

**From:** Diane Hart  
**To:** Louise Jones; Stephen Dodge; Beverley Clarke;  
Pat Pilgrim;  
**cc:** Paula Dillon; Dianne Smith; Joyce Penney;  
**Subject:** FW: Letter to Patients & Families from Eastern Health  
**Date:** May-12-08 9:30:12 AM  
**Attachments:** Letter to Patients-Families from Eastern Health.pdf

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Attached is the prepared ad for provincial newspapers to begin printing on Wednesday.

This has to be sent to the Telegram by noon today to meet their deadline.

Diane

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**From:** Angela Lawrence  
**Sent:** May 12, 2008 9:26 AM  
**To:** Diane Hart  
**Subject:** Letter to Patients & Families from Eastern Health



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Manager of Design Services

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## **LETTER TO PATIENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES**

As the Interim President and CEO of Eastern Health, I feel it necessary to contact you at this time on behalf of Eastern Health. Since the Commission of Inquiry hearings began, it has become increasingly clear that the impact of the ER/PR testing issue is profound. The way we addressed the issue and the decisions we made have had a negative impact on you, our patients, and this is unacceptable. We get calls everyday from patients and families looking for more information and telling us their concerns. We know that every patient deserves to receive the highest standard of care possible from Eastern Health. We wish to say to you that we are sorry that we, as a health care organization, did not provide you the high quality patient care in relation to the ER/PR issue that you deserve and that we expect of ourselves. We deeply regret any stress, pain, and anxiety felt by you and your family because of this issue.

To our knowledge, our decision to go back eight years to retest patient tissue samples for ER/PR is something that had never been done before in Canada. It was a massive undertaking, and its challenges are still being felt. This action was launched without hesitation and for one reason only: to identify patients who might be candidates for additional drug therapies such as tamoxifen.

We have learned many things throughout this process. There are many things we would have done differently if we had known then what we know today about the size and complexity of the task that actually faced us.

We have heard your views on how we communicated with you and the public. Again, there are lessons we have learned. But if there is one thing I want you to know, it is this: those responsible for your care tried to make the best decisions they could at the time. Their main concern was to present you with the most accurate and complete information possible about your own health care as soon as it was available. We know now that there were many cases where you and others like you should have received this information sooner.

We are available to talk to you or your family in person or by phone to provide further information. If you are unsure of your results or would like to discuss your results please give us a call toll free at **1-866-445-4548**. And more information on ER/PR is available on the Eastern Health website at [www.easternhealth.ca](http://www.easternhealth.ca). In addition, we would welcome any suggestions you might have for improving our services.

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

Sincerely,

Interim President & Chief Executive Officer, Eastern Health

