

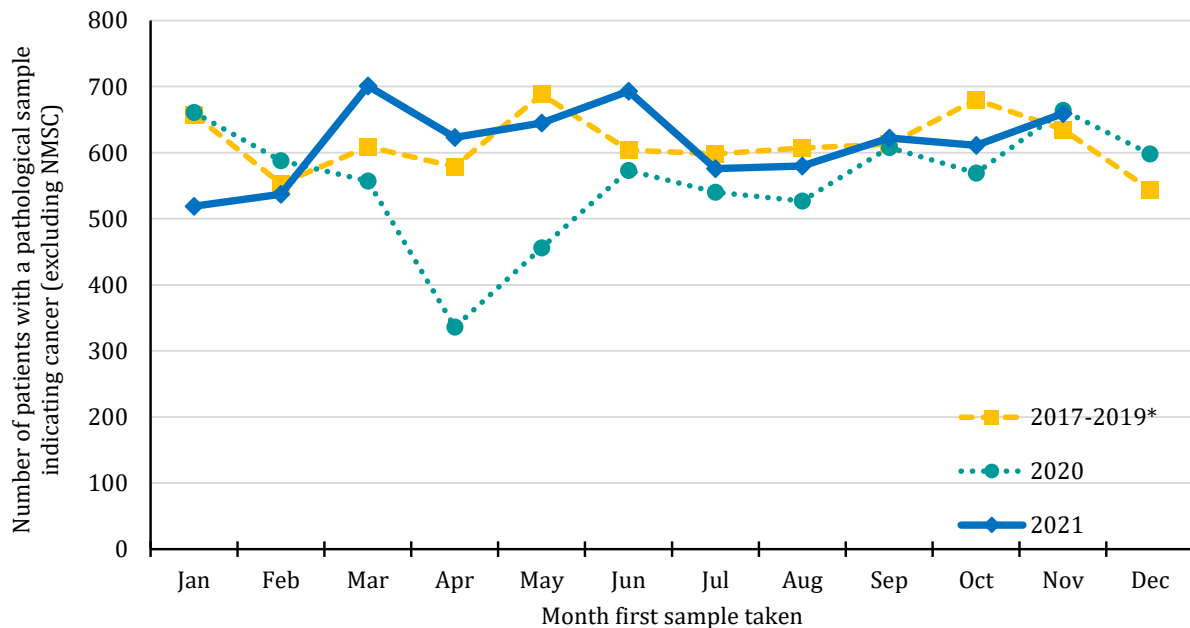
SUMMARY

Recent trends in the number of patients with pathology samples indicating cancer: Nov-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 Nov-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 NICKR on a monthly basis. **Altnagelvin laboratory is excluded throughout this report 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

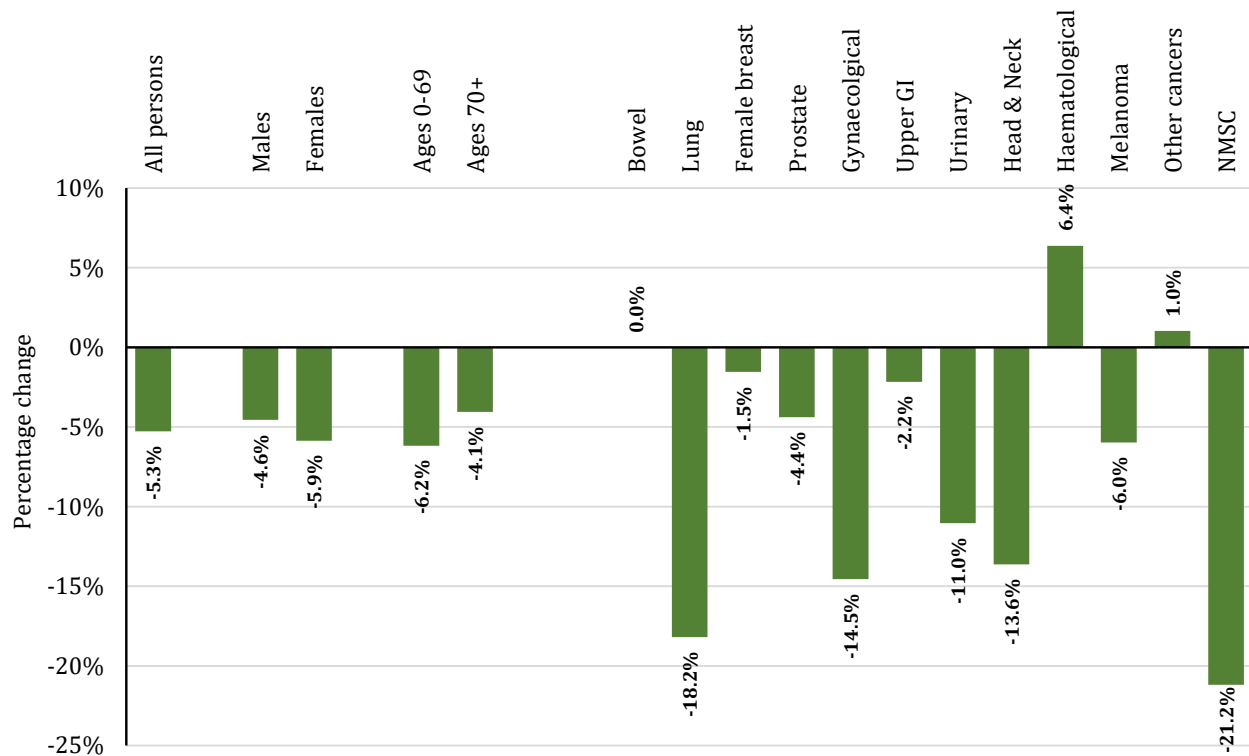
- 4) From Mar-20 to Nov-21 the number of patients with a pathological sample indicating cancer was 5.3% lower than the average number for the same time period in 2017-2019.



Year sample taken	Month sample taken											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2017-2019*	658	553	609	579	688	604	598	607	613	680	635	544
2020	661	588	557	336	456	573	540	527	608	569	664	598
2021	519	537	701	623	645	693	576	580	622	611	659	

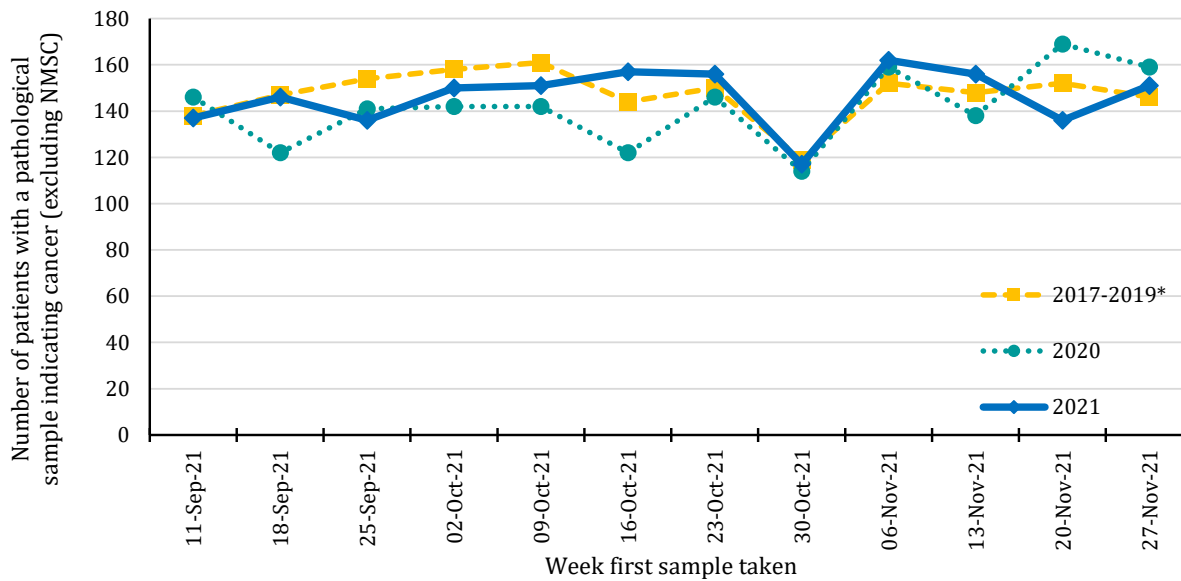
*Annual average

- 5) From Mar-20 to Nov-21 there was a 4.6% decrease among males and a 5.9% decrease among females compared to 2017-2019. A decrease of 6.2% occurred in the number of patients aged 0-69 years, while there was a decrease of 4.1% among those aged 70 and older.
- 6) Compared to the average in 2017-2019 the number of patients in 2021 was higher in March, April, June, September and November. Monthly variations may be a result of random factors (e.g. staff leave) which occur naturally and are unrelated to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 7) Compared to the annual average in 2017-2019, from Mar-20 to Nov-21 the number of patients with a pathology sample indicating lung cancer decreased by 18.2%, while those indicating prostate cancer decreased by 4.4%. 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

8) There was an 0.8% decrease in the number of patients with a pathology sample indicating cancer in the twelve weeks up to 27-Nov-21 compared to the average value in the equivalent weeks in 2017-2019.



Year sample taken	Week sample taken**											
	11-Sep-21	18-Sep-21	25-Sep-21	02-Oct-21	09-Oct-21	16-Oct-21	23-Oct-21	30-Oct-21	06-Nov-21	13-Nov-21	20-Nov-21	27-Nov-21
2017-2019*	138	147	154	158	161	144	150	119	152	148	152	146
2020	146	122	141	142	142	122	146	114	159	138	169	159
2021	137	146	136	150	151	157	156	117	162	156	136	151

*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.

- 9) In the twelve weeks up to 27-Nov-21 there was a 0.8% increase in male patients and a 2.2% decrease in female patients compared to the same time period in 2017-2019. An increase of 0.4% occurred in the number of patients aged 0-69 years, while there was a decrease of 2.5% among those aged 70 and older.
- 10) Compared to the annual average in 2017-2019, in the twelve weeks up to 27-Nov-21 the number of patients with a pathology sample indicating lung cancer decreased by 9.8%. Increases were recorded for bowel cancer, prostate cancer, gynaecological cancer, upper GI cancer and melanoma, while decreases of more than 10% occurred for head and neck cancer, haematological cancer and non-melanoma skin cancer.

