

Katie Gardner – Bursary Report – BDIAP Molecular Pathology Virtual Study Day

Name: Katie Gardner

Training year: ST3

I recently attended the BDIAP Molecular Pathology virtual study day. I wished to attend this event as molecular pathology is a vast area which is rapidly developing and ever increasingly being incorporated into histopathology reports. It is something that I now encounter in day-to-day practice in almost every specialty and wanted to have a better grasp of the interpretation of molecular results in guiding diagnosis, prognosis and management.

I feel this study day greatly improved my understanding of molecular pathology as a whole – I particularly liked the format of the programme which started with a general introduction to the principles of molecular pathology before expanding on this for each of the different specialities.

The study day broadened my knowledge base and covered topics I had not previously come across. For example, I was not aware of the POLE mutated endometrial cancers and their implications for prognosis in this cancer subgroup. This is a topic of discussion I have since encountered on a couple of separate occasions and felt my learning from the study day enabled me to participate in these discussions in a more informed manner.

In addition, I now feel more confident about what molecular tests to request in tumours I commonly encounter in my working day (e.g. colorectal and lung) and feel able to order these tests independently when I am working up the case to make sure these are requested and reported as efficiently as possible for the patient.

Overall, the study day exceeded my expectations. I am incredibly impressed at the adaptation of this study day to a virtual platform and feel the online programme ran very smoothly. In particular the live question and answer sessions were very informative. I am very grateful to have had the opportunity to attend this study day and feel it was a valuable contribution to my pathology training.

I would highly recommend this course to anyone. I think this would be a beneficial course for my colleagues at any stage in their histopathology training as molecular pathology is only going to continue to develop and expand over the coming years so having a solid grasp on it early in your training is invaluable.

Katie Gardner – Bursary report – BDIAP Approach to Cut up Virtual Study day

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I recently attended the BDIAP Approach to Cut up virtual study day. I wished to attend this event to improve my confidence in my approach to trimming specimen types I commonly encounter as well as more advanced and complex specimens.

After attending this event, I now feel I have a safe and methodical approach to all of the specimens covered in the study day that I can adapt to suit individual specimens. My confidence has definitely increased for specimens I frequently trim (e.g. colorectal cancer cases and endometrial tumours) after attending this study day and I also feel I would be able to approach more advanced specimens that previously I would have felt more hesitant with.

I learnt about several different trimming techniques I had not come across before. For example, it was very interesting to learn about the different approaches to trimming breast wide local excisions. I had not previously encountered the cruciate method, as described at this study day, and can appreciate the benefits of this for tumour fixation. This highlights the fact there are multiple different ways to approach and trim the same specimen, each of which will have its own benefits. This is important to appreciate and to try different techniques to find the one most suited to you in your own practice.

In addition, learning about the approach to cut up for a Whipple procedure is something I found extremely beneficial from this course. I would like to try to incorporate this next time I encounter one of these specimens.

Overall, I was extremely impressed with this study day, in particular with the adaptation to an entirely virtual format. This was a challenging topic to deliver online, but I do not feel this format detracted from its value in any way whatsoever. All of the speakers delivered extremely informative and easy to follow talks and the live question and answer sessions were an excellent opportunity to clarify or expand on any points of discussion.

I would not hesitate to recommend this study day to my peers – I thoroughly enjoyed the day as well as finding it an invaluable teaching resource that has definitely improved my confidence in my approach to trimming a wide range of specimens.