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Miramichi Regional Health Authority provides update #1 regarding pathology review

The retrospective review of pathological reports of a former pathologist is continuing with an independent pathologist currently reviewing cases from 2006 and 2007. A retrospective review will be conducted of all pathological reports completed by a former pathologist between 1995 and February 2007. This only applies for procedures or tests where tissue was removed. This is also known as a biopsy. Blood work and x-rays are not affected.

The Department of Health is looking for pathology resources within Canada and the United States to conduct the review. The process of reviewing all cases will be completed as quickly as possible but is expected to take some time. In the process of manually pulling cases from the earlier years of 1995 to 1997, the estimated number of cases to be tested has increased to 23,728.

“There were many more cases completed in the earlier years than we had anticipated,” says Gary Foley, president and CEO. “The original approximation of 15,000 cases was based on the average number of cases analyzed by a former pathologist in the last number of years. “The most recent cases will be reanalyzed first as they are of more clinical significance,” says Foley. The current breakdown of cases per year is as follows:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number of Cases</u>
1999-2007	13,897
1997-1999	4,301
1995-1997	5,800

All Miramichi doctors have received their patient lists from June 1997 to February 2007 and are in the process of notifying their patients. Patient lists from 1995-June 1997 are currently being manually compiled. All patients who have had their pathological tests such as tissue biopsies analyzed by this pathologist will be contacted by either their family doctor or referring surgeon. If neither is in the area, they are requested to call (506)623-3300 and a doctor will get back to them.

Patients affected can also contact their family doctor, go to www.rha7.ca (Click on Pathology Review) or call the toll free patient information line at 1-866-577-5901.

“Patient safety is a top priority for the Miramichi Regional Health Authority and we are working as quickly as possible to complete this retrospective review,” says Foley. He says two independent reviews have indicated that no concerns were raised regarding the work of the hospital’s current pathologist. “We are confident in the current laboratory services and the staff and pathologists who work there.” He says the health authority supports the Department of Health in their initiatives to hold an inquiry and review the roles of the Medical Advisory Committee and the College of Physicians and Surgeons. “Miramichi Regional Health Authority is dedicated to improving the system.”

The Miramichi Regional Health Authority is completing a retrospective review of all pathological reports of a former pathologist based on findings from an independent review. A pathologist is a doctor who specializes in diagnosing diseases by examining tissue, blood, and body fluids using sophisticated laboratory techniques. The audit was conducted by an independent pathologist in January 2008 and included 227 cases of prostate and breast cancer biopsies from 2004-05. The results of this audit indicated that 18 percent of the cases reviewed had incomplete results and three percent of the cases were misdiagnosed. ”

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