

Head & Neck Clinical Sub Group

Network Agreed Pathology Guidelines for UAT and Thyroid Cancer

The pathologists within the network adopt and follow the guidelines issued by the Royal College of Pathologists. See links below:

<http://www.rcpath.org/Resources/RCPATH/Migrated%20Resources/Documents/G/g098datasetforthyroidcancerhistopathologyreportsfinal.pdf>

http://www.rcpath.org/Resources/RCPATH/Migrated%20Resources/Documents/G/g110_oralmucosaldataset_dec11.pdf

http://www.rcpath.org/Resources/RCPATH/Migrated%20Resources/Documents/G/g111_pharynxmucosaldataset_dec11.pdf

http://www.rcpath.org/Resources/RCPATH/Migrated%20Resources/Documents/G/g112_neckdissectiondataset_dec11.pdf

http://www.rcpath.org/Resources/RCPATH/Migrated%20Resources/Documents/G/g113_larynxmucosaldataset_dec11.pdf

http://www.rcpath.org/Resources/RCPATH/Migrated%20Resources/Documents/G/g114_nosesinusesdataset_dec11.pdf

http://www.rcpath.org/Resources/RCPATH/Migrated%20Resources/Documents/G/g115_salivarydataset_dec11.pdf

Thyroid cytopathology

<http://www.rcpath.org/Resources/RCPATH/Migrated%20Resources/Documents/G/g089guidanceonthereportingofthyroidcytologyfinal.pdf>

Responsibilities

Following FNA / biopsy, responsibility to act on the results lies with the diagnostic and assessment service. Responsibility for taking action following resection and discussion of the post-op pathology information lies with the MDT.

Unexpected Malignancies

In the event of malignancy being diagnosed unexpectedly (UAT only), the pathologist will make all effort to alert the clinician of the diagnosis by the end of that working day, by telephone or by faxing the report and requesting acknowledgement of receipt. If the clinician is a non-designated clinician, the pathologist can provide information regarding onward referral to a designated clinician. Some centres have pathology reports available electronically and in that instance, an email alert can be generated to ask the clinician to check the pathology report. This is then documented electronically.

Data Collection

Pathologists agree to ensure that final pathological pTNM staging is included and is as clear as possible to assist data entering for database purposes.

Clinical Lines of Enquiry

In response to clinical lines of enquiry, pathologists reporting UAT resections will alert MDT co-ordinators when resection pathology is available to ensure that all cases are discussed.

Case Review

For cases discussed at MDT for which the biopsy has been reported elsewhere, it is at the discretion of the MDT as to whether they wish for the pathology to be reviewed. In these instances, the reviewing pathologist will copy his / her review report to the referring pathologist and also to the MDT clinician who has assumed care of the patient.

Difficult salivary gland tumours are routinely sent to other MDT core member pathologists for review and there is a low threshold for doing so.

Thyroid

Thyroid cancers should be sent for review to a pathology core member of the thyroid MDT when clinically indicated.

Lymphoma

Lymph node biopsies which prove to be lymphoma are sent to a regional haematological malignancy diagnostic centre (Christie Hospital or elsewhere) for confirmation of the diagnosis and definitive sub-typing. It is the responsibility of the diagnostic and assessment service to ensure the patient is referred to a haemato-oncologist.

Diagnostic lead clinicians for head and neck work closely with colleagues in haematology at all diagnostic centres, undertaking neck node excision biopsies on request when the initial referral has been made directly to haematology. Likewise, they will arrange prompt referral to the appropriate haemato-oncologist when lymphoma is diagnosed when the initial referral has been directed to UAT clinicians.

HPV related oropharyngeal carcinomas

A guideline document detailing when p16 testing (as a surrogate for HPV status) might be indicated has been circulated to pathology clinical leads at all diagnostic centres. MDT pathologists will request material and undertake this in situations where it is not available.