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Cytoscientists and cytotechnicians have been the backbone of cervical cytology screening for decades. New and emerging technologies are changing the way we practice but the need for well trained, proficient and motivated cytologists will continue. Improving training for cytoscientists and cytotechnicians has been a high priority for the NCPTS in 2015.

The Vocational Registration Programme in Cervical Cytology (VRPCC) established by the NCSP has been a mandatory requirement for cytologists entering the workforce since 2008. The comprehensive VRPCC Workbook written by Dr Harold Neal (published May 2007) needs revising because of the move to 100% LBC cytology and the introduction of automation and HPV Testing. The NCPTS Training Team with Abed Kader as the revision author, have been working on a second edition this year. The revised VRPCC workbook will be available on CD rather than in print and should be finalized early in 2016.

QMLT qualification for Cytopreparation staff. The NZIMLS is introducing a new Qualified Medical Laboratory Technologist Qualification (QMLT) for those working in cytopreparation in cytology laboratories. At the request of the NZIMLS, the NCPTS Training Team (Christl Kirstein, project leader) has developed a syllabus for the gynaecologic aspects of the new qualification. The NZIMLS is arranging for others to develop the non-gynaecologic component and will announce when the new qualification is available for candidates.

The NZIMLS ASM held in August each year provides a fantastic opportunity for cytoscientists and cytotechnicians from different laboratories to meet, give and listen to talks, discuss work issues and learn about developments and changes in cervical cytology. The NCPTS runs a half-day programme at the conference each year which cytoscientists and cytotechnicians are encouraged to attend. In 2015, the programme included talks on the HPV immunization programme in New Zealand, the implications for laboratories of HPV vaccination, HPV-related oropharyngeal cancer in NZ, using HPV for primary screening: laboratory workflow issues, colposcopy, and a talk on journal clubs. A cytology morphology quiz is a regular feature of the NCPTS programme at the NZIMLS ASM. Thanks to Lois Barnett from Pathlab and Christl Kirstein for preparing and delivering the SurePath and ThinPrep cases for the quiz this year.



Liz Pringle talks at the NZIMLS ASM in Auckland about the laboratory workflow implications of using HPV testing for primary screening as part of the Compass study

NCPTS 2015 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

NCPTS Scholarships are awarded annually to cover expenses for conferences and courses within Australasia and further afield internationally. Application information and Terms and Conditions are available on the NCPTS website www.ncpts.co.nz. Two changes have been introduced in 2015:

- Histotechnicians are now eligible to apply for the \$500 scholarships offered in the early few months of each year, to attend the NZIMLS conference in August.
- The Terms and Conditions now state that if a scholarship awardee resigns from professional practice before attending their course/conference, NCPTS funding disbursed to cover costs must be returned to the NCPTS.

Recipients of NCPTS scholarships awarded in 2015 for 2016 courses and conferences are:

Cathy Rowberry (Cytotechnician)	Lisa Ding (Cytoscientist)	May Du (Cytoscientist)
Mary Webster (Cytoscientist)	Vicki Goodhand (Cytoscientist)	Tamaki Inoue (Cytoscientist)
Sheryl Worthington (Cytoscientist)	Nirup Kumar (Cytoscientist)	

Two **International scholarship** recipients will attend The International Congress of Cytology in Yokohama in May 2016. Six **Australasian scholarship** recipients will attend the Australian Society of Cytology Annual Business and Scientific Meeting in Melbourne in October 2016.

NCPTS 2015 TRAINING INITIATIVES

CYTOSCIENTISTS and CYTOTECHNICIANS

The three topics selected for cytoscientists/cytotechnicians for 2015 were postpartum samples, misdiagnosis of endometrial lesions and post-Iletz appearances. These were the topics for all workshops and for the circulated teaching sets of glass slides.

Australian Cytoscientist-led Workshops

Grace Tan, a senior cytoscientist at the Victorian Cytology Service in Melbourne ran three workshops at ThinPrep laboratories in September. The workshops were very well received and included a powerpoint talk on endometrial histology developed by the NCPTS and delivered on-site by Drs Sadiq Al-Sakini, KP Wong and Nicole Smith at LabPlus, APS and Medlab Central respectively.

New Zealand Cytoscientist-led Workshops

Three workshops were held in three SurePath laboratories during September to November. Abed Kader from Aotea Pathology presented workshops at Pathlab and CHL and Ashika Bissoon from Pathlab presented a workshop at SCL, Dunedin.



Grace Tan teaching at APS

Two teaching sets of glass slides were circulated to each cytology laboratory, using ThinPrep or SurePath slides as appropriate for the laboratory site. The sets were compiled by Christl Kirstein and Abed Kader.

In-house teaching modules. A poster entitled “Human Papillomavirus and Cervical Cancer” developed by Julia Mayes, Dulanjalie Tantirigama and Collette Bromhead at Aotea Pathology was distributed to cytology laboratories in July, with copyright permission from Aotea Pathology. A module on establishing and running a Journal Club was distributed to laboratories in November.

