

Report on Clinical Review of Breast Ultrasound Services at Midland Regional Hospital, Portlaoise.

Findings: All diagnostic tests carried out were negative. The review of ultrasounds, therefore, did not reveal any case of a missed or delayed diagnosis.

Introduction

On the 28th August 2007, the HSE decided to review the diagnostic breast radiology service at Midland Regional Hospital Portlaoise. One part of this process required a review of all ultrasounds within the breast radiology service.

Review Period and Process

The period for the ultra sound review was agreed at a meeting of a review facilitation group on 13th September 2007. It was decided that an examination of the results of every breast ultra sound in conjunction with a review of each patients clinical history would be carried out for patients who received treatment at the Midland Regional Hospital Portlaoise between August 2005 and August 2007.

These Breast Ultrasound and Patient notes were reviewed by a team of Clinicians including Surgeons & Nurses against Criteria established for the breast imaging ultrasounds in St. Vincent's Hospital.

Following the review, if there were no reasons for concern, the patients were advised in writing of this fact.

Where there was any reason for concern, patients were contacted and offered appointments at special breast clinics held in Portlaoise. Some patients found the available dates in Portlaoise inconvenient and these were accommodated at clinics in Dublin.

Outcome of the Review of Ultrasounds

All diagnostic tests carried out were negative. The review of ultrasounds, therefore, did not reveal any case of a missed or delayed diagnosis.

A total of 607 breast ultrasound reports and medical notes were reviewed. Of these 607 patients, letters were issued to 435 patients informing them that the review of their ultrasound reports and chart notes showed that there was no need for them to attend for further clinical review.

Twelve of these 607 patients did not need to be considered any further because eight were already reviewed in the mammogram study and four were outside the review period.

Two further patients were deemed to be outside the review criteria. One patient had died but the cause of death was unrelated to issues under consideration as part of the Diagnostic Radiology Breast Service review.

Two patients were residing abroad when contacted. They were advised to attend for clinical review in the country of current residency and to avail of ultrasound, mammography and biopsy as appropriate. They were requested to forward reports to the Midland Regional Hospital Portlaoise to facilitate completion of the database. They were also advised that the Health Service Executive would pay for any expenses arising as a result of them being resident outside of the Country.

Eight patients, when contacted indicated that they were availing of services elsewhere.

Three patients chose not to accept an offer to attend the special clinics.

One patient was uncontactable despite the very best efforts of staff at the Midland Regional Hospital Portlaoise.

The remaining 143 patients were invited to attend Consultant led review clinics in Portlaoise and Dublin between 24 November and 19 December 2007.

Following these clinics, 70 patients were discharged and the balance (73) were referred for further diagnostic testing involving a mixture of mammograms, ultrasounds and biopsy.

All diagnostic tests were negative

Acknowledgement

These Consultant provided clinics were conducted by Professor Arnold Hill (Professor and Chairman of Surgery at the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, Beaumont Hospital), Mr. Mike Allen (Consultant Breast Surgeon, Beaumont Hospital) and Mr. Enda McDermott (Consultant General Surgeon, St. Vincent's University Hospital). There is a huge debt of gratitude due to Professor Hill, Mr. Allen and Mr. McDermott for their time and support offered at such short notice.

The HSE also wishes to express its appreciation to the staff of the Cuisle Centre in Portlaoise where the special clinics were held.

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