

# Improvement in Time From Abnormal Screening Mammogram to Final Diagnostic Test in NL over 6 Years (2014–2019)

## Guidelines

Canadian Partnership against Cancer (CPAC):

The target times for abnormal mammogram to final diagnostic tests should be:

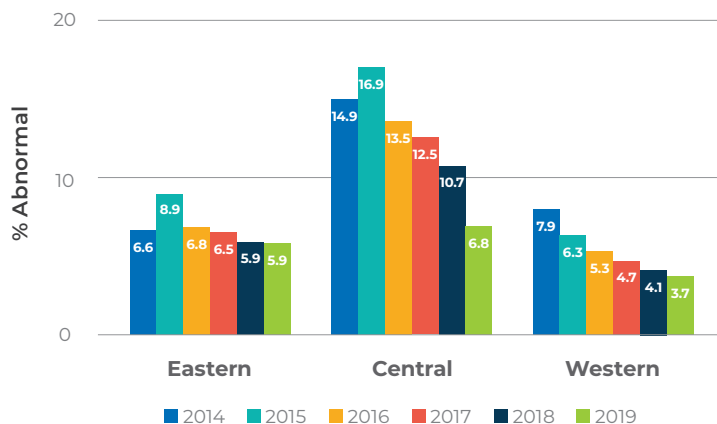
- a. <7 weeks in those who had a breast biopsy,
- b. <5 weeks in those who did not have a biopsy

## Practice Points

1. The age standardized incidence rate of breast cancer/100,000 women is one of the highest in Canada (129) and the age standardized mortality in NL is the highest in Canada (26.2/100,000 females).
2. In Canada, <10% of screening mammograms are abnormal.
3. In 2018, CPAC reported that NL's median time to final diagnostic test in those who required a biopsy was ranked ninth compared to the other Canadian provinces but 90<sup>th</sup> centile was ranked eleventh. In those who did not require a biopsy, median time was seventh and 90<sup>th</sup> centile was ranked eleventh.

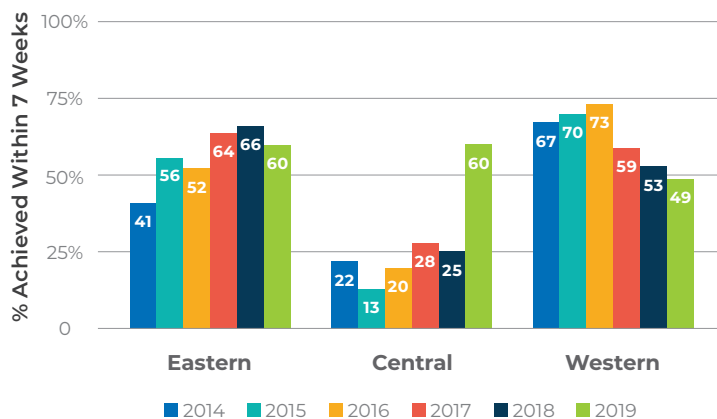
## Methods

1. Data were obtained from the breast screening database, diagnostic imaging, pathology reports, laboratory, and ARIA tumor registry 2014–2019, and were analysed by region.
2. In Eastern Health (EH), process changes were made to improve efficiency over time. Changes were also implemented in Central Health (CH) in 2019.
3. Total number of mammograms completed in NL was 18,541 in 2014, 19,952 in 2015, 20,884 in 2016, 19,930 in 2017, 20,779 in 2018 and 21,555 in 2019.



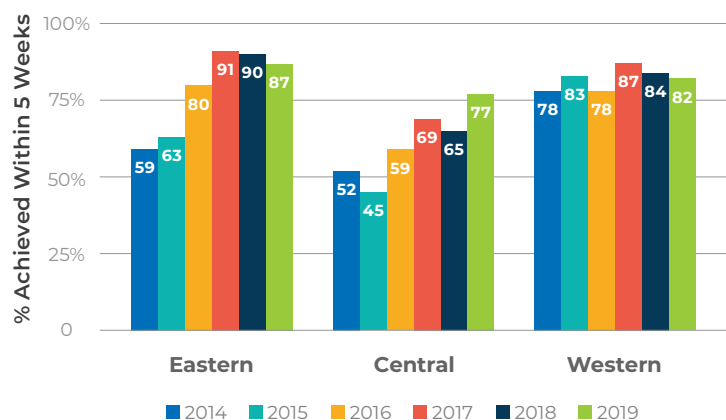
**Figure 1. Percentage Abnormal Mammograms in Each Region (2014–2019)**

- The provincial rate of abnormal mammograms in 2019 was 5.5%. Central Health consistently has the highest rate but it improved to 6.8% in 2019.



**Figure 2. Time From Abnormal Screening Mammogram to Final Diagnostic Test in Those Who had a Breast Biopsy: Percentage Achieved Within 7 Weeks by Region**

- In patients who had a breast biopsy in 2019, Western Health (WH) had the lowest percentage of patients who had a final diagnostic test within 7 weeks at 49%. CH improved substantially.
- In 2018 in the province the number of weeks taken for 90% to have received a final diagnostic test was 31 and in 2019 it was also 31.



## Conclusions

1. Time from abnormal screening mammography to final diagnostic test in women who had a breast biopsy has improved in EH and CH and deteriorated in WH. Times are not yet optimal.
2. Time to final diagnostic test in women who did not have a breast biopsy improved in EH and CH. In WH, around 80% consistently had a resolution within the target time of 5 weeks.

**Figure 3. Time from Abnormal Screening Mammogram to Final Diagnostic Test in Patients Who Did Not Have a Breast Biopsy: Percentage Achieved Within 5 Weeks by RHA**

- In patients who had abnormal mammogram and no breast biopsy, CH had the lowest percentage of patients who had final diagnostic test within 5 weeks at 77% but this percentage has improved over time. Both EH and WH had good performance.
- In 2018 in the province, the number of weeks taken for 90% to have received a final diagnostic test was 7 and in 2019 it was 8.