

Report on the 5th BDIAP Molecular Pathology study day, March 4th 2019.

The day started with registration and refreshments and an introductory presentation by the president of the British Division of the International Academy of Pathology, Prof. McMahon. Prof. Salto-Tellez then followed with an Introduction to Molecular Pathology which gave a very informative outline of what exactly is incorporated into the area of molecular pathology and the impact and implications of molecular pathology. I found this to be a thought provoking and interesting presentation which lay the groundwork for the rest of the days topics.

The day was then divided into presentations on molecular pathology in order of speciality. I enjoyed this approach as previous lectures I have attended, tend to discuss the area of molecular pathology by jumping from one speciality to another. This approach can get overly complex in a detailed and evolving area. By segregating the systems it allowed for a more detailed and focused approach.

I found this teaching day to provide an opportunity to learn about molecular testing in specialities I may be less familiar with. One such area was molecular testing in sarcomas presented by Dr. Pillay, in which Dr. Pillay discussed techniques used and gene expression in sarcomas along with the importance of histological correlation. I particularly enjoyed the presentation on Molecular Diagnostics in Haemaopathology by Dr. Soilleux. In this presentation Dr. Soilleux discussed gene rearrangement starting at the basic structure of the antibody domain on both B and T cells and continuing through the method of clonality testing through to interpretation of the results. This is not something one does often and as such it was very useful to get the opportunity to learn about these processes.

Each presentation was interesting and detailed and gave a full account of the requirements and impact of molecular pathology on that speciality. I found this study day to be detailed and one which one could attend a second time before fully grasping all concepts and techniques use. The detail provided on the day emphasised the importance of molecular pathology to the future of histopathology and as such the need for a good understanding the this area. This study day goes a long way to helping grasp the complex and evolving subject of molecular pathology.

Report on Approach to Cut-Up study day, March 5th 2019.

The day began with an overview of the general points, ethos and tools when approaching cut-up, presented by Dr. Browning. This presentation emphasized the importance of considering the what you will need to facilitate an accurate diagnosis and how the requirements of each specimen is to be taken into account as soon as the specimen is received by the laboratory staff. I found the concept of approaching the specimen with purpose to be a useful one requiring forward planning and consideration before starting the gross cut-up. I found this presentation set up the rest of the days topics nicely.

The rest of the presentation were broken into specialties using for the most part, The Royal College of Pathologist Cancer Data Sets as a template for correct grossing and sampling of each organ. I found this a useful approach as the RCPATH data sets are something I frequently refer to and gaining more familiarity with them helps to set out a consistent approach to specimens.

I particularly enjoyed the approach to skin cut-up as this can be one area where each specimen can be a little different from the last and while they are just small specimens the correct approach is important. The simple explanation provided of how to approach a wedge excision has made my cut-up much more efficient. The review of how to gross and cut a whipples was also very useful with the diagrams provided making orientation straight forward.

Whilst one might have more experience in one area over another, I found that I picked up valuable information even in the areas I would be more familiar with. As there can be numerous preferences in each department, I found this study day gave me a solid approach to everything from endocrine specimens to gastrointestinal specimens. By having a better foundational approach to cut-up, with one eye on the questions that need to be answered for staging purposes etc, I find I'm more confident in block selection. I found this to be an invaluable study and one which I would recommend to all 1st year trainees in particular. I have shared much of what I learned on this study day with fellow trainees and continue to use the techniques taught on a daily bases.

By Dr Gráinne Heuston