

Denise Dunn

From: Deborah Thomas-Pennell
Sent: Tuesday, December 06, 2005 2:12 PM
To: Dr. Robert Williams; George Tilley; Heather Predham; Susan Bonnell; Tansy Mundon; Nancy Parsons; Dr. Donald Cook; Terry Gulliver; Sharon Smith
Subject: FW: PATIENTS STILL WAITING FOR TEST RESULTS: The Canadian Cancer Society is critical of the amount of time its taking to review batched results for breast cancer tests. 01:43PM Item # 03



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VOCM yesterday. FYI

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

From: 709News@bristolgroup.ca [mailto:709News@bristolgroup.ca]
Sent: Tuesday, December 06, 2005 12:51 PM
To: Deborah Thomas-Pennell; 709news@bristolgroup.ca
Subject: PATIENTS STILL WAITING FOR TEST RESULTS: The Canadian Cancer Society is critical of the amount of time its taking to review batched results for breast cancer tests. 01:43PM Item # 03

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Tel: 709-576-6397 OR 1-888-709-6397
Fax: 709-753-7340

Product Summary:

PATIENTS STILL WAITING FOR TEST RESULTS: The Canadian Cancer Society is critical of the amount of time its taking to review batched results for breast cancer tests.
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VOCM Radio St. John's

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GERRY PHELAN: The Canadian Cancer Society is critical of the amount of time it's taking to review botched results for breast cancer tests. Some of those tests done since 1997 may have given the wrong results. Up to 800 women in Newfoundland and Labrador are affected. Peter Dawe, Executive Director of Canadian Cancer Society for this province says the retesting should have been done by the end of October. He says only about half of the 800 women have had their tests looked at for a second time.

PETER DAWE: Well we noticed 700 or 800 samples were sent away to be retested and ideally you know, that could have been done in six or eight weeks, everybody would have been happy to get the results back and women could have found out if they should have been on tamoxifen or not. You know the problem now is there are only about halfway through getting these samples retested. So you've got a group of women that are sitting there

knowing that they're going to be retested, they don't even know when it's going to be done and you know, if there's about 10 percent rate of changing from a negative to a positive then that means there's about 10 percent should have the opportunity to go on a drug like tamoxifen. So there's women sitting there knowing that you know, gee whiz it might be me that should be going on tamoxifen and can't even really figure out when we're going to get the tests results back.

GERRY PHELAN: What's the problem is that normally how long it would take to get these 700 or 800 women tested or did they mess up somewhere along the line?

PETER DAWE: The problem is that Mount Sinai was running at pretty well full capacity and then they were approached by Eastern Health to do you know these 700 or 800 more tests and they thought they could do it on weekends and then on over-time and get through it. You know what they discovered was that they just didn't have the capacity and to get 700 or 800 more tests done was taking a lot longer than they thought. And it's not even a money solution, you know, it's not like oh, we'll give you more money and you guys do it, it's a capacity up in Mount Sinai you only have so many lab technicians, you only have so many pathologists to read the results. So you know, that's the problem now is that, you know, there's no clear path for it to say well you know if we did this we could get through them all. And you know, so that's the frustrating part, the frustrating part is you don't see the solution either.

GERRY PHELAN: So is there no way to speed this thing up in the foreseeable future?

PETER DAWE: Mount Sinai apparently, has purchased a particular machine that can do this automatically a certain piece of it automated and they think that will speed it up but now, you know that's not the regular process. I mean the regular process is this test might take a week at the most, you know that would be the norm, that would be the expectation, the problem is that they've got this bulk of tests that they've got to get through and so it's clogged up the system up in Mount Sinai.

GERRY PHELAN: God forbid but are we putting some women in danger because of these time delays?

PETER DAWE: Well there's no doubt that if you look at the entire group of women and if you look at the experience they've gone through and the delays of getting on a drug like tamoxifen. Tamoxifen in the clinical trials has shown one particular clinical trial a 33 percent increase in survival rate over a two year period and so there's no doubt that you know taking a group of people, you can't pick out which one and it's almost impossible on an individual basis but you know if you take a group of people almost a thousand women and then you know 100 of them should have been on tamoxifen, there's no doubt that lives were and have been endangered and will be endangered unless this process is hurried along.

GERRY PHELAN: Peter Dawe.