

Pathology Working Group Minutes **June 21st, 2005** **(9am – 11am)**

Attendees:

Dr. R. Williams
Dr. N. Denic
Dr. M. Dalton
Dr. P. Neil
Mr. S. Jerrett
Mr. S. Brown

General Introduction:

Given that this was the first meeting of the group, Dr. Williams introduced the members and thanked them for their participation. He then gave a general overview and an introduction of the purpose of the working group and of the objectives that are to be achieved.

Discussion of Issues:

Each of the members gave an overview of the current situation in their region with regard to pathology services. This included a review of the current complement, upcoming retirements, stability of the group, ability to recruit or lack thereof, major problems/issues, possible solutions to local problems, review of the national pathology situation, etc.

Some of the common issues/points raised were:

- the low numbers of residents entering the pathology specialties nationally
- the high level of retirements that will occur in the near future
- the aging of the population/higher incidence of disease in the local population
- the increased level of testing and reporting necessary in today's work environment
- the current inability to fully recruit the complement necessary/easing of restriction on J1 visa applicants by other provinces
- the aggressive recruitment of our pathologist by other provinces
- the relatively low wage levels compared to other provinces/ better locum payments available in other jurisdictions, etc.

Probable Solutions Proposed for Further Investigation:

- