Pathologist Assistant

Position Description

Date: June 2017

Job Title: Pathologist Assistant
Department: Surgical Pathology Unit
Location: North Shore Hospital
Reporting To: Clinical Director
Direct Reports: Nil

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

Our Purpose, Values and Standards

At the heart of Waitemata DHB is our promise of ‘best care for everyone’. This promise statement is the articulation of our three-fold purpose to:

1. promote wellness,
2. prevent, cure and ameliorate ill health and
3. relieve the suffering of those entrusted to our care.

At the heart of our values is the need for all of us to reflect on the intrinsic dignity of every single person that enters our care. It is a privilege to be able to care for patients, whānau and our community, a privilege that is sometimes overlooked in our day to day work.

Our standards and behaviours serve as a reminder to us all about how we are with our patients and with each other.
Purpose of the role: 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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<tr>
<th>KEY TASKS</th>
<th>EXPECTED OUTCOMES</th>
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| 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. |
| 3. Digital dictation of macroscopic description using appropriate medical terminology. | • Accurate descriptions of salient features and findings relevant to clinical information. |
| 4. Work independently in areas where you are assessed as competent. Ability to seek assistance from the pathologists and/or pathologist assistants 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 lead pathologist assistant, 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 |
## Pathologist Assistant

*Position Description*

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<th>10. Maintain storage, filing and disposal of specimens.</th>
<th>• Appropriate disposal of specimens and maintain cleanliness in storage area</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11. Preparation of tissue requiring return to patient.</td>
<td>• Properly pack tissue for pick-up by Director of Nursing and Midwifery, social workers and nurses</td>
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<td>12. Answer telephone enquiries regarding tissue samples</td>
<td>• Accurate information given</td>
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### 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

### To recognise individual responsibility for workplace Health & Safety under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015

**Contribute to a safe and healthy workplace at WDHB by:**

**All Employees**

- Following & complying with H&S policies & processes & applying them to their own work activities, including using/wearing Personal Protective Equipment as required.
- Participating in activities directed at preventing harm & promoting well-being in the workplace
- Identifying, reporting & self-managing hazards where appropriate
- Early and accurate reporting of incidents at work and raising issues of concern when identified.
# PERSON SPECIFICATION

**POSITION TITLE:** Pathologist Assistant

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<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Preferred</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bachelor of Science</td>
<td>Overseas medical qualification</td>
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<th>Experience</th>
<th>Previous related experience in a laboratory</th>
<th>Previous related experience including surgical pathology, gross dissection on surgical specimens, frozen sections</th>
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<th>Skills/Knowledge/Behaviour</th>
<th>Some knowledge in anatomy, physiology, pathology and histopathology</th>
<th>Thorough knowledge in anatomy, pathophysiology, dissection technique, equipment and methodologies</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<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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