

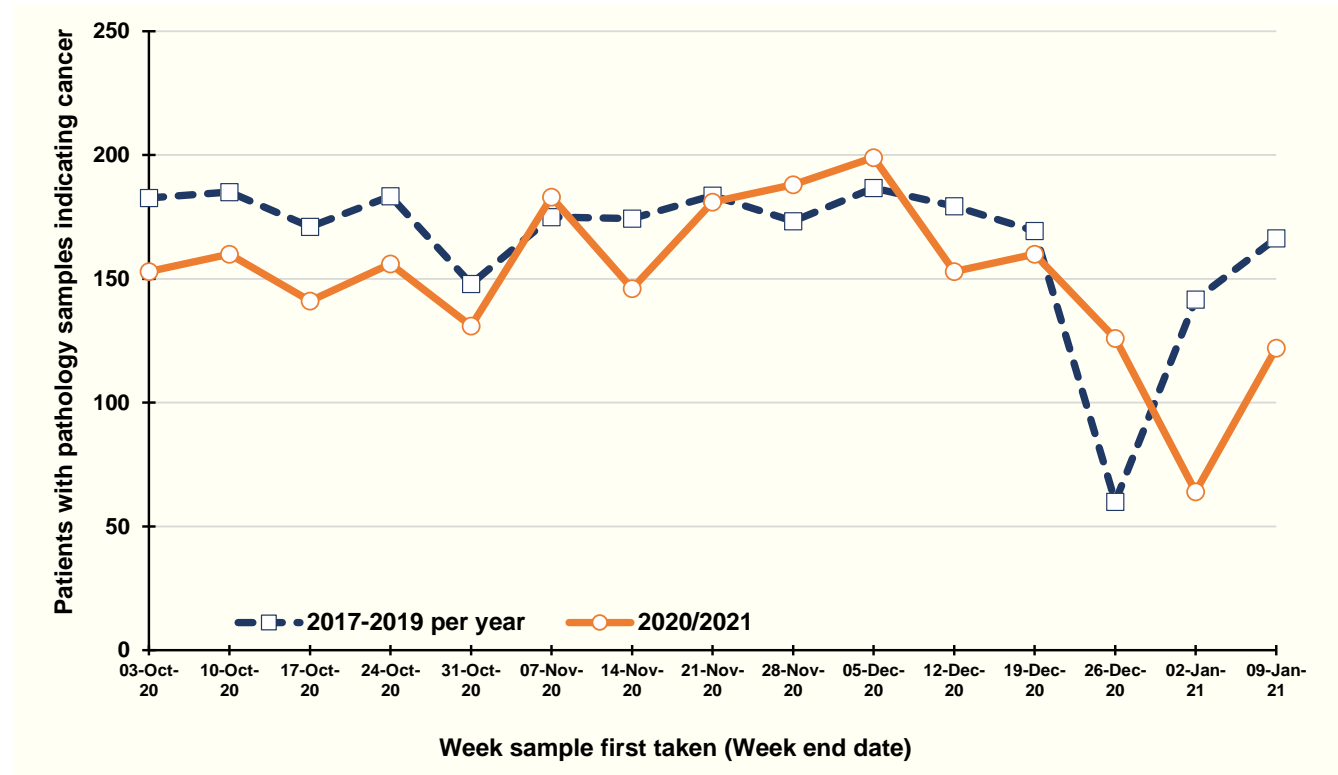
## SUMMARY

### Recent trends in the number of patients with pathology samples indicating cancer: Jan-21

- 1) This summary provides an overview of recent trends in the number of patients with pathology samples indicating cancer (excluding non-melanoma skin cancer, NMSC) whose first sample was taken from 01-Jan-20 to the week ending 09-Jan-21 in Northern Ireland.
- 2) These trends are contrasted with the annual average number of patients with pathology samples indicating cancer (ex NMSC) during 2017-2019 in order to provide an indication of the potential impact of the Covid-19 restrictions on diagnostic cancer services.
- 3) Data are sourced from the four NHS pathology laboratories in Northern Ireland (Belfast, Altnagelvin, Antrim, Craigavon), which are usually provided to the NI Cancer Registry on a monthly basis.

