

**Susan Bonnell**

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**From:** Susan Bonnell  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 31, 2007 9:01 AM  
**To:** Pat Pilgrim  
**Subject:** RE: ER/Pr - Notification of Deceased Relatives  
**Attachments:** EH Apologizes CBC Radio May 18 2007.doc; Tilley Apologizes to Breast Cancer Patients CBC Here and Now May 18 2007.doc

Think it's clear that we need to contact the families directly.

Here's the content from his prepared statement:

I also appreciate that this issue must be causing incredible anxiety for the families of the women who have passed away. We sincerely regret that.

Unfortunately we simply do not know how many of these patients may benefited from hormonal therapy.

We are committed to being responsive to all our patients and their and if a systematic review of these tissue samples would help to alleviate concerns, than I am committed to ensure that this is completed and that patient's families are contacted for follow-up.



**Susan Bonnell**

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**From:** Pat Pilgrim  
**Sent:** Monday, July 30, 2007 1:02 PM  
**To:** Louise Jones; Oscar Howell  
**Cc:** Heather Predham; Susan Bonnell; Pat Pilgrim  
**Subject:** ER/Pr - Notification of Deceased Relatives

Hello, As you are both aware, George announced publicly that we would be carrying on with the retesting of all deceased patients who had original negative results.

Susan is checking on the exact commitment he made re the notification of the deceased next of kin. Today in the Coordinating Committee, we talked about the possible notification alternatives and concluded that the best way to do this would be to attempt a direct notification via mail. We have already started sending the specimens to Mount Sinai for retesting. We expect to start getting the results in a couple of weeks. Oscar, for those that convert from negative to positive, the group felt they should be paneled to see how many of them would have had a treatment change???? We are thinking we follow the same process as we did for all others. So, we just need your approval for the discussion we had today

- We directly notify next of kin of results when they are received.
- We have any conversions paneled to determine if there would have been a treatment change.

Pat

709NEWS

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Product Summary:

**EASTERN HEALTH APOLOGIZES:** Health officials in Nfld and Labrador are now apologizing to the public saying it was a mistake to withhold information from breast cancer

Friday, May 18, 2007 04:30PM Item # 01

CBC Radio St. John's

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Standing Order: YES

Standing Order

**EASTERN HEALTH APOLOGIZES:** Health officials in Nfld and Labrador are now apologizing to the public saying it was a mistake to withhold information from breast cancer

Friday, May 18, 2007 04:30PM Item # 01

CBC Radio St. John's

**MARCIA WILLIAMS:** In Newfoundland and Labrador health officials are apologising to the public. They now say it was a mistake to withhold information from breast cancer patients who were denied anti-hormone therapy due to faulty testing. But, as Vik Adhopia tells us, the CEO of the Eastern Health Authority insists patient safety was not compromised.

**GEORGE TILLEY:** And I apologise for the confusion that that caused.

**VIK ADHOPIA:** CEO George Tilley acknowledges it was a mistake to keep quiet about how poorly Eastern Health's hormone testing was performing. The test was meant to determine if breast cancer patients who were entitled to anti-hormone therapy received it. Eastern Health was testing to see whose cancer was driven by estrogen or progesterone. Faulty test results meant more than three hundred women didn't get adequate treatment; thirty-six of whom died. But Tilley maintains patients who later qualified for the treatment as a result of retesting did get it,

**GEORGE TILLEY:** We made a decision in this process to focus in on the results of those individuals who could benefit from a change in therapy.

**VIK ADHOPIA:** Tilley admits most patients didn't know their test results were under question as soon as Eastern Health knew there was a problem. He says it was to spare them from anxiety. Peter Dawe of the Canadian Cancer Society says that

**was wrong.**

**PETER DAWE: Full disclosure was important. Individuals could have been brought into the process a lot quicker. They should be part of the decision making about their own treatment.**

**VIK ADHOPIA: To this day, there are still families of deceased patients who don't know a mistake was made. Eastern Health says everyone affected will now be contacted. Vik Adhopia, CBC News, St. John's.**

709NEWS

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Product Summary:

**TILLEY APOLOGIZES TO BREAST CANCER PATIENTS AND FAMILIES:** The head of Eastern Health apologized today for inaccurate breast cancer testing.

Friday, May 18, 2007 06:00PM Item # 01

CBC - TV News

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Standing Order: YES

Breast Cancer Testing - All Media - HCS

**TILLEY APOLOGIZES TO BREAST CANCER PATIENTS AND FAMILIES:**

The head of Eastern Health apologized today for inaccurate breast cancer testing.

Friday, May 18, 2007 06:00PM Item # 01

CBC - TV News

**JONATHON CROWE:** We'll begin today with an apology from Eastern Health. The head of the Health Board says he is sorry for not telling people everything about incorrect breast cancer tests and now some women who might have been eligible for hormone treatment are dead. Here and Now has full coverage beginning with Glen Dier.

**GLEN DIER:** Jonathan, cancer patients and the general public have had their confidence shaken by what was not revealed until this week. The words contrite, apologetic, and even remorseful are appropriate to describe how the top official at Eastern Health behaved this morning.

George Tilley has faced the media a great many times in his career but never so humbly.

**GEORGE TILLEY:** It's great to be a Monday morning quarterback now but I confess to you that I regret that we didn't do that and I apologize for it.

**GLEN DIER:** The apology is for not fully disclosing all he knew much earlier. He admits that fueled suspicion and confusion. And then there's the issue of those 36 people now dead. Some of whom might, might be alive today if the test results had been right and their treatment different.

**GEORGE TILLEY:** Cancer is a terrible disease and this situation has weighed very heavy on me, personally and my colleagues. Having said that as you have

eluded to we don't have an ability to be able to say whether the . . .the treatment of hormonal therapy would have made a difference to those people. I regret that and I wish that I could change it all.

**GLEN DIER:** What they have changed is the way tests are done. Eastern Health says it lab now meets the gold standard.

**DR. NEBOJSA DENIC:** We are good as any best laboratory in Canada if not in North America.

**GLEN DIER:** Someday the mistakes could end up on court. Some cancer survivors are pursuing a class-action suit. Still the Canadian Cancer Society says apology accepted.

**PETER DAWE:** I think it was very sincere. I think they honestly know that they made a huge mistake in their communication process and I really hope they learn from it.

**GLEN DIER:** The self-recrimination may not be over. Eastern Health will retest samples for every deceased patient in the troubled period. So that number of 36 could be grow. Glen Deir CBC News St. John's.