

Denise Dunn

From: Joan Dawe [jddawe@warp.nfld.net]
Sent: Wednesday, July 20, 2005 10:43 AM
To: George Tilley
Cc: Dr. Robert Williams
Subject: Re: Clinical Issue and NLHBA Activities

Hi. Thanks for the update. Very sorry to hear of the situation. I agree with making this public asap when you have the details. Let's plan for briefing the board via conference call before this info. becomes public.

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

From: "George Tilley" <George.Tilley@hccsj.nl.ca>
To: "Joan Dawe" <jddawe@warp.nfld.net>
Cc: <hcc.wilr@hccsj.nf.ca>
Sent: Wednesday, July 20, 2005 9:11 AM
Subject: Clinical Issue and NLHBA Activities

Welcome back.

I will need to call you latter today when I learn more but we potentially have a major clinical issue on our hands, which pertains to the accuracy of laboratory testing for women who have been diagnosed with breast cancer, and get tested for the most appropriate treatment option. In 2004 we automated this procedure, so the issue pertains to testing pre 2004. The new process is said to be ten times more sensitive than the former, labour intensive, process. The issue was drawn to our attention when a lady who was originally tested in 2002 was retested in 2005 and found to have a positive result. Since we still had the specimens for those who were tested over the years (from St. John's) we have done some retesting of those done in 2002 and others, have tested positive. The majority of the patients, whose specimens we have retested and have converted to positive, have been in contact with their oncologist. The challenge now is to determine whether the new results are a consequence of the more sensitive technology we have acquired or an error in the way it was handled these tests in the past, and if it is the latter, whether it has been an ongoing problem or isolated to a particular year.

I have been I touch with the Minister, who is edging us to go public asap. No doubt about the need to do that, but not until I know the size and shape of it. For example, late yesterday the size of the issue began to shrink as managers compared the results of these tests with national benchmark outcomes and found that in 2003 we were consistent. I am expecting a briefing latter this morning when the results of this comparison are made for other years.

Bob Williams has been heavily involved and is providing great leadership to the follow up. I will keep you posted.

We will be briefing the Minister early tomorrow.

On the NLHBA issue, I did respond to John to ask him not to post this position. I was surprised to learn of his plan, particularly since the senior HR leaders were still meeting to discuss how we should go forward and they had not even been consulted. I did speak to three of the CEOs and they were all supportive of our opinion. It did cause me to reflect however that we need to wrestle this out of John's hands and create a vision for a much smaller association. More on that later.

George.