

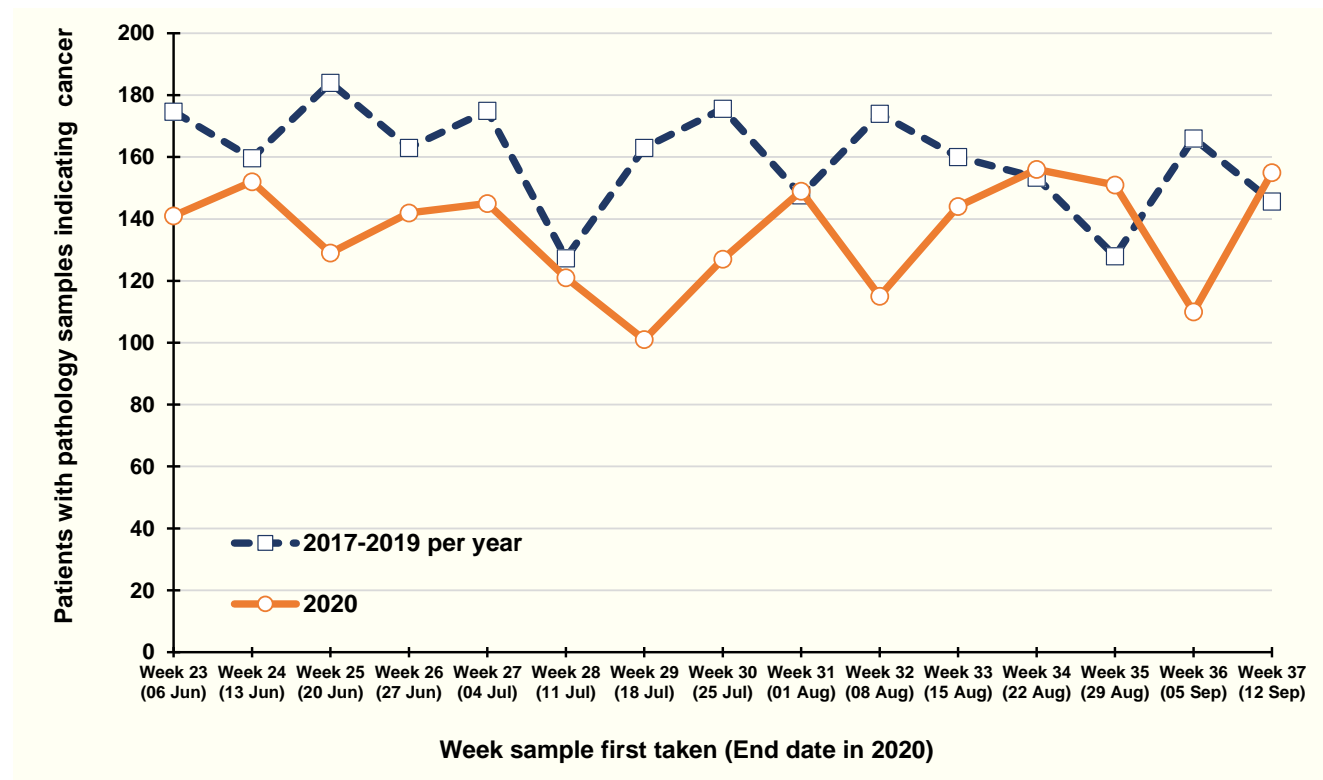
SUMMARY

Recent trends in the number of patients with pathology samples indicating cancer: Sept 2020

- 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 1st January 2020 to the week ending 12th September 2020 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

