



22<sup>nd</sup> March 2014

Mr Tony McNamara,  
CEO,  
Cork University Hospital,  
Wilton,  
Co. Cork

**Report Letter relating to the inspection of the Histopathology department of Cork University Hospital**

Dear Mr. McNamara,

The Irish Committee on Higher Medical Training (ICHMT) last inspected Cork University Hospital on the 25<sup>th</sup> November 2013 regarding its suitability for the Histopathology Higher Specialist Training (HST) programme. The NSD report pertaining to this hospital inspection was received by the hospital inspections department on **20<sup>th</sup> February, 2014**. The very recent change of the administrative staff in the hospital inspection department at RCPi led to a delay in this report being formatted and typed resulting in the target time of 3 weeks, from receipt of NSD report to sending out of hospital inspections report being exceeded.

The purpose of a hospital inspection is to determine the ability of an institution to deliver Higher Specialist Training in a specialty, according to the requirements as defined by the Histopathology curriculum of training. The inspection panel advises on the suitability after a detailed interview with consultant trainers, trainees and management representatives, with an inspection of the facilities.

The inspection committee commended Cork University Hospital on the commitment of the trainers to the Higher Specialist Training programme, and the support of the management team.

On the basis of the inspectors' recommendations, this unit is approved for Higher Specialist Training in Histopathology for:

- Number of Posts – **8 training posts** (excluding Lecturer and Neuropathology). At least 3 of these posts should be at SHO level.
- Length of Approval: **3 years** pending receipt of a satisfactory interim report
- Trainers: Dr. Tara Jane Browne, Dr. Bill Bennett, Dr. Louise Burke, Dr. Julie McCarthy, Dr. Brendan Fitzgerald, Dr. Niamh Bermingham
- Next Inspection Due: **last quarter 2016 pending receipt of a satisfactory interim report**
- Interim Progress Report: **end of December 2014 addressing issues overleaf**

Inspection Panel:

- Dr. Cecily Quinn – National Specialty Director
- Dr. Peter Kelly – Dean of Faculty of Pathology
- Prof Robbie Harrison - Inspection Chair

The education and training observations as confirmed by the ICHMT on advice from the Inspection Panel follow. Major issues are those that impact on the accreditation status or

are critical for training approval. Minor issues are areas that could be improved but are not critical for training approval.

**Educational Opportunities:**

- Weekly Blackbox session
- Weekly Journal Club
- Weekly Webinar didactic teaching
- Occasional In-house tutorials
- National study days (please see below).
- Audit projects
- Opportunity to teach undergraduate students

**Strengths of the Department:**

- Large surgical pathology workload with good case mix
- Busy non-gynaecological cytopathology service
- Busy autopsy service
- Multidisciplinary team meetings
- Supportive consultant trainer staff
- Spacious, well appointed laboratory

**Major Issues & Recommendations**

<b>Major Issues:</b>	<b>Recommendations for Change:</b>
1. Busy work load and low trainee number for workload	1. Increase trainee number to reduce workload and enhance training and teaching experience
2. During the past year, some of the trainees have been unable to attend the National Study Days due to staff shortages.	2. Feedback at meeting with trainees indicated that this has been recently addressed. Continue to ensure good attendance at National Study Days or create podcasts
3. Shortage of dictation equipment.	3. Upgrade dictation equipment in cut-up and in sign-out room.
4. Limited opportunity to perform autopsies despite busy autopsy service. Lack of opportunity to construct autopsy reports and formulate cause of death.	4. Review trainee autopsy rota arrangements to ensure exposure to same
5. Access to cytopathology and haematopathology limited at times due to busy surgical pathology workload.	5. Increase trainee number and review of trainee rota to ensure access to haematopathology
6. Some of the specialist rotations involve considerable time spent in cut-up and necessity to work overtime to complete slide screening etc.	6. Increase trainee number to reduce workload and enhance training. Ensure laboratory staff assistance for all cut-ups.
7. No access to UCC journal portal.	7. IT upgrade required to facilitate journal access.

8. Access to gynaecological cytopathology.	8. Requires national solution.
9. Trainees request further involvement in research	9. Increase trainee involvement in research

**Note:**

Due to the structure of histopathology training, the RCPI inspection team approved posts some of which may be filled by SpRs and some by SHOs. It is important to ensure that individual trainee requirements are met, the curriculum covered, the trainer trainee ratio is appropriate and that there is a capacity to train at both levels at this site. While currently hospital inspections do not formally inspect BST, the prospective plan of hospital training accreditation is to include BST in addition to HST. Due to the structure of training in histopathology some of the posts which may be filled by SHOs have been included in this site visit by the inspection team.

Please review in the accompanying letter the separate list of trainee issues raised by trainees in histopathology with the inspection panel during site visits. While each issue may not be relevant to all sites, the inspection panel requested that this list be circulated to all training sites.

**Conclusions:**

- Excellent teaching department with good facilities and good range of material but need 1 or 2 more trainees to reduce workload and enhance training experience. Approval given for **3 years for 8 training posts (at least 3 of which should be SHO) pending receipt** of an interim report regarding issues particularly progress pertaining to increasing trainee number to enhance training experience, due end of **December 2014**

Thank you for the hospitality extended to the visiting inspection team and your continuing commitment to the Higher Specialist Training Programme.

Yours sincerely

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