

**From:** [Thompson, Robert](#)  
**To:** [McGrath, Karen](#); [susangillam@westernhealth.nl.ca](mailto:susangillam@westernhealth.nl.ca);  
[Pat Pilgrim](#);  
**Subject:** Labrador Key Messages  
**Date:** June-30-08 12:08:25 PM

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FYI

Robert Thompson  
Secretary to Cabinet (Health Issues),  
Chair, Task Force on Adverse Health Events  
709.729.4092 (p)  
709.682.8946 (c)

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**From:** Boyd Rowe [mailto:[boyd.rowe@lghealth.ca](mailto:boyd.rowe@lghealth.ca)]  
**Sent:** Monday, June 30, 2008 11:52 AM  
**To:** Thompson, Robert  
**Subject:** FW: Testimony this morning

Robert,

Here are the suggested messages from LG Health. Brief but to the point..

- Labrador-Grenfell Health is committed to providing high quality, safe laboratory testing and strives to provide the best possible service for our clients.
- All pathology testing in the Labrador-Grenfell Health region is centralized in St. Anthony, where specimens are processed according to the established protocols.
- **In his testimony, Dr. Mullen referenced that slide preparations continue to be at levels below what is considered to be good quality. Since 2005, Labrador-Grenfell Health sends specimens in blocks only to Mount Sinai. The slide preparation is done at Mount Sinai and not at Labrador-Grenfell Health.**
- We are continuously monitoring the quality of our specimens and making improvements to the processes we have in place.

Let me know if you have questions or comments.

Boyd

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

**From:** Boyd Rowe  
**Sent:** Monday, June 30, 2008 10:24 AM  
**To:** Dr. Kweku Dankwa  
**Subject:** RE: Testimony this morning

Thank you. I suspect we may get some inquiry from the media. I have asked Alison to get your thoughts on some key messages should we be asked for comment.  
 Boyd

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

**From:** Dr. Kweku Dankwa  
**Sent:** Monday, June 30, 2008 10:16 AM  
**To:** Boyd Rowe  
**Subject:** RE: Testimony this morning

Hello Boyd,

Further information on how we are striving to maintain and improve on quality of our work:

1. The lead tech in histology had a week's "attachment" at the Histology lab in the Health Sciences, St John's when she took on the role in last year. The intention is for her to repeat that every year to ensure that we are keeping up with what techs are doing elsewhere. I have also had discussions with a comparative laboratory in Nova Scotia who are agreeable that we work together and that will also give her exposure to the practices there as well.
2. We send specimens and slides to Gamma Dyna Care in Ottawa when they are covering me. Therefore, another group of pathologists effectively "use" our laboratory service and would make comments if need be. To date we have heard none.
3. I participate in quality assurance scheme with College of American Pathologist. I get the opportunity to evaluate the accuracy of my diagnoses by reviewing slides they send me from time to time. In addition I also assess the quality of glass slides produced by the college. This inherently reinforces the expectation of what quality slides should be like.
4. In further pursuit of quality assurance, we send slides of every 25<sup>th</sup> specimen to Gamma Dyna Care for review. When I get their report I compare their results with ours to ensure that we are on the

same wavelength. If not, I re-review my slides to see if anything further needs to be done.

These are few thoughts I felt I should share with you.

Thanks.

Kweku

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

**From:** Boyd Rowe

**Sent:** Friday, June 27, 2008 2:18 PM

**To:** Dr. Kweku Dankwa

**Subject:** FW: Testimony this morning

Good Day Dr. Dankwa, What are your thoughts on this? I'd like you provide some feedback from LG Health. Thanks.

Boyd

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

**From:** Thompson, Robert [mailto:rthompson@gov.nl.ca]

**Sent:** Friday, June 27, 2008 12:56 PM

**To:** McGrath, Karen; susangillam@westernhealth.nl.ca; Boyd Rowe

**Subject:** Testimony this morning

Pat:

Just an alert that I think Dr. Mullen of Mount Sinai gave some eyebrow-raising testimony this morning. If I interpreted him correctly, he said that while positivity rates have improved since 2005 (based on the new cases that he has reviewed since the Eastern lab originally stopped ER/PR in 2005), the slide preparation is not "100%". It does not meet the same level of consistently good quality as Mount Sinai or other hospitals in the Niagara area that send their slides to Mount Sinai. Without labels he can often tell which slides have come from Newfoundland and which ones from elsewhere.

It was not clear from the testimony that these slides were from Eastern Health or your organizations. Nonetheless, the question may get asked, so you will need to be prepared for it.

Would you please give me your initial reaction to this testimony and how you might respond if it becomes a public issue. I will need to brief the Minister accordingly.

Robert Thompson  
 Secretary to Cabinet (Health Issues),  
 Chair, Task Force on Adverse Health Events  
 709.729.4092 (p)  
 709.682.8946 (c)

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