

**From:** [Pat Pilgrim](#)  
**To:** [Sharon Smith; Nebojsa Denic; Kara Laing; Terry Mouland; Jim Brown; Terry Gulliver; Oscar Howell; Heather Predham; Pam Elliott; Lynn Wade;](#)  
**Subject:** FW: New draft  
**Date:** November-02-07 9:08:25 AM

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Just to let you know that the Minister is going out with the attached information today. We are not in agreement with this and will not be responding to any media inquiries about this....Up to today, as a result of the NLCHI work we have identified 9 patients who were never retested. They were negative in the original specimens, but were all put on Tamoxifen. We have to notify them that they are being retested but it will have no bearing on their treatment. There are another 6 that were retested and confirmed negative. We are pretty sure we did notify them that they were retested, but are unable to find the written record of this. We will be calling them. There are 3 more that were never retested. One of them is out of the country. The other two of them have to be contacted and told that they will be retested. Please let any concerned staff know about this. If they need to talk to someone give me a call. This is it for now! Pat

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-----Original Message-----

From: Louise Jones  
Sent: Friday, November 02, 2007 8:29 AM  
To: Pat Pilgrim  
Subject: FW: New draft

-----Original Message-----

From: Robert Thompson [<mailto:RThompson@gov.nl.ca>]  
Sent: Friday, November 02, 2007 12:05 AM

To: Louise Jones; Susan Bonnell  
Subject: New draft

This draft is also being reviewed by the Minister. It incorporates most of your changes, with a few extras.

The Minister of Health and Community Services, Ross Wiseman, today provided a progress report on the work being undertaken by government, in collaboration with regional health authorities, to prepare for the Commission of Inquiry on Hormone Receptor Testing.

"On May 22 of this year I announced that our government would undertake a Commission of Inquiry as an important and necessary measure to ensure a thorough review and understanding of what exactly happened with respect to the problems encountered with ER/PR testing for breast cancer patients," said Minister Wiseman. "As part of our preparation for the Commission process, a comprehensive database was developed to ensure a thorough understanding and documentation of what transpired as part of the re-testing of ER/PR results."

During the summer, the Department asked the Newfoundland and Labrador Centre for Health Information (NLCHI) to develop a database to allow analysis of the key events related to ER/PR testing including: 1) the total number of ER/PR tests sent to Mount Sinai for retesting; 2) whether there are any breast cancer patients tested between May 1997 and August 2005 who need re-testing at Mount Sinai but were not included in the initial round of re-testing; and 3) any patients who had been re-tested in 2005/06 but were not contacted. NLCHI is the crown agency charged with developing and maintaining a wide range of health statistics and information systems and is regarded as a repository of expertise in the health system regarding database management.

While compiling of the database continues, there are emerging results which we wish to share with patients and the public.

In December 2006, Eastern Health reported that 939 patients with original ER/PR tests between 1997 and 2005 had been re-tested at Mount Sinai Hospital. The main criterion for being selected for retesting was that the original test result was "negative" for estrogen and progesterone receptivity. The work thus far on the new database shows that approximately 1000 cases have been sent to Mount Sinai Hospital for

retesting. Despite the growth in the total number of cases, and except for 14 patients noted below, almost all the extra cases were retested in the original 2005/2006 period and assessed when the results came back from Mount Sinai.

It is important to note that the total number of cases may grow in the coming weeks as the database exercise is completed. For example, [there are some test results from Mount Sinai for which NLCHI has not yet identified the matching original test results. Once the matches are made, the cases will be added to the database.] The public will be informed about the total when a firm number is established.

There are 14 new cases which were sent for retesting in the last two months. Two of these patients have been confirmed negative. Results have not yet been returned for the other 12 cases. However, in nine of these cases the patients' physicians determined they should be treated as positive and they have received Tamoxifen or other adjuvant therapy. There is insufficient information to date on the final three cases to determine whether the retest will result in a treatment change. Contact with the 14 people and their physician has begun.

The data base development process has also been used to ensure that all retested patients have been contacted with their final results. To date we have identified six patients for which there is no documentation of contact. Today Eastern Health is calling these patients to confirm the earlier contact or, if necessary, to provide the re-test results.

The Commission of Inquiry on Hormone Receptor Testing was briefed yesterday on the results to date from the new database. We expect that these matters will be examined by the Commission. We look forward to this examination which will help improve the processes for handling similar events in the future.

Robert Thompson  
Deputy Minister  
Department of Health and Community Services  
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador  
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