

Histopathology Team working

Notes to accompany job planning

The consultant histopathologists have individual job plans reflecting their particular activities and schedule.

The consultants share most activities.

It is the responsibility of all consultants to co-operate in drawing up rotas and agreeing the distribution of work. The team will ensure that direct clinical care PAs (such as multidisciplinary team meetings, surgical cut-up and emergency work) are covered while one or more colleagues are on annual or study leave with an appropriate allowance in weekly PAs for such cover, typically a 25% increase in work measured when all consultants are present.

Direct Clinical Care Workload

The consultant pathologists will trial and validate for local use, the Royal College of Pathologists' guidelines for staffing and workload. This information can be used to inform the next job planning cycle. The validated guidelines will indicate the expected number of cases of each type, per hour of macroscopy and microscopy, when carried out as pure, uninterrupted activities.

It is not expected that all histopathologists, any more than consultants in any other specialty, will work at the same rate. Consultants who are comfortable working more quickly than average should not feel obliged to work more slowly; consultants who work more slowly should not feel pressed to rush.

Supporting Professional Activities

This time is used for CPD, maintaining and enhancing sub-specialty knowledge and skills, audit, clinical governance, external quality assurance schemes, teaching and training, departmental meetings and general administration.

Additional NHS responsibilities

The Head of Department spends approximately 1 PA per week on general administration.

Future workload

Should any individual cease an activity scheduled in the job plan (such as an approved external duty, or Head of Department), then either the time allocated for this activity will be assigned to another activity, or the job plan will be reduced appropriately.

Coronial work

“Time shifting” is allowed to accommodate Coronial work so that mortuary staff may carry out their duties during the normal working day. This means that the consultants may choose to work later than the job plan indicates in order to fulfil the agreed number of hours of NHS work. This may be averaged over the week in which the Coronial work takes place. If the time-shifting is the choice of the consultant, premium rates do not apply. Coroner’s work therefore causes minimal disturbance to the NHS and consultants may keep the fee.

Objectives

Members of the team will have their own personal objectives.

Service objectives will be agreed around the management of the workload and meeting the requirements of cancer unit status.

Resources

The employer will provide sufficient resources to enable the Histopathology Department to provide accurate and timely diagnostic services and to maintain full accreditation with all appropriate regulatory bodies. The resources considered will include medical, technical and clerical staff, office and laboratory space, equipment, IT support and funded study leave.