

Position Statement

Subject: **Diagnosis requiring collaboration between Pathology Disciplines**
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Recent scientific and technological advances have led to the combination of tests supervised by more than one Pathology discipline in diagnoses that have traditionally been within the scope of practice of a single discipline. These include the requirement for the expertise of microbiologists in cervical screening and genetic pathologists in tumour diagnosis.

The competencies required to supervise and interpret new testing draw from the curricula of the disciplines in which those techniques have been developed and are not necessarily currently shared by other disciplines. Therefore, providing an integrated diagnosis with input from appropriately qualified pathologists from each discipline involved in the testing is essential.

For example, genetic testing in addition to morphological diagnosis of tumours is increasingly important for individualised treatment of numerous malignancies. Providing a diagnosis combining both modalities requires training in morphological diagnosis as well as demonstrated competency to supervise and interpret the genetic test applied to the tissue. The Anatomical Pathology training curriculum includes testing for the presence or absence of one or more predefined genomic variants where the pathogenicity and clinical utility of each variant is well established. These are scenarios in which the Pathologist is not required to evaluate the pathogenicity and clinical utility of a previously undescribed variant. If more complex genetic testing is performed it must be under the supervision of a Genetic Pathologist or by an Anatomical Pathologist who has been certified as competent in the appropriate module. At present the Genetic Pathology curriculum does not include competencies in morphological diagnosis but this is being developed.

Similarly, the NPAAC *Requirements for Laboratories Reporting Tests for the National Cervical Screening Program (First Edition 2017)* state that HPV nucleic acid testing must be supervised by a Pathologist with training and experience in nucleic acid testing and that liquid-based cytology must involve a Pathologist competent in cytology and histology of gynaecological specimens. HPV nucleic acid testing is incorporated in the Microbiology curriculum while cytology and histology of gynaecological specimens is examined as part of the Anatomical Pathology curriculum.

Accurate diagnosis incorporating results from different modalities of testing requires active collaboration between members of the appropriate disciplines practicing within their recognised scopes of practice.