



## **Commission of Inquiry on Hormone Receptor Testing**

### **Commissioner Cameron's Opening Statement At The Public Hearings**

**March 19, 2008**

#### **INTRODUCTION:**

- Good Morning. Today we commence the public hearings phase of the work of the Commission of Inquiry on Hormone Receptor Testing. I am Margaret Cameron, the Commissioner.
- The Terms of Reference state what is to be done by the Commission, what the lawyers in this room would describe as the Commission's jurisdiction. As I said in September, the general purpose of the Commission is to:
  1. Find out why there were a high number of different results when certain hormone receptor tests, done between 1997 and 2005, were retested;
  2. Examine the response of authorities when the problems were discovered, including the communications with affected patients and others;
  3. Examine present practices related to estrogen and progesterone hormone receptor testing systems, and
  4. Make recommendations as to how such matters should be handled in the future.
- The Terms of Reference do not direct that I examine the records of each patient whose test results were different on retesting for the purpose of determining what impact that had on the health of the patient nor, in the case of those who have died, whether the test results and treatment decisions made on the basis of such results were factors in the deaths or timing of the deaths of those patients.
- The Commission does not act as a court and is prohibited from expressing any conclusions or making recommendations regarding civil or criminal responsibility of any person or organization.

- Since September the Commission has received and counsel have reviewed in excess of 5000 documents. Approximately 270 hours of interviews have been conducted thus far. All but two of the interviews were conducted in the presence of counsel for the person being interviewed. All of this activity was directed to ensuring that at this stage of the Inquiry Commission Counsel would be in a position to present a full and balanced picture of events and to do so as efficiently as possible. The use of technology, which is evidenced by the monitors you see in this room, will, we hope, make the presentation of evidence more efficient.
- The hearings will be webcast. In addition, a transcript of the proceedings will be posted on the Commission's website each evening. The schedule of hearings will also be on the website. It will list the witnesses to be heard each week. Hearings will commence at 9:30 each morning and generally continue until 4:45 each afternoon. The lunch break will be from 12:45 to 2:00 p.m. We plan to hold hearings from Monday to Thursday of each week. However, if weather interferes with hearings or if we are unable to complete the evidence of the witnesses listed for any week, we will continue on Friday of that week, except for Good Friday, March 21, 2008, when no hearings will be held.