

Name: Tracy Bright

Role: Senior Biomedical Scientist studying for IBMS ASD in Breast Dissection

Why did you want to attend the symposium?

The timing of the Breast Symposium appealed to me as I was busy preparing for the IBMS ASD in breast dissection examination. I applied in order to consolidate my learning and take-in the information in a different way in the lead-up to the exam.

Did the symposium meet your expectations?

I found the symposium to be a good opportunity to get up to date with changes to the RCPATH breast dataset, to understand some of the current reporting challenges, to connect with various other breast dissection professionals and to be inspired as to what the future might look like as technology progresses. It was useful to interact with the trade stall personnel and had some useful discussions with AstraZeneca in particular.

Do you feel more confident in your knowledge/understanding of this area of pathology following attendance at the symposium?

I felt reassured that due to my revision and study for the exam, I understood the majority of issues discussed throughout the day. This validated my efforts thus far and helped me to feel more confident in the knowledge I had retained.

Highlight aspects of this area of pathology that you have learnt from the Symposium which you were not aware of prior to the day:

I was interested to note the use of different terminology for breast surgical specimens (in particular cavity shaves) which can cause misunderstandings at dissection if practice/terminology is not standardised. There were also some diagrams presented to outline dissection practice including thickness of slice which I could see would be useful.

I thoroughly enjoyed the presentation of evidence for agreed minimum resection margins for invasive and in-situ disease and understanding the impact on risk of recurrence. I now understand why we have maintained these limits and that these are different to those adhered to in the USA.

It was interesting to explore molecular markers and understand a little more the range of patient - tailored treatments available in advanced or metastatic disease.

The various presentations outlining some of the potential for artificial intelligence in image analysis to aid in breast reporting was absolutely fascinating.

Are there any aspects of what you have learnt during the symposium that you would consider incorporating into your own practice?

Some general pointers that may prove useful in decision making that I picked up from the day:

- I have a better understanding of why grade is often increased on excision
- When mastectomy slices are of variable thickness, a diagram may be helpful to aid in tumour measurement.
- Generally speaking the more specimens that are tested for her2, the more likely a positive result.

- There was also included, plenty of information about her2 low. This potentially means alterations to use of controls and EQA schemes within the laboratory but also has an impact on pathologists in terms of training to identify her2 -low, -ultra-low and -null.

Would you recommend this Symposium to your colleagues?

Yes absolutely. The venue and hospitality were excellent and the breadth of presentations made it a very worthwhile day.