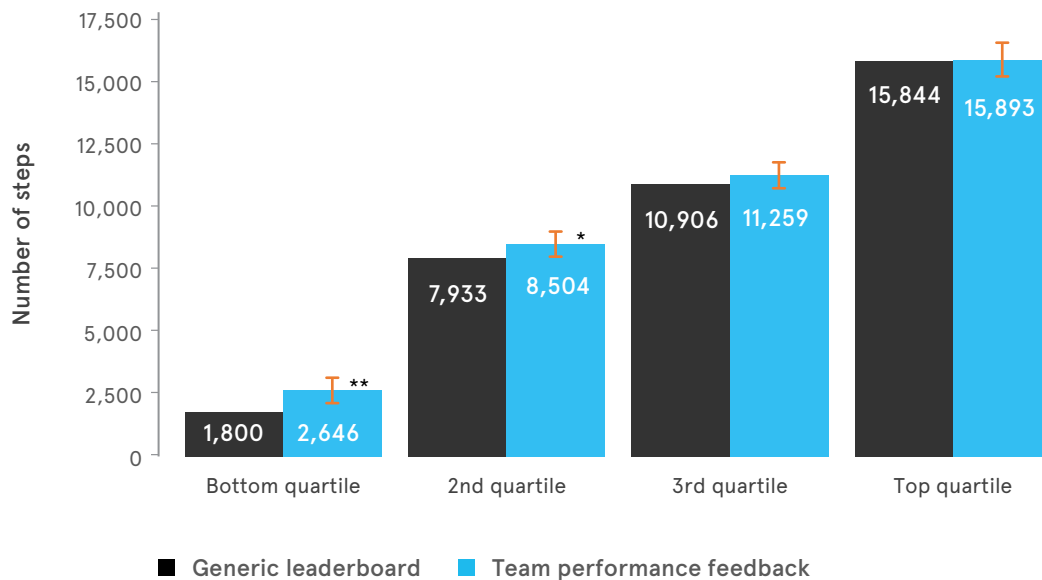


Figure 10.2: Effect of intervention (by quartile distribution of prior exercise level)



N=14,725

\*\* p&lt;0.01, \* p&lt;0.05, + p&lt;0.1

### Improving cancer screening rates

Detecting breast cancer early, before any symptoms are noticed, maximises the chances of successful treatment. The best way of doing this is through a regular breast screen, not least because it enables you to compare previous X-rays with a current breast screen.

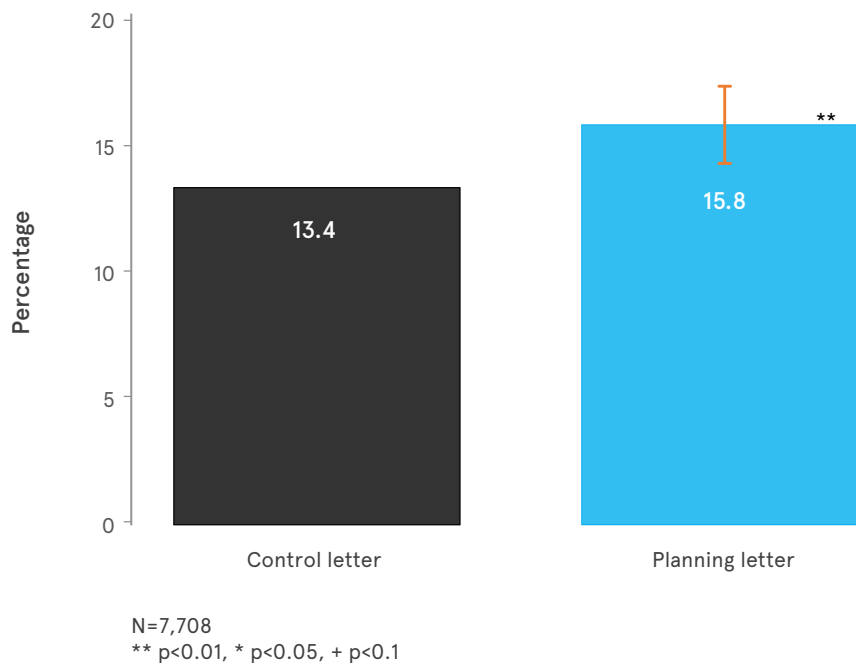
Over the course of the last year, BIT Australia has undertaken a programme of work with BreastScreen Victoria to test different ways of encouraging people to attend breast screening sessions. This included two large scale trials.

The first trial drew on a classic behavioural intervention – encouraging people to plan ahead. Around 7,700 women received one of two letters. Both letters informed the recipients about the risks of breast cancer and about the free breast screening service offered by BreastScreen Victoria.

