

### The NCPTS and COVID-19

Covid-19 certainly provided new challenges for the NCPTS this year. At the top of the list has been the move on-line for training events and meetings. The National Training Day in August was attended on-line by more people than in any previous year. Workshops for cytoscientists/cytotechnicians were held on ZOOM in December, with Professor David Wilbur teaching from Boston, USA. Feedback from the sector has been positive, particularly around the ease of access to teaching and the time-efficiency involved - things to consider for future event planning. On the down side, the RCPA-NZ and NZIMLS ASM meetings planned for August in Auckland were cancelled. No NCPTS scholarships were awarded and registrar workshops were considerably rearranged to adjust to the change of timing of the RCPA examinations in 2020.

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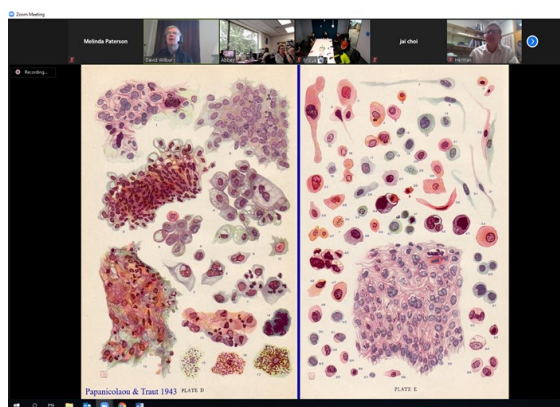
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We are grateful to those who have continued to contribute, support and attend our NCPTS training events despite an exceptionally disrupted and busy year. We wish you all an equally exceptional relaxing break over summer!



### DAVID WILBUR WORKSHOPS

Professor David Wilbur from Boston, Massachusetts USA provided an engaging 6-hour workshop for cytoscientists/cytotechnicians in early December 2020. David has expertise in reporting both ThinPrep and SurePath cytology as well as a keen interest in digital pathology so was a perfect tutor for an on-line cytomorphology workshop. Three workshops were held to accommodate the Thin-Prep and SurePath laboratories. A particular feature was the discussion of 8 unknown cases at each workshop, some supplied from New Zealand and some from the USA, with Professor Wilbur providing a detailed discussion of the diagnostic features for each case. It was very instructive to see how an internationally respected cytopathologist approached these difficult cases. We are hoping to get David into New Zealand in person towards the end of 2021 for a series of face-to-face workshops, COVID constraints permitting.



## NCPTS SLIDE SCAN PROJECT

Work on the collaborative project between the NCPTS and the RCPA to create 500 digital cervical cytology e-cases hosted on the RCPA website, has continued throughout the year. To date, 363 of the 500 cases have been scanned. The first five batches of slides (94 cases) have been released on the RCPA website with the remainder in various stages of processing. Work will continue in 2021 to complete the project. Thanks to Gwenda Lawrence (Cytoscientist), SurePath pathologists (Andrew Miller, Pathlab cytopathologists), the RCPA and the RCPA QAP for assistance with funding, scanning and posting the finalised cases, and to Melinda Paterson who handles most of the communication involved in coordinating all those involved with the project.

## USING THE NCPTS SLIDE SCAN PROJECT CASES

The cases are hosted on the Sectra platform which uses cloud computing, so there is no software to download or install, and there is minimal lag-time. Slides can be viewed from any internet-connected device, such as a work or home computer, iPad, tablet or mobile phone.