#### Trends in patients with pathology samples indicating cancer by week first sample taken

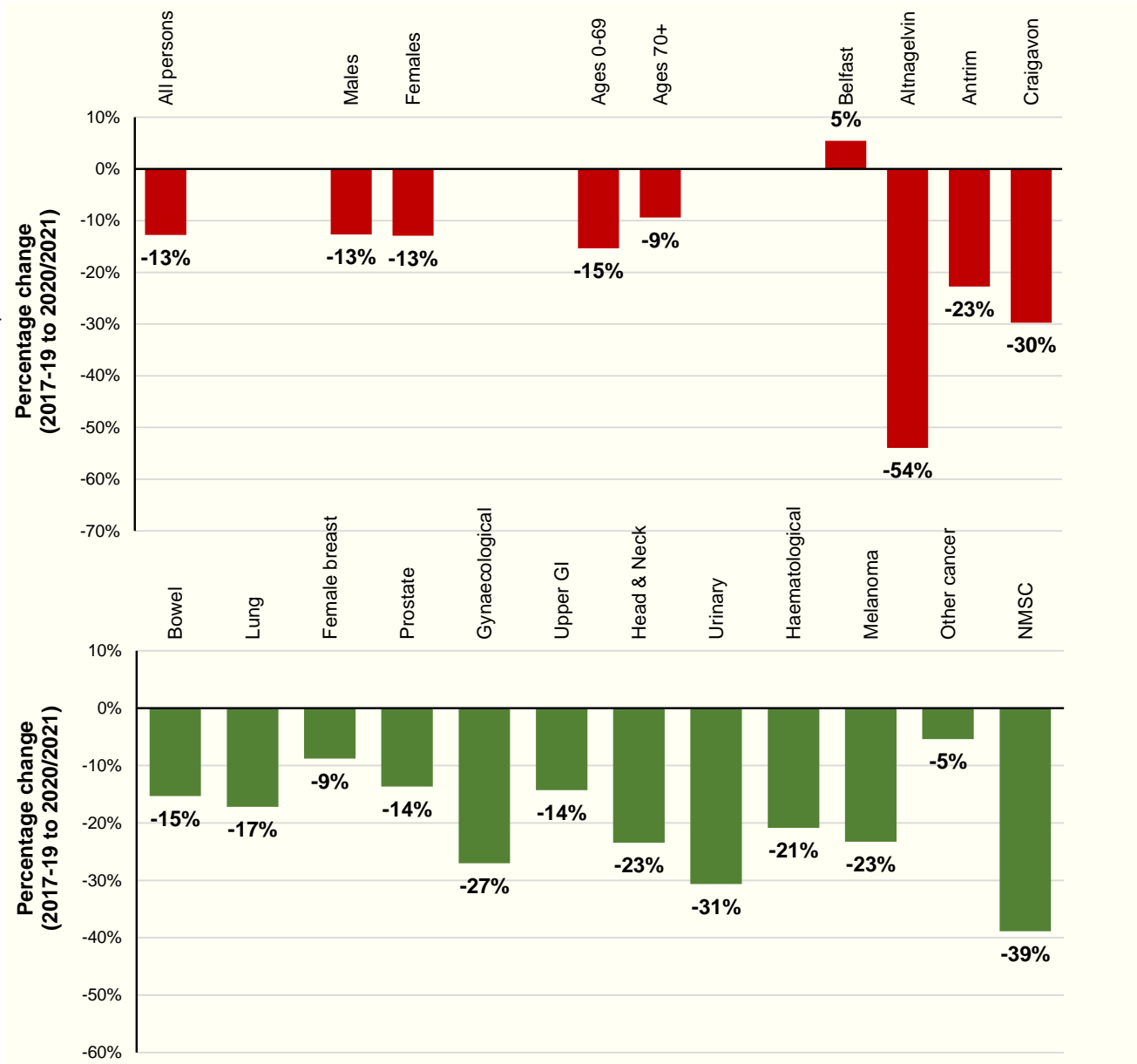
- 4) From 01-Mar-20 to 09-Jan-21 the number of patients with a pathological sample indicating cancer was 16% lower than the average number for the same time period in 2017-2019.
- 5) Based upon the monthly trend in patients with pathology samples indicating cancer, there was an estimated shortfall of 1,280 patients during Mar-20 to Dec-20 compared to the expected number. Some of these "missing" patients may have a clinical only diagnosis (e.g. as a result of an emergency hospital admission).



