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CBC Radio St. John's

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Product Summary:

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Standing Order: YES

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JACINTA WALL: Eastern Health apologized today for the way it handled information about faulty medical tests. In 2005 the health authority started to find problems with hormone receptor tests. That test is given to breast cancer patients to determine what treatment they should get. Last year, Eastern Health refused to reveal how many tests turned out to be wrong. That information became public only this week when CBC reported that court documents show more than three hundred tests were inaccurate. At a news conference this afternoon, Eastern Health admitted it was a mistake to withhold that information. Mark Quinn reports.

MARK QUINN: Eastern Health CEO George Tilley said his organization was focusing on trying to do what was best for patients. Last year, the health authority said treatment changed for more than a hundred patients after tests were sent to Ontario for retesting. It didn't say that another two hundred hormone receptor tests were also wrong and thirty-six of those patients had died. Now, after calls for a judicial inquiry at

the House of Assembly and requests from the Health Minister to disclose everything, Tilley says, clearly, Eastern Health should have told people everything it knew last year.

GEORGE TILLEY: It's great to be a Monday morning quarterback now. But I confess to you that I regret that we didn't do that and I apologise for it.

MARK QUINN: Juanita Hudson is one of the more than three hundred women whose hormone receptor test was wrong. She's on Tamoxifen now but she should have been on it several years ago. She's angry about how the problem has been handled and she's not satisfied with Eastern Health's apology.

JUANITA HUDSON: Well, we're looking for a lot more, I think they deceived us in the beginning when they didn't tell us. So, I think they're trying to make up for lost time, really.

MARK QUINN: Hudson says more should be done to get to the bottom of what went wrong. MHAs have been calling for a full judicial inquiry. Tilley says Eastern Health would welcome that. Mark Quinn, CBC News, St. John's.