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Date: 6/7/2007 10:34:15 AM
Subject: BREAST CANCER TESTING CONTROVERSY

709NEWS

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Product Summary:

BREAST CANCER TESTING CONTROVERSY: Host preamble. The Opposition says the government is in damage control mode when it comes to the faulty breast cancer testing in Eastern Health.

Thursday, June 07, 2007 09:04AM Item # 02
 VOCM Radio St. John's

Standing Order: NO

Ordered By Fax

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LINDA SWAIN: The Opposition says government is in damage control mode when it comes to the controversy surrounding faulty tests that help determine treatment options for breast cancer patients. And you may have heard comments by the Minister last week and also from Eastern Health that patients were informed as soon as the problem was discovered in 2005. Well I received a letter from a listener who is a breast cancer patient, a very well written letter I have to say, very clear. And she indicated that she was diagnosed with breast cancer back in 2002. And she was told at that time no, no everything is fine, you don't need any treatment with Tamoxifen, your hormone receptor tests have come back negative, carry on as you should. And she indicates in her letter to me that, that didn't sit well with her, she just didn't, it didn't seem right somehow. She of course like anybody that receives that dreaded diagnosis tries to do research and she had received a book and had read through the book you know indicating the different things that breast cancer patients should be aware of. And she said somehow that just did not sit well with her. And eventually she did get a letter, she did get a letter indicating that no, the testing was wrong. Initially it tested that she had a less than ten percent likelihood of you know hormone. . . that the hormone receptor testing showed that you know that wasn't an issue and then it went up to over 80 percent. So of course she needs to go on the Tamoxifen. But she got that letter she tells us in 2006 and she actually sent me a copy of that letter that she got from Eastern Health. So she just wanted to point out that if there are indications that patients were informed in 2005, that's not necessarily the case, she wasn't informed until 2006. And of course that's raising lots of questions, a judicial inquiry has been announced although the mandate hasn't been set exactly yet and a commissioner hasn't been appointed to that yet. But calls continue for the resignation of the Health Minister. The Premier has said you know guess again, that's not going to happen. But I'd like to hear what you have to say about that as well because it continues to be a very important issue in Newfoundland and Labrador.