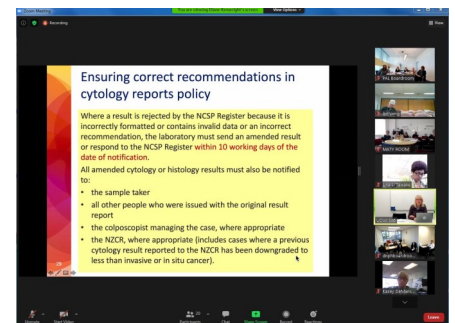
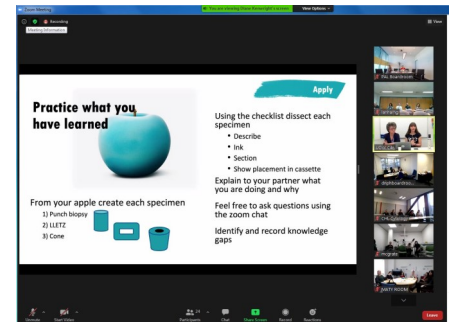
Pathologists and registrars with an RCPA website log-on already have access to the RCPA files of e-cases. Cytoscientists and cytotechnicians can access the cervical cytology e-cases at <https://www.rcpa.edu.au/Library/eCases> using the following:

User ID: 33229

Password: 33229rcpa

## NATIONAL TRAINING DAY 2020

The online programme was hosted on ZOOM from the Wellington Clinical School of Medicine, Otago University. Thanks to Diane Kenwright and the IT personnel on-site for setting up arrangements for the day and providing facilities and backup support. 90 participants joined for at least part of the day, with the majority joining for selected sessions. Topics covered included updates about new NCSP Clinical Practice Guidelines and changes coming in an update to NCSP Policies and Standards Section 5: Providing a Laboratory Service. A quiz regarding choosing correct cytology report recommendations in tricky clinical situations, a session on grossing and processing cervical tissue in histopathology, and new developments in digital pathology in cytology and histology followed. A final highlight of the day was Dr Sarb Johal's interactive session entitled: *Recalibrating in times of Uncertainty—Learning lessons from Covid-19*, taking us through lessons we can learn from coping with COVID that are useful when facing any period of uncertainty. Thanks to all the presenters for your contributions and to all who participated in the day.



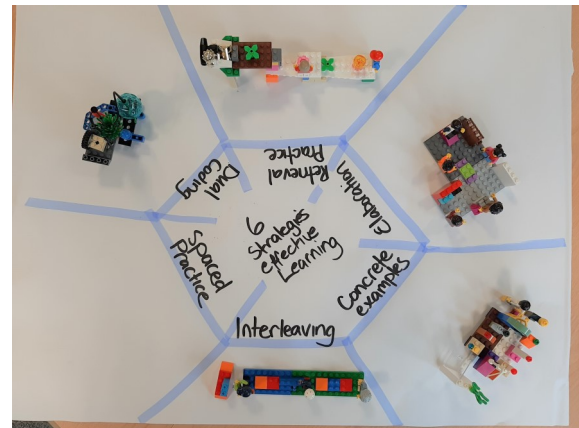
## NCPTS TRAINING INITIATIVES 2020

### ANATOMICAL PATHOLOGY REGISTRARS

**First and second year registrars** attended workshops in Wellington in March in the week prior to the lockdown. The Auckland Year 1-2 workshop planned for April was finally held on 30th October. Many thanks to all the tutors—Drs Wendy McBurnie (multiheader teaching), Diane Kenwright and Amanda Charlton (“Learning how to learn” sessions), and Elizabeth Goulding (Introduction to colposcopy). Morphology workshops for **senior pathology registrars have been postponed to the end of January 2021** to accommodate the change in timing of the 2020 RCPA examinations which were held in October/November instead of May/June.

**Six cytology teaching slide sets (three ThinPrep and three SurePath sets of 10 cases each) and one cervical histopathology set** were distributed to all Anatomic Pathology registrars. The cases were drawn from the NCPTS teaching set in 2020. Thanks to Drs Diane Kenwright and Peter Bethwaite for providing the cervical histopathology.

