

N. Ireland Cancer Registry Implications of Research for Services

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Paper Title	Whole-population trends in pathology-confirmed cancer incidence in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales during the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic: A retrospective observational study
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Funders	The Northern Ireland Public Health Agency funds the Northern Ireland Cancer Registry. The Welsh Cancer Intelligence and Surveillance Unit in Public Health Wales is the national cancer registry of Wales. Public Health Scotland operates the Scottish Cancer Registry. This work uses patients' data collected by health services as part of their care and support. Administrative and analytical support was provided by Health Data Research UK and DATA-CAN, the UK's Health Data Research Hub for Cancer.
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Conclusion	<p>The COVID-19 epidemic interrupted normal cancer diagnosis procedures. In a novel approach some cancer registries used pathologically confirmed cancers (PDCs) as a proxy or early signal for cancer incidence.</p> <p>Data were accessible within 5 months of pathological diagnosis date. Between 2019 and 2020, the number of PDCs (excluding NMSC) decreased by 14.% (7315), which showed the clear adverse impact of COVID-19 on cancer diagnoses in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland (NI).</p>
What this means for the service	Pathologically confirmed cancers (PDCs) may be useful in estimating cancer incidence as they can provide data quicker than cancer registrations. However further work is needed to verify their sensitivity and specificity against the gold standard of cancer registrations.

