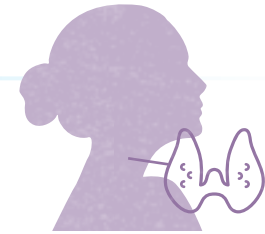


Measuring incidence, overdiagnosis and management of thyroid cancer in Ontario

ISSUE

The incidence of thyroid cancer in women is increasing at an epidemic rate in Ontario and worldwide, with evidence suggesting this is due to overdiagnosis and possibly overtreatment.



STUDY

Looked at records for all **12,959** adults diagnosed with thyroid cancer in Ontario from 1999 to 2008.


Calculated mean annual rate of diagnosis (cases/100,000), for each Local Health Integration Network (LHIN).

STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

- Cancer Care Ontario (CCO)
- South East LHIN

FINDINGS

112%
increase in new cases over 9 years
(1999: 893; 2008: 1,890)

80%
female 

Diagnosis rates vary among LHINs by as much as **4x** (from 5.2 to 21.6; mean 11.5)

LHINs with high use of diagnostic ultrasound of neck, pelvis and abdomen

Higher diagnosis rates



LHINs with higher education rates and income

IMPACT

The cancer journey



Adapted from CCO, *The Cancer Journey*

CCO is using the data to create a disease management pathway for thyroid cancer.

LHINs are using comparative data to improve quality and resource allocation.

Health planners are using the data to understand practice patterns and identify regions where overdiagnosis may be taking place, in order to improve.

Wider system implications: demonstrates how poor evidence and lack of policy on medical tests and treatments can distort physician behaviour, adversely affect patients and increase costs.



Hall SF, Irish J, Groome P, Griffiths R. Access, excess and overdiagnosis: the increasing incidence of thyroid cancer. *Cancer Medicine*. 2014; 3(1):154-61. (Abstract)