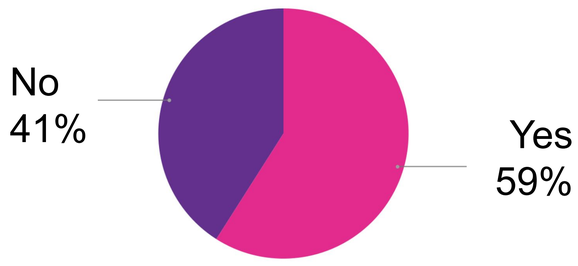



## Results

Since 2021 we have achieved:

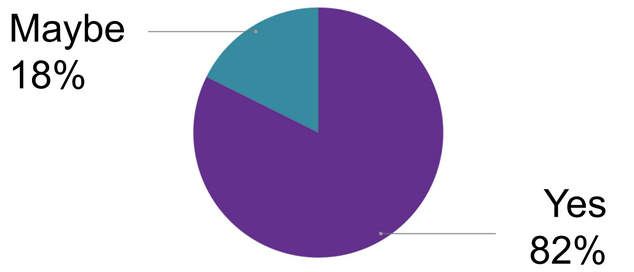
- **400** Patient referrals
- Found eligible trials for **84%** patients
- **94%** Highest service ratings

**Before Appointment:**




Have you discussed trials with your clinical team previously?

**After Appointment:**




Do you plan to speak to your clinical team about trials in the future?



## Our People

Lesley Stephen, Patient advocate
Vivienne Wilson, Lead PTA nurse
Melanie Tolson & Catherine Graham, PTA nurses
Corinne McDougall, Support & Patient Engagement Coordinator
Dr Sarah Thomas, Research Manager:

*With special thanks to Tassia Haines for creating illustrations*

**Get in touch:** 0131 357 4811
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*“This is the best service of any charity I have received. It is invaluable to have the help of someone like Vivienne on your side during a very scary and vulnerable time of deciding on next line of treatment. This service is wonderful.”*