MOLECULAR SCIENTISTS

The 2015 annual newsletter for molecular scientists will be circulated in December and will provide an update for molecular scientists on developments relating to the use of HPV testing internationally. A Forum Board on the NCPTS website will be made available in 2016 for molecular scientists performing HPV testing. This will provide a place where comments or questions about HPV testing can be posted, to facilitate communication between molecular scientists. Further information will be distributed to molecular scientists in 2016.

HISTOSCIENTISTS

A short talk outlining what the NCPTS Scholarship programme has to offer Histoscience was delivered at the NZIMLS Histology Special Interest Group meeting in Christchurch in November.

PATHOLOGISTS and ANATOMICAL PATHOLOGY REGISTRARS

The **anatomic pathology registrar annual weekend workshops** were held in Auckland and Christchurch in October this year. This time of year was trialed to avoid RCPA examinations in May, June and August and proved popular, with record attendances from registrars. Thanks to Dr Diane Kenwright for providing teaching in cervical histopathology, Dr Andrew Miller for providing SurePath cytology multiheader sessions and two colposcopists Dr Pip Shirley (Auckland) and Dr Helene MacNab (Christchurch) for presenting sessions on colposcopy. Thanks also to Dr Cindy Ooi (Colposcopist) for preparing the Auckland colposcopy talk. Keepad technology allowing participants to vote anonymously on displayed cases was enthusiastically received at the Auckland workshop.

Three teaching sets of ThinPrep slides were distributed to all Anatomic Pathology registrars during the year. **Support for registrars sitting the RCPA examination in Cytology** was provided by way of face-to-face teaching

CONFERENCE CONTRIBUTIONS

The NCPTS half-day workshop at the **combined South Pacific Congress/NZIMLS ASM** in Auckland in August included talks on The HPV Vaccination Programme in NZ (Chris Millar, Ministry of Health), Implications for laboratories of HPV vaccination (Dr Harold Neal, Ministry of Health), HPV-associated Oropharyngeal Cancer in New Zealand (Rebecca Lucas-Roxburgh, Massey University), Using HPV Testing for Primary Screening: the Compass study experience at APS (Liz Pringle, APS) Understanding Colposcopy (Dr Cindy Ooi, Specialist Colposcopist, Auckland Hospital) and Reviewing Articles for Journal Clubs (Dr Margaret Sage). Christl Kirstein and Lois Barnett ran a cytology quiz of ThinPrep and SurePath cytology cases, using the Keepad voting technology.



Dr Harold Neal and Chris Millar from the Ministry of Health gave talks at the NCPTS programme at the South Pacific Congress/ NZIMLS ASM in Auckland in August.

CONFERENCE CONTRIBUTIONS cont.

The theme of the NCPTS contribution to the **RCPA-NZ Annual Scientific Meeting** in Queenstown in October was Diagnostic Morphology of Lesions of the Cervix. Included were talks on Assessing Glandular Lesions Using SurePath Cytology (Dr Peter Fitzgerald), Assessing Low-grade Cervical Lesions by Histology (Dr Peter Bethwaite), and Immunohistochemistry: Using p16 in Cervical Histopathology delivered by a panel of three histopathologists (Dr Diane Kenwright, Wellington Hospital, Dr Kathryn Payne, LabPlus and Dr Rachael van der Griend, CHL).



From left: Dr Rachael van der Griend, Dr Diane Kenwright and Dr Kathryn Payne provided a panel discussion on using p16 in cervical histopathology at the RCPA ASM in Queenstown.

TRAINING INITIATIVES: PLANS FOR 2016

The National Training Committee which oversees the work of the NCPTS Training Team holds an annual meeting in Wellington in November each year. Plans for each workforce group are discussed and are made available on the NCPTS website in January the following year. For 2016, in brief:

Cytoscientists/Cytotechnicians :

Australian cytoscientist-led workshops will be held in the three SurePath laboratories. Annette O'Leary (Adelaide) has accepted an invitation to visit as tutor. Topics covered will be AIS, assessing crowded sheets and ASC-US vs reactive cases. Three NZ cytoscientist-led workshops addressing the same topics will be held in the three ThinPrep laboratories, taken by a senior cytoscientist/cytotechnician from another ThinPrep laboratory. Two SurePath and two ThinPrep slide sets will be circulated to cytoscientists/cytotechnicians and further in-house training modules will be developed. There will be a half-day NCPTS workshop at the NZIMLS ASM in Rotorua in August.

Cytopreparation staff: Two education modules for distribution to laboratories are planned.

Vocation Registration Programme in Cervical Cytology (VRPCC): Completion of the workbook and logbook review is a high priority for the first few months of 2016.

Anatomic Pathology Registrars: The annual workshops and teaching slide sets rotation programme will continue. The NCPTS is keen to increase the training for registrars available on line and will continue to provide as much support as possible for those registrars sitting the RCPA examination in Cytology.

Cytopathologists/Histopathologists A contribution to the RCPA ASM is planned. Literature reviews for pathologists will be distributed on a regular basis from 2016.



The NCPTS Training team: Margaret, Christl, Pauline and Abed.

We wish you a happy holiday season!

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