**Percentage change from 2017-2019 to 2020/2021 in the number of patients with pathology samples indicating cancer, first taken in the weeks ending 12-Dec-20 to 09-Jan-21**

**6) Patient demographics**

There was a 13% reduction in the number of patients with a pathology sample indicating cancer in the weeks ending 12-Dec-20 to 09-Jan-21 compared to the average value in the equivalent weeks in 2017-2019. There was a 13% decrease among males and a 13% decrease among females. A decrease of 15% was recorded in the number of patients aged 0-69 years, while a decrease of 9% occurred in the number aged 70 and older. Reductions were greatest in Altnagelvin (54%), with decreases also apparent in Craigavon (30%) and Antrim (23%).



**7) Cancer type**

Compared to the annual average in 2017-2019, the number of patients with a pathology sample indicating bowel cancer in the weeks ending 12-Dec-20 to 09-Jan-21 decreased by 15%, while those indicating lung cancer decreased by 17%, those indicating prostate cancer decreased by 14% and those indicating breast cancer decreased by 9%. Decreases of more than 20% occurred for gynaecological cancer, head & neck cancer, urinary cancer, haematological cancer and melanoma.

**Percentage change from 2017-2019 to 2020/2021 in the number of patients with pathology samples indicating cancer, and estimates of the number of "missed" patients in 2020/2021: Patient demographics**

Patient demographics	Percentage change from 2017-2019 to 2020/2021 in the number of patients with pathology samples indicating cancer		Estimated number of "missed" patients
	Weeks ending 12-Dec-20 to 09-Jan-21	Weeks ending 07-Mar-20 to 09-Jan-21	At the end of Dec-20
All persons	-13%	-16%	1,280
<b>Gender</b>			
Males	-13%	-16%	600
Females	-13%	-17%	680
<b>Age</b>			
Ages 0-69	-15%	-16%	710
Ages 70+	-9%	-16%	560
<b>Pathology Lab</b>			
Belfast	5%	-9%	340
Altnagelvin	-54%	-24%	330
Antrim	-23%	-17%	130
Craigavon	-30%	-32%	460

Notes:  
 "Missed" patients may have a clinical only diagnosis (e.g. as a result of an emergency hospital admission).  
 "Missed" patients were calculated based upon the difference between the actual and expected number of patients recorded. The latter is determined using the trend in patients diagnosed pathologically from Jan 2017 to Feb 2020, and thus includes any expected increases (or decreases) as a result in annual changes in the number of cases diagnosed (e.g. as a result of population growth and/or ageing).

**Percentage change from 2017-2019 to 2020/2021 in the number of patients with pathology samples indicating cancer, and estimates of the number of "missed" patients in 2020/2021: Cancer type**

Cancer type	Percentage change from 2017-2019 to 2020/2021 in the number of patients with pathology samples indicating cancer		Estimated number of "missed" patients
	Weeks ending 12-Dec-20 to 09-Jan-21	Weeks ending 07-Mar-20 to 09-Jan-21	At the end of Dec-20
All cancers (ex NMSC)	-13%	-16%	1,280
NMSC	-39%	-31%	1,510
Bowel	-15%	-16%	160
Lung	-17%	-26%	160
Female breast	-9%	-11%	120
Prostate	-14%	-12%	140
Gynaecological	-27%	-19%	100
Upper GI	-14%	-20%	70
Head & Neck	-23%	-21%	70
Urinary	-31%	-15%	50
Haematological	-21%	-8%	70
Melanoma	-23%	-25%	150
Other cancer	-5%	-1%	30
<u>Screening age</u>			
Bowel cancer (Ages 60-74)	-27%	-17%	120
Breast cancer (Ages 50-70)	-5%	-8%	30

Notes:

NMSC: Non-melanoma skin cancer; GI: Gastrointestinal

"Missed" patients may have a clinical only diagnosis (e.g. as a result of an emergency hospital admission).

"Missed" patients were calculated based upon the difference between the actual and expected number of patients recorded. The latter is determined using the trend in patients diagnosed pathologically from Jan 2017 to Feb 2020, and thus includes any expected increases (or decreases) as a result in annual changes in the number of cases diagnosed (e.g. as a result of population growth and/or ageing).

Other cancers excludes cancer of unknown primary.