

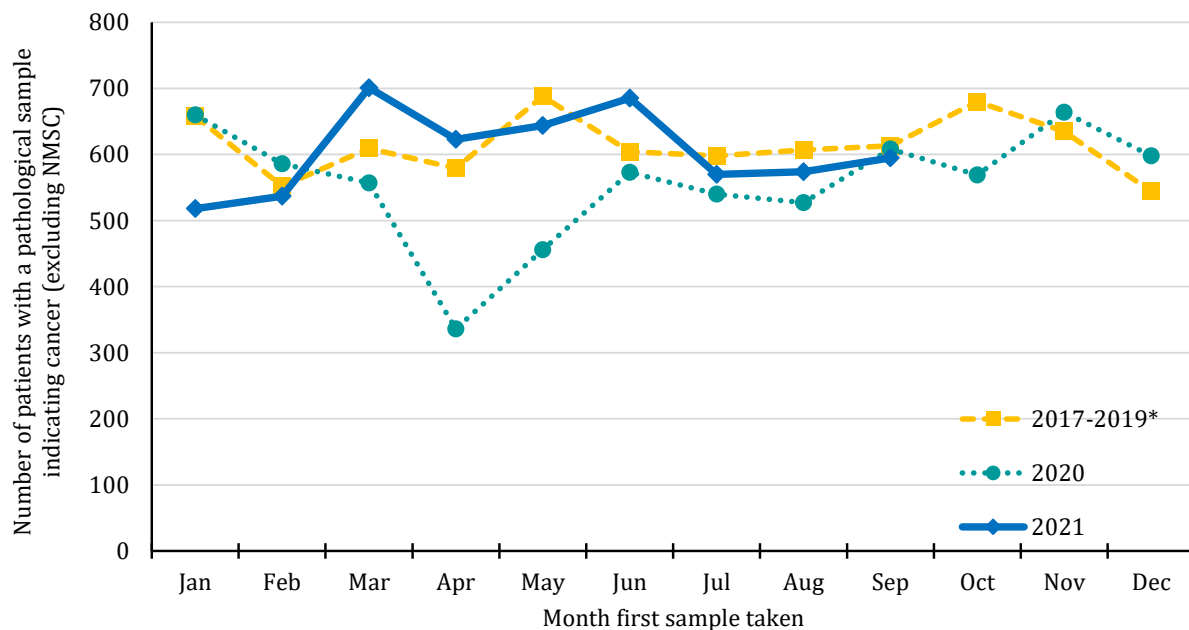
SUMMARY

Recent trends in the number of patients with pathology samples indicating cancer: Sep-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 Jan-20 to Sep-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 three of the four NHS pathology laboratories in NI (Belfast, Antrim, Craigavon), which are usually provided to NICR on a monthly basis. **Altnagelvin laboratory is excluded as a change in recording systems led to an undercount in the number of reported samples in Jan-Apr 2021.**

Trends in patients with pathology samples indicating cancer by month and year first sample taken

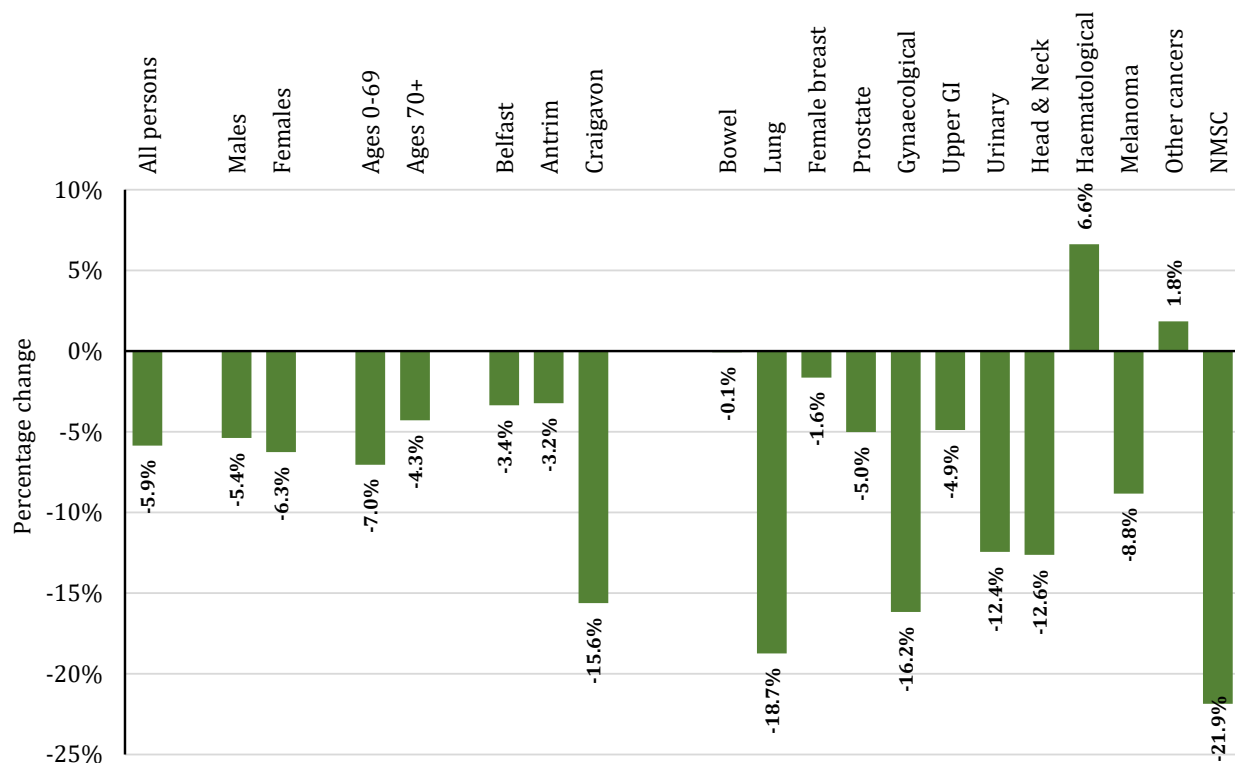
- 4) From Mar-20 to Sep-21 the number of patients with a pathological sample indicating cancer was 5.9% lower than the average number for the same time period in 2017-2019.