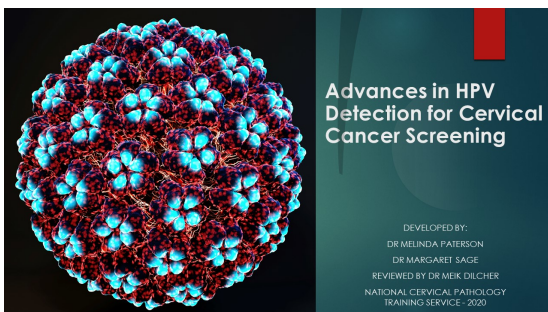
**Registrars sitting the RCPA examination in Cytology** were provided with additional teaching slide sets and a mock examination glass slide test prior to the RCPA examination. The NCPTS will move to a digital mock exam in 2021, to align with the new RCPA cytology examination format.



### CYTOSCIENTISTS/CYTOTECHNICIANS

**Two teaching sets of glass slides** were circulated to cytoscientists/cytotechnicians at each cytology laboratory, using ThinPrep or SurePath slides. The sets were compiled by Christl Kirstein (ThinPrep sets) and Ashika Bissoon (SurePath sets). Each set comprised a mix of interesting and difficult cases of educational value across the cytology spectrum. Thanks to Christl and Ashika for the work they put in each year to develop these interesting case sets.

### MOLECULAR SCIENTISTS

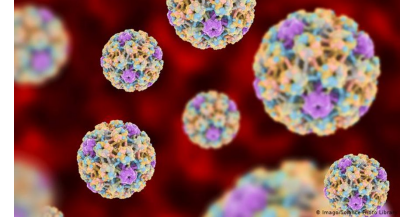


**Advances in HPV Detection for Cervical Cancer Screening** is a Power-Point talk developed by Melinda Paterson in conjunction with the NCPTS National Training Committee molecular scientist Meik Dilcher. The talk covers extended genotyping, viral load, viral integration, methylation status and HPV variants. It has been distributed to the six laboratories performing hrHPV testing for use as part of their in-house training. Thanks to Melinda for using her research molecular scientist expertise to create this teaching resource.



## CONFERENCE CONTRIBUTIONS AND NCPTS SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

The RCPA-NZ ASM and the NZIMLS ASM were both cancelled in 2020. No NCPTS scholarships were awarded because of the NZIMLS conference cancellation and the lack of international travel this year. The situation will be reviewed in 2021 as the international COVID situation continues to evolve. Laboratories will be notified when the NCPTS Scholarship programme recommences.



## TRAINING INITIATIVES: PLANS for 2021

1. The NCPTS Slide Scan Project is due for completion in 2021.
2. There will be a National Training Day in 2021. Decisions about the format and the programme will be made in May 2021, as this will be influenced by decisions around the timeline for the introduction of HPV primary screening.
3. A programme of in-house teaching with Professor David Wilbur is proposed, subject to fulfilling immigration requirements allowing him to visit New Zealand. Further details will be released in 2021.
3. An on-line workshop will be developed for cytoscientists/cytotechnicians in place of the usual workshop series. Two teaching sets of slides will be distributed to cytoscientists/cytotechnicians.
4. Registrar workshops, slide sets and RCPA examination candidate support will continue

## NATIONAL TRAINING COMMITTEE (NTC)

### *The current NTC committee members are:*

*Diane Kenwright (Chair), Peter Bethwaite (RCPA representative), Andrew Miller, Kathryn Payne, Amanda Charlton, Ursula Van Den Heever, Christine Hide (Cytotechnician representative), Meik Dilcher, Helen Keeman (Registrar representative)*

Ex officio NCPTS members: *Margaret Sage, Christl Kirstein, Ashika Bissoon.*

Administrative assistance: *Melinda Paterson (NCPTS Administrator)*

### **NEWSFLASH!! We need more scientist representatives on the National Training Committee!!!**

If you are a cytoscientist (ThinPrep or SurePath), a histoscientist or a molecular scientist performing HPV testing for the NCSP and would like to join our lively active committee to help plan NCPTS training events, please contact us at either of the email addresses below. The commitment isn't onerous - we will welcome your interest!

Thanks again to all who have contributed to the work of the NCPTS in 2020. We look forward to working with you all again in 2021.

*We wish you a happy holiday season!*

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