



Update on the Manitoba Pathology Review from the Board of Diagnostic Services of Manitoba

For Immediate Release: December 18, 2009

An external review at Diagnostic Services of Manitoba (DSM) is well underway and is expected to be complete in approximately 60 days.

A three-person team is being led by Dr. Sharon Macdonald, a specialist in community medicine. Dr. Rosemary Henderson, a pathologist from Prince Edward Island has also joined the review team. Independent accountant advisory services or other professional services will be included in the investigation as needed.

The external review was set up following several allegations disclosed to the board of DSM by a local pathologist on November 17, 2009. These concerns focus on proper remuneration practices of physicians at DSM, possible staff conflicts of interest and related workload issues.

The allegations included concerns about the process for notification of laboratory results for one previously unknown and uninvestigated specific patient case. Upon receiving the allegation, DSM did a preliminary investigation into the case and determined that for this patient, there was no impact on patient care. However, both the allegation and information from the preliminary DSM review will be included in the external review investigation.

Two additional cases included in the allegations were investigated as critical incidents earlier this year. In both cases, the identified corrective actions were taken in the lab system before the recent allegations were brought to the board. As a precaution, these cases will be re-examined by the external review.

A critical incident is declared if an unintended event occurs which causes harm to the patient when health services are delivered. DSM is included in Manitoba's mandatory critical incident reporting and investigation legislation. During the course of a critical incident investigation, it is sometimes determined that the event caused no patient harm. Investigations in these cases are still completed to ensure that any lessons learned are incorporated into the system to improve patient safety.

Patient safety continues to be the board's primary concern. If at any point the investigation determines that patient safety is at risk, the public will be notified and immediate action will be taken.

DSM was created in 2002 as the not-for-profit corporation responsible for all of Manitoba's public laboratory services and for rural diagnostic imaging services. There are approximately 10 million tests processed in DSM labs annually.

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