

N. Ireland Cancer Registry Implications of Research for Services

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Paper Title	Impact of COVID-19 control on lung, breast, and colorectal pathological cancer diagnoses. A comparison between the Netherlands, Aotearoa New Zealand, and Northern Ireland
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Conclusion	<p>During the COVID-19 pandemic, New Zealand took a different approach to manage the virus compared to Northern Ireland and the Netherlands. New Zealand followed an elimination policy, which involved closing borders and implementing a national lockdown. To understand the impact of these different strategies on cancer diagnoses, NICR researchers studied the numbers of lung, breast, and colorectal cancers diagnosed in each country during the pandemic period (March to December 2020) and compared them to the pre-pandemic period (2017-2019).</p> <p>This study compared the numbers of laboratory diagnosed cancers in the pandemic period compared to the pre-pandemic period. The study found reductions in lung and colorectal cancers in NI and reductions in breast and colorectal cancer in the Netherlands. In contrast in NZ there was no reduction in the number of breast cancers and indeed an increase in the numbers of lung (not significant) and colorectal cancers diagnosed. This may have been due to delayed patient visits to healthcare facilities and longer and more widespread disruption to cancer screening and</p>

	healthcare services and more severe societal restrictions in Ni and the Netherlands compared to NZ.
What this means for the service	The findings highlight the importance of protecting cancer and wider healthcare services during any future pandemic or healthcare system disruption. Public health campaigns may be needed to try and identify and treat individuals who might have a missed cancer diagnoses due to the pandemic's impact.