

News Release

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Health Authorities Release Update on Patient Identification Review

The four regional health authorities today released an update on the patient identification review for ER/PR testing. This review was conducted by the Newfoundland and Labrador Centre for Health Information (NLCHI). The new total confirmed number of patients with original "negative" ER/PR tests performed between 1997 and 2005 that were identified for re-testing is 1088.

This number includes an additional 65 patients who have been identified since the conclusion of the Commission of Inquiry on Hormone Receptor Testing who either required re-testing or were re-tested but not included in the database. The breakdown of this information is as follows:

- A total of 12,500 files were reviewed.
- Of the 65 new cases, 34 are living and 31 are deceased.
- 51 patients requiring re-testing have been identified through the review of charts of which 46 are from the Eastern region, one is from the Central region and four are from the Western region. There were no cases in the Labrador-Grenfell region.
- 14 patients have been identified, either self-reported or RHA-identified, who had been re-tested at Mount Sinai but were not reported to NLCHI for inclusion in the database. Ten are from the Eastern region, two are from the Central region and two are from Western region

All known living patients with the exception of one woman living in the Eastern Region have been contacted regarding retesting. This person will be contacted next week. The next-of-kin for the deceased will receive information via registered mail, as recommended in the Commission of Inquiry on Hormone Receptor Testing Report, about how to obtain results.

The reasons vary as to why cases were missed in the original search process. In some instances the cases were missed due to incomplete manual searches and incomplete or non-standard coding practices. For half of the cases, an explanation for why these were missed could not be determined.

NLCHI has also provided an update on mortality status of the overall group. In February 2008, of the total of 1013 patients, 691 were alive and 322 were deceased. In the summer of 2008, 10 additional patients were added to the database but a mortality update was not provided at that time. In June 2009, the new total is 1088 patients, of which 696 are alive and 392 are deceased. It should be noted that statistics on mortality status do not explain the causes of death or indicate a causal relationship between ER/PR testing and life expectancy.

In the fall of 2008, the Provincial Government requested the Newfoundland and Labrador Centre for Health Information undertake a more robust review of ER/PR testing in the province, beginning with Eastern Health. The purpose of this additional review was to further enhance the database that captures important information on the number of patients re-tested, processes for contact with patients, and the extent of changed results. This comprehensive, provincial review process will now move into Phase II and will focus on changes in test results. When this process is complete information will be released publicly.

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