

Provincial Anatomical Pathology

Newsletter

The purpose of this quarterly newsletter is to update the pathologists of BC on functions of the Provincial AP Advisory Committee

Digital Pathology

We have had an incredible amount of activity around the digital pathology testbed project. Most notably we were pleased to [formally announce](#) this project on July 15, in collaboration with our many partners and funder, Innovate BC. Held at the BC Cancer Agency, the event hosted representatives from the project teams alongside partners and government officials.

Adrian Dix, B.C. Minister of Health for B.C. said: “Innovative digital tools have the potential to revolutionize health care and, ultimately, achieve better health outcomes for patients and save more lives. Through the testbed, potential solutions can be found, such as the ability to share and consult on diagnoses around the province helping health-care professionals access data and analyses more quickly and reducing wait times for patients. This is a significant project that will help strengthen B.C.’s health-care system now, and in the future.”

July also saw the close of two of our first projects including standing up laboratory infrastructure at BC Cancer, Vancouver Centre, St. Paul’s Hospital and slide scanning and set-up for the VCH testbed. Additionally, we solidified a partnership with [Visiopharm](#) to provide access to the DeepDx Prostate algorithm. This AI will be utilized by the VCH testbed team in assessing its use in prostate cancer workflow. We have already seen positive reports and new learning coming from these projects and we are very pleased with the way teams come together to collaborate on solutions and deepen partnerships.

All testbed partners are now working on provincial cloud integration (Project 5) through the summer and preparing for project validation and evaluation (Project 6) activities through the Fall.

The Provincial Anatomical Pathology Advisory Committee is made up of 23 members including medical, technical and operational representation from all health authorities, PLMS and the MoH. The committee is co-chaired by Dr. Lik Hang Lee (PLMS Medical Lead for AP) and Brigette Rabel (PLMS Discipline Lead for AP).

The committee was created in the Fall of 2022 to support the implementation of the provincial mandate of Provincial Laboratory Medicine Services (PLMS), which is to ensure that clinical laboratory diagnostics are quality driven, achieve excellent clinical outcomes, and remain sustainable by being provided effectively and efficiently.

The committee works with PLMS, the Health Authorities, private laboratory partners, and the Ministry of Health (MoH), by providing discipline specific clinical, technical, and operational leadership; and providing advice/expertise on provincial guidelines, policies, and discipline strategic planning.

The committee will provide advice and guidance, will foster engagement and act as change management champions for discipline specific quality improvement, innovation and optimization opportunities.

The committee objectives will align with the PLMS purpose to lead innovative, high quality laboratory services that improve the health of B.C. citizens by helping providers and citizens make timely and insightful decisions regarding patient care.

In parallel, many pathologists and lab operations folks from around the province, have and continue to work on the DICOM Specification Sub-committee. This work is helping us to understand the common elements between data standards, understand commonalities and differences between Health Organizations and examine what the province might be able to use in a future state for the purpose of provincial digital pathology. A tremendous thank you to those experts from Fraser Health Authority, Interior Health Authority, Providence Health, Children and Women's, BC Cancer, Vancouver Coastal, Island Health and Northern Health for all your expertise and enthusiasm in these important discussions.

Questions or Comments?

Send to:

Dr. Lik Hang Lee
llee22@providencehealth.bc.ca

Brigette Rabel
Brigette.rabel@phsa.ca

New Provincial Outpatient AP Requisition

The Provincial AP Advisory Committee has developed a new provincial outpatient requisition for AP specimens. This requisition has been approved by the PLMS Requisitions team and endorsed by the Ministry of Health. The requisition can be downloaded from the [PLMS website](#). Communication around the new requisition was circulated to the Doctors of BC and other professional organizations. The committee encourages all AP labs to notify their submitting physicians about the new requisition.

SIG Meetings – CME Credits

The Pathologist Special Interest Group (SIG) meetings are accredited for Continuing Medical Education (CME) credits. Meeting participation is tracked and certificates will be issued at the end of the year. Credits be recorded under Section 1 of the Royal College Maintenance of Certification Program.

SIGs are open to all pathologists! If you want to join any of the SIG's, email Brigette Brigette.rabel@phsa.ca.

The Anatomical Pathology “Path Hub”

*** Coming Soon ***

Cancer treatment is continually evolving, with many therapies depending on the results of AP biomarker and genomic testing. However, some pathologists in BC are unaware of the tests required by oncologists, leading to late orders and delays in treatment. While subspecialist pathologists at major centers are up-to-date on testing requirements, there is a communication gap with pathologists in community hospitals across BC.

To address this issue, the Provincial AP Advisory Committee is creating an **online hub with tumour-specific testing guidelines**. The **Path Hub** will provide pathologists across the province with easy access to the latest testing guidelines for various tumour types. The guidelines are being developed by the SIG leads in consultation with oncologists and tumour groups.

The **Path Hub** will also host other resources for AP staff and pathologists. A link to the Path Hub will be circulated very soon!

BC Cancer Clinical Pathways

BC Cancer is in the process of developing [Clinical Care Pathways](#).

As per BC Cancer, these pathways will:

- guide best practice within BC Cancer to ensure high quality care is provided equitably to all patients across the province
- support decision making and communication within health care teams
- guide the development and reporting of clinically relevant benchmarks and key performance indicators and guide healthcare providers and patients in understanding the cancer trajectory for tumour-specific cancer care.

BC Cancer is consulting with Special Interest Group (SIG) leads to ensure AP has input in the development of the pathways.

Sending Specimens to BC Children's Hospital

When submitting remains for autopsy to BC Children's Hospital, please ensure the appropriate paperwork is included before submission. Instructions for submission can be found in [elabhandbook](#) by using the following search terms in the left hand column "search for test".

Search '**embryofeto**' for

- pregnancy losses less than 20 weeks gestational age at delivery

Search '**autopsy**' for

- losses 20 weeks or greater
- 500 g or greater at delivery regardless of gestational age
- any sign of life at delivery regardless of gestational age

Synoptic Reporting Dashboards

Each year, individual dashboards are issued to pathologists and surgeons. The dashboards include clinical and quality metrics based on the cases they reported using the mTuitive xPert synoptic reporting software, for breast, colorectum, endometrium, lung and prostate cancer resections.

In June, individual dashboards were distributed to:

- 144 pathologists
- 106 surgeons

Anyone with questions about the content of their dashboard can email Brigette Brigette.rabel@phsa.ca.

Ongoing Projects

Ongoing work by the AP Advisory committee includes:

- Supporting UBC's efforts in creating a training program for Pathologists' Assistants
- Supporting the provincial special interest groups (SIG's)
- Supporting increased inter-hospital collaborations for providing ancillary tests, including immunohistochemistry and molecular testing. Integral to this would be improvements to the courier systems.
- Developing autopsy proficiency guidelines.
- Creation of a central repository for provincial pathology testing guidelines.