Susan Bonnell

From: Deborah Thomas
Sent: Friday, July 22, 2005 3:37 PM
To: Susan Bonnell
Subject: as requested

Eastern
HEALTH

MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Eastern Health reviews ER and PR test results

July XX, 2005, St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador – The General Hospital Laboratory will be retesting breast tissue specimens collected prior to 2004 that tested negative for estrogen and progesterone receptors, Eastern Health announced today.

The decision to retest these specimens comes after a review of specimens revealed that a high percentage of previously negative tests have changed to positive using a new, more sensitive, type of testing technology. The retesting may provide new opportunities for patients with breast cancer.

ER/PR positive tumours are more likely to respond to hormone therapy. Although not a cure for breast cancer, hormone drugs such as Tamoxifen can affect the progression of these tumours.

"We believe we have a responsibility to our patients to do a double-check in this situation" said Dr. Robert Williams, M.D., Vice President Quality, Diagnostic and Medical Services. "Our patients are always our first priority and we want them to know we have given them the best options for their care."

Patients who may be impacted have been contacted by letter and all patients will be contacted by their oncologist or physician if any treatment changes are required.

Approximately XXX of specimens will be retested. Patients do not need to visit a hospital. The retesting is being completed on existing lab specimens.

Patients with questions about this process can contact the Patient Relations Officer at 777- XXX or toll free 1-800 XXXXX.

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Eastern
HEALTH

MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Laboratory testing review to be completed by outside consultant

July XX, 2005, St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador – Changes in technology and a commitment to quality control has prompted Eastern Health to examine its pathology system at the General Hospital in St. John's.

Eastern Health has hired an outside consultant to review existing laboratory procedures and equipment, as well as provide expertise on the past several years of laboratory activity.

"We are thrilled to have someone of this calibre to study our operations," said Dr. Robert Williams, M.D., Vice President Quality, Diagnostic and Medical Services. "It's imperative to us and to the safety of our patients that we are always looking at ways to be better and this is an example of that."

In 2003, significant changes were made to improve the accuracy of immuno testing, and in 2004 the purchase of the Ventana system further improved processes. However, in 2005 some test results from prior to 2004 were reviewed prompting a more extensive review of procedures, leading ot the external review being conducted this month.

XXXX XXXX from Mount Sinai, a graduate of XXXX, will be visiting the provincial laboratory on Sept. whatever. He/she will have the full cooperation of the entire department and access to all pertinent areas.

A report is expected in XXX of this year.

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For information, contact: Deborah Thomas, Corporate Communications, 777-1339/685-7697

EASTERN REGIONAL INTEGRATED HEALTH AUTHORITY
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