Waitemata District Health Board

Pathologist Assistant

Position Description

Date: June 2015

Job Title: Pathologist Assistant

Department: Surgical Pathology Unit

Location: North Shore Hospital

Reporting To: Anatomical Pathologists

Direct Reports To: Clinical Director

Functional Relationships with:
- Internal Laboratory Team Leader, Surgical Pathology
- Unit Manager, Surgical Pathology
- Surgical Pathology Technical Staff and Secretaries
- External Clinicians
- All Ward Nurses and Outpatients Clinics
- General Laboratory

Purpose:
Assist the pathologists in the preparation of specimens from biopsies through to dissection of specimens from major operations, describing salient gross anatomic features, selecting and submitting tissue for histologic processing after obtaining pertinent clinical information. The tasks are performed under supervision of pathologists and the pathologist assistant supervisor. It also includes assisting pathologists in frozen sections, tissue banking, and submitting specimens for additional analytical testing.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>KEY TASKS</th>
<th>EXPECTED OUTCOMES</th>
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</table>
| 1. Receive specimens from theatres, outpatients and wards with appropriate tracking books/forms. Collect specimens received after hours from the General Laboratory. Sorting and accessioning of these specimens. | - Accurate identification and labeling of patient forms and specimen containers.  
- Subsequently printing tissue cassettes with the correct surgical pathology accession number and patient name. |
| 2. Correct transfer of biopsy samples to matching tissues cassette. Selecting tissue samples for histologic processing after consultation with pathologist and in accordance with the SPU Cut-Up Manual. | - Appropriate selection of tissue sections that will be needed by the pathologists to provide an accurate diagnosis and pathologic staging. |
| 4. Digital dictation of macroscopic description using appropriate medical terminology. | - Accurate descriptions of salient features and findings relevant to clinical information. |
### KEY TASKS | EXPECTED OUTCOMES
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4. Work independently in areas where you are assessed as competent. Ability to seek assistance from the pathologists and/or pathologist assistant supervisor when required. Perform and complete these tasks within the required timeframe. | • Perform duties with good judgment in accordance to departmental policies and protocols  
• Able to identify limitations and know when to ask for help
5. Under the supervision of the pathologist or pathologist assistant supervisor, process fresh tissue for frozen section and breast sentinel node biopsies. Assist in collection of fresh tissue for bio-banking. | • Coordinate with technical staff for frozen section.  
• Perform Diff-Quik stain of slides for sentinel nodes.  
• Coordinate with pathologist and General Laboratory for bio-banking
6. Consult pathologist in tissue selection for special tests (e.g. lymphoma protocol, flow cytometry, cytogenetics and others). Use appropriate protocols and properly track send-away samples. Decalcify bone marrow trephine sample for Haematology using appropriate reagent. | • Appropriate selection of tissue sample, proper labeling and documentation of specimen sent to other institutions  
• Appropriate handling of decalcifying acids
7. Participate in continuing medical education. | • Attend work-related scientific meetings  
• Appraisal of journals and related literatures
8. Maintain instruments and equipment in order to have an orderly and safe working environment. | • Working areas well maintained and cleaned
9. Photography of specimens for use in instruction and documentation. Maintain complete and accurate filing of photos. | • Ensure macroscopic photographs are readily available for conferences and documentation
10. Maintain storage, filing and disposal of specimens. | • Appropriate disposal of specimens and maintain cleanliness in storage area
11. Preparation of tissue requiring return to patient. | • Properly pack tissue for pick-up by Director of Nursing and Midwifery, social workers and nurses
12. Answer telephone enquiries regarding tissue samples | • Accurate information given
Pathologist Assistant

Position Description

**KEY TASKS** | **EXPECTED OUTCOMES**
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13. Statutory & Treaty of Waitangi obligations | • Ensures the professional and political integrity of WDHB by carrying out all functions in compliance of the Treaty of Waitangi and by demonstrating a serious commitment to keeping the treaty alive.

• Shows sensitivity to cultural complexity in the workforce and patient population

14. To recognise Individual Responsibility for Workplace Health and Safety under the Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992 | • Company health and safety policies are read and understood and relevant procedures applied to their own work activities

• Workplace hazards are identified and reported, including self management of hazards where appropriate

• Can identify health and safety representative for area

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**Behavioural Competencies**

Adheres to Waitemata District Health Boards 4 Organisational Values of:

- **everyone matters**
- **with compassion**
- **connected**
- **better, best, brilliant**

*Every single person matters, whether a patient / client, family member or a staff member*

*We see our work in health as a vocation and more than a job, We are aware of the suffering of these entrusted to our care. We are driven by a desire to relieve that suffering. This philosophy drives our caring approach and means we will strive to do everything we can to relieve suffering and promote wellness.*

*We need to be connected with our community. We need to be connected within our organisation – across disciplines and teams. This is to ensure care is seamless and integrated to achieve the best possible health outcomes for our patients/clients and their families.*

*We seek continuous improvement in everything we do. We will become the national leader in health care delivery.*

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**Behavioural Competencies** | **Behaviour Demonstrated**
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavioural Competencies</th>
<th>Behaviour Demonstrated</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communicates and Works Cooperatively</strong></td>
<td>• Actively looks for ways to collaborate with and assist others to improve the experience of the healthcare workforce, patients &amp; their families and the community &amp; Iwi.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Is Committed to Learning</strong></td>
<td>• Proactively follows up development needs and learning opportunities for oneself and direct reports.</td>
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| **Is Transparent**                                | • Communicates openly and engages widely across the organisation.  
• Enacts agreed decisions with integrity.                                                        |
| **Is Customer Focused**                           | • Responds to peoples needs appropriately and with effective results  
• Identifies opportunities for innovation and improvement                                          |
| **Works in Partnership to Reduce Inequality in Outcomes** | Works in a way that:  
• Demonstrates awareness of partnership obligations under the Treaty of Waitangi.  
• Shows sensitivity to cultural complexity in the workforce and patient population.  
• Ensures service provision that does not vary because of peoples’ personal characteristics. |
| **Improves health**                               | • Work practices show a concern for the promotion of health and well-being for self and others.                                                                                                                            |
| **Prevents Harm**                                 | • Follows policies and guidelines designed to prevent harm.  
• Acts to ensure the safety of themselves and others.                                                                                                           |

**VERIFICATION:**

Employee: ______________________________________

Manager: ______________________________________

Date: ______________________________________

Review Date: ______________________________________

**Note:** This job description forms part of an individual’s contract of employment with WDHB and must be attached to that contract.
### PERSON SPECIFICATION

**POSITION TITLE:** Pathologist Assistant

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<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Preferred</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Qualification</strong></td>
<td>Bachelor of Science</td>
<td>Overseas medical qualification</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Experience</strong></td>
<td>Previous related experience in a laboratory</td>
<td>Previous related experience including surgical pathology, gross dissection on surgical specimens, frozen sections</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Skills/Knowledge/Behaviour</strong></td>
<td>Some knowledge in anatomy, physiology, pathology and histopathology</td>
<td>Thorough knowledge in anatomy, pathophysiology, dissection technique, equipment and methodologies</td>
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<td>Excellent communication skills and ability to work independently</td>
<td>Strong analytical skills</td>
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<td>Computer literate</td>
<td>Computer literate with ability to problem solve computer related problems</td>
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