Year sample taken	Month sample taken											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2017-2019*	658	552	609	579	688	604	598	607	613	680	635	544
2020	660	586	557	336	456	573	540	527	608	569	664	598
2021	518	537	701	623	644	685	570	574	595			

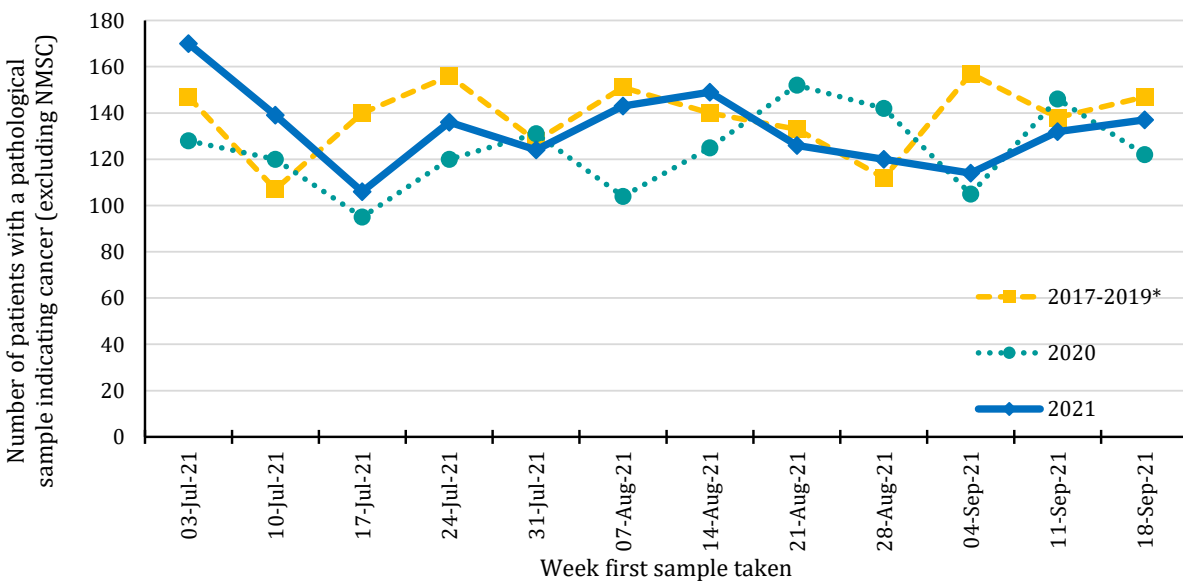
*Annual average

- 5) From Mar-20 to Sep-21 there was a 5.4% decrease among males and a 6.3% decrease among females compared to 2017-2019. A decrease of 7.0% occurred in the number of patients aged 0-69 years, while there was a decrease of 4.3% among those aged 70 and older. Decreases were greatest in Craigavon (15.6%).
- 6) Compared to the annual average in 2017-2019, from Mar-20 to Sep-21 the number of patients with a pathology sample indicating lung cancer decreased by 18.7%, while those indicating prostate cancer decreased by 5.0%. Increases were recorded for haematological cancer, while decreases of more than 10% occurred for gynaecological cancer, head and neck cancer, urinary cancer and non-melanoma skin cancer.



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

7) There was an 3.6% decrease in the number of patients with a pathology sample indicating cancer in the twelve weeks up to 18-Sep-21 compared to the average value in the equivalent weeks in 2017-2019.



Year sample taken	Week sample taken**											
	03-Jul-21	10-Jul-21	17-Jul-21	24-Jul-21	31-Jul-21	07-Aug-21	14-Aug-21	21-Aug-21	28-Aug-21	04-Sep-21	11-Sep-21	18-Sep-21
2017-2019*	147	107	140	156	128	151	140	133	112	157	138	147
2020	128	120	95	120	131	104	125	152	142	105	146	122
2021	170	139	106	136	124	143	149	126	120	114	132	137

*Annual average

** The date of the end of the week in which the sample was taken in 2021. Data for previous years refers to the equivalent Sun-Sat week in those years.

- 8) In the twelve weeks up to 18-Sep-21 there was a 1.7% decrease in male patients and a 4.9% decrease in female patients compared to the same time period in 2017-2019. A decrease of 4.9% occurred in the number of patients aged 0-69 years, while there was a decrease of 1.8% among those aged 70 and older. Decreases in the number of patients were recorded in all three laboratories.
- 9) Compared to the annual average in 2017-2019, in the twelve weeks up to 18-Sep-21 the number of patients with a pathology sample indicating lung cancer decreased by 23.4%, while those indicating female breast cancer decreased by 8.8%. Increases were recorded for bowel cancer, haematological cancer and gynaecological cancer, while decreases of more than 10% occurred for head and neck cancer and non-melanoma skin cancer.

