

*DR Camidge et al. British Journal of Cancer. (2006) Vol.95 p 649 – 652.*

**Factors affecting the mesothelioma detection rate within national and international epidemiological studies: insights from Scottish linked cancer registry-mortality data**

The detection rate for mesothelioma was assessed by comparing death certificate information with a register of mesothelioma patients. 75% of known cases were detected in routine practice.

The research followed the records of known mesothelioma cases. Death certificates prior to 1999 detected mesothelioma status in just 40% of cases. Following the introduction of new standards in 2000 75% of mesothelioma cases were identified. Discrepancies still exist because 'primary cause of death' and 'other significant diseases' may not include mesothelioma, this is a matter of some judgement and there may be an element of human error.

Comment

These findings were based on populations known to have mesothelioma, a disease with a low incidence in the general population. 75% is likely to represent an upper limit of the detection rate for mesothelioma.

Where mesothelioma was not the primary cause of death there is a good chance that the person concerned, and their relatives, would not know they had the disease.