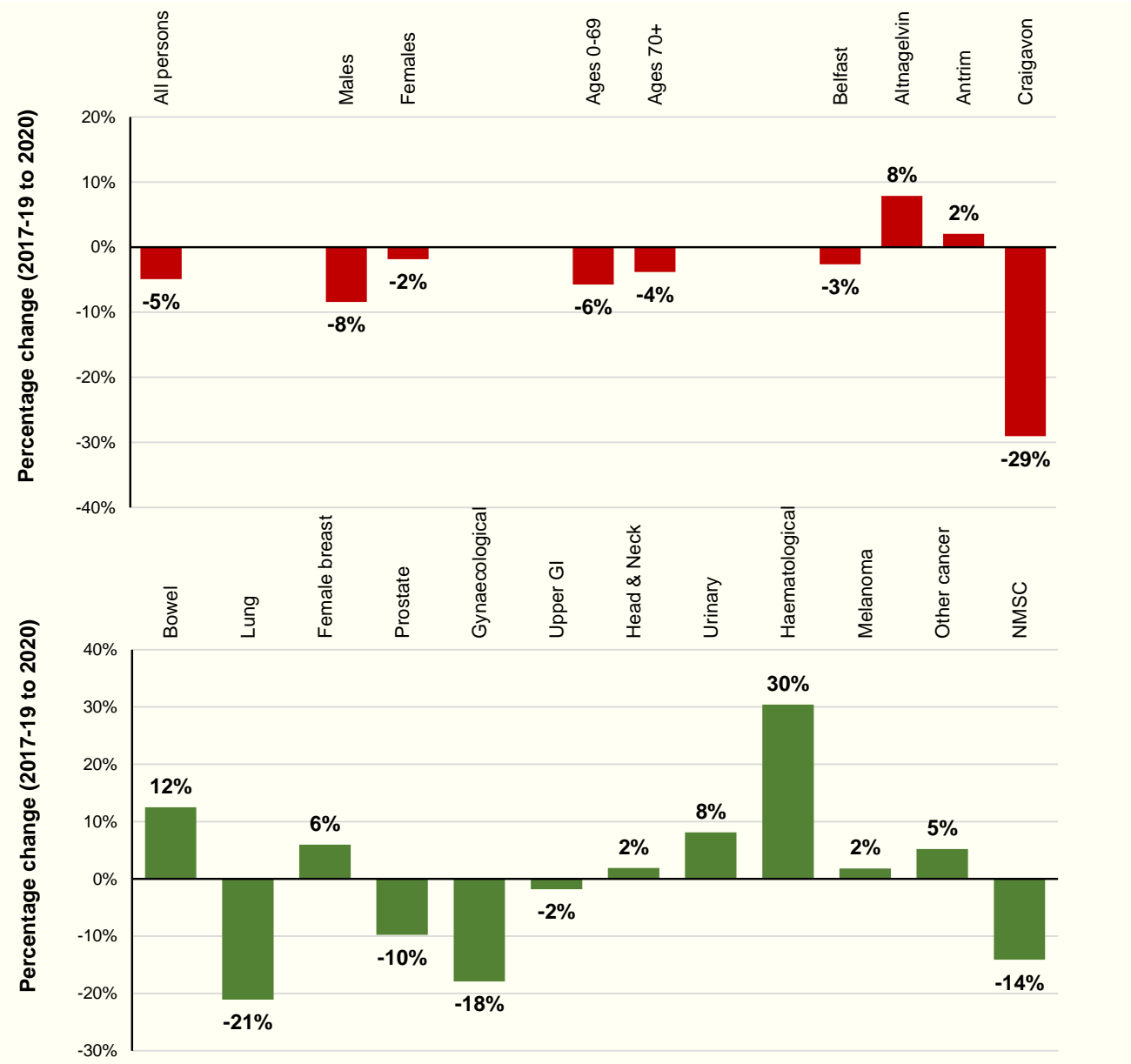
- 4) From 1st March to 12th September 2020, the number of patients with a pathological sample indicating cancer was 23% lower than the average number for the same time period in 2017-2019.
- 5) Based upon the monthly trend in patients with pathology samples indicating cancer, there was an estimated shortfall of 1,130 patients during March-August 2020 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 in the number of patients with pathology samples indicating cancer, first taken in weeks 33-37 of each year (9 August to 12 September in 2020)

6) Patient demographics

There was a 5% reduction in the number of patients with a pathology sample indicating cancer in weeks 33-37 of 2020, compared to the average value for weeks 33-37 in 2017-2019. In particular, there was a 8% decrease among males and a 2% decrease among females. A decrease of 6% occurred in the number of patients aged 0-69 years, while a decrease of 4% occurred in the number aged 70 and older. Reductions mostly occurred in Craigavon (29%), but with small decreases also recorded in Belfast (3%).



7) Cancer type

Compared to the annual average for weeks 33-37 in 2017-2019, the number of patients with a pathology sample indicating lung cancer in 2020 decreased by 21%, while those indicating prostate cancer decreased by 10%. However, the number of patients with pathology samples indicating bowel or breast cancer increased by 12% and 6% respectively, while the number of haematological cancer patients increased by 30%.

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

Patient demographics	Percentage change from 2017-2019 to 2020 in the number of patients with pathology samples indicating cancer		Estimated number of "missed" patients
	Weeks 33-37 (9 Aug to 12 Sept in 2020)	Weeks 10-37 (1 Mar to 12 Sept in 2020)	At the end of August 2020
All persons	-5%	-23%	1,130
Gender			
Males	-8%	-22%	530
Females	-2%	-23%	600
Age			
Ages 0-69	-6%	-23%	640
Ages 70+	-4%	-23%	490
Pathology Lab			
Belfast	-3%	-17%	430
Altnagelvin	8%	-28%	250
Antrim	2%	-25%	140
Craigavon	-29%	-36%	310

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 in the number of patients with pathology samples indicating cancer, and estimates of the number of "missed" patients in 2020: Cancer type

Cancer type	Percentage change from 2017-2019 to 2020 in the number of patients with pathology samples indicating cancer		Estimated number of "missed" patients
	Weeks 33-37 (9 Aug to 12 Sept in 2020)	Weeks 10-37 (1 Mar to 12 Sept in 2020)	At the end of August 2020
All cancers (ex NMSC)	-5%	-23%	1,130
NMSC	-14%	-37%	1,180
Bowel	12%	-17%	100
Lung	-21%	-27%	100
Female breast	6%	-20%	160
Prostate	-10%	-21%	150
Gynaecological	-18%	-29%	100
Upper GI	-2%	-27%	70
Head & Neck	2%	-24%	60
Urinary	8%	-15%	20
Haematological	30%	-9%	60
Melanoma	2%	-23%	90
Other cancer	5%	-2%	60
<u>Screening age</u>			
Bowel cancer (Ages 60-74)	-18%	-14%	60
Breast cancer (Ages 50-70)	14%	-21%	90

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.