The second letter was identical to the first but included a simple planning prompt: at the bottom of the letter, recipients were encouraged to write down the time and date of their breast screening appointment. This was intended to prompt people to think about when they might be able to attend, the practicalities involved in getting there, and then

once booked, to remember to turn up for the appointment. As shown in the graph below, the planning letters significantly increased the number of women who booked the breast screening appointment from 13.4 to 15.8 per cent. In addition, this effect carried through, with two percentage points more women ultimately being screened in the treatment group.

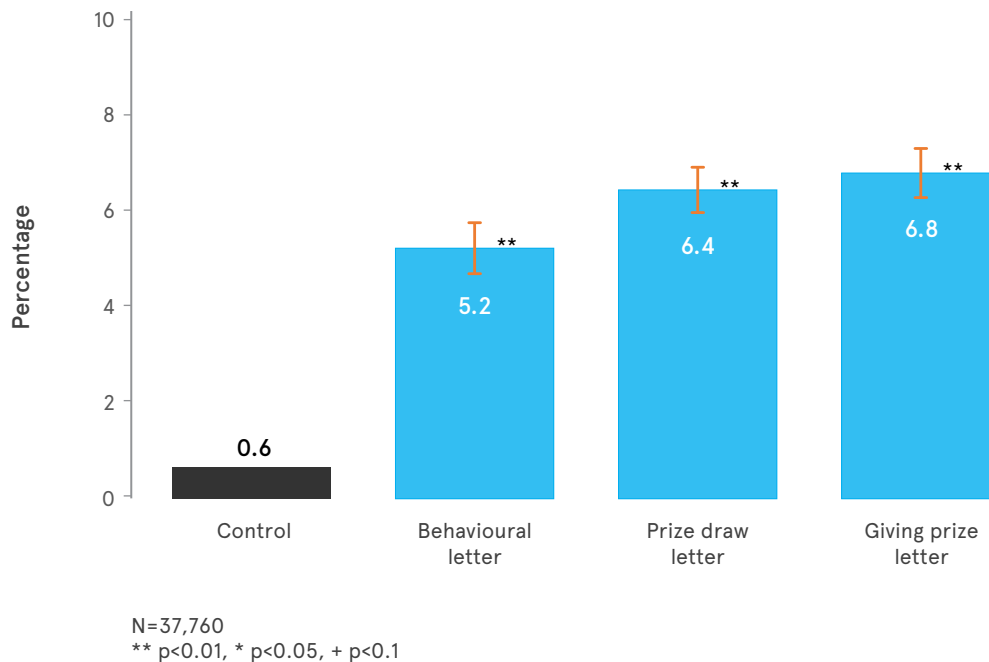
Figure 10.3: Percentage of women booking appointments, depending on what letter they received



In the second trial, we tried a more complex idea. We tested different ways of encouraging women who had not previously responded to two postal invitations. In the control condition, no invitation was sent. This was compared with one of three letters. First, a behaviourally-informed letter. Second, a letter which entered respondents into a prize draw to win an iPad. Third, a letter that included a pro-social twist: recipients were told that they could give the prize to a valued other person ('giving prize'). In total 38,000 women were randomly allocated into the four groups.

The behaviourally-informed letter led to a significant increase in bookings. We also found that both prize draw conditions were more effective than the letter alone. The highest rate of bookings was for the giving prize draw, but there was no statistically significant difference between this and the standard prize draw.

Figure 10.4: Percentage of previously non-responsive women booking, depending on what letter they received



An important question is how much the iPad prize draw cost per person relative to sending a behavioural letter, when the cost of giving out the prizes is factored in. We estimate a cost of AU\$1.50 per additional booking – a highly cost-effective intervention, in other words. We estimate that if the best performing arms in all of the trials we ran with BreastScreen Victoria were used, it would have resulted in 4,100 more women booking appointments than a ‘business-as-usual’ approach.

### Capability building across Australia and New Zealand

Alongside our project work, a major focus of BIT Australia’s efforts is on supporting other organisations to build their internal capacity and capability. Part of BIT’s wider mission is to help develop a greater understanding of behavioural science so that increasingly, it becomes a standard part of the policymaker’s toolkit.

Over the past year in Australia and New Zealand we have run around 30 separate workshops for more than 500 regional and federal government officials. Alongside this programme of introductory workshops, we have developed a suite of executive training programmes with the Australia and New Zealand School of Government (ANZSOG).

BIT Australia has also been working for more than a year with the Australian Department of Employment to help build its internal capabilities on behavioural sciences and the associated evaluation methodologies. As part of this collaboration, BIT and the Department have been co-designing and implementing a number of trials.

Outside of the UK, Australia was one of the first countries to test and adapt behavioural insights methods and approaches. It is no coincidence that NSW hosted the first Behavioural Exchange Conference in 2014, and the depth and sophistication of its application continues to grow at an impressive rate.