**Title: Directional vacuum-assisted (DV) breast biopsy October 1999**

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**Aim**

To assess the safety and effectiveness of the procedure and under what circumstances public

funding should be supported for the procedure.

**Conclusions and results**

*Safety* DV breast biopsy is safe.

*Effectiveness* Comparative studies (level III-3 evidence) suggest that compared to core

biopsy, DV breast biopsy:

1. has a higher success rate for the removal of microcalcifications;

2. is able to obtain larger numbers of specimens at biopsy; and

3. has increased sensitivity in the detection of ductal carcinoma in situ and atypical ductal hyperplasia.

DV breast biopsy seems to be a more effective diagnostic for non-palpable breast abnormalities.

*Cost-effectiveness* This was not undertaken. Some items used in DV are more expensive than with core-biopsy.

**Recommendations**

DV breast biopsy for non-palpable breast lesions should receive higher remuneration than

currently available, pending a review of the costs of the procedure.

**Method**

MSAC conducted a systematic review of medical literature on DV from 1975 until August

1998 using Medline, HealthSTAR and the Cochrane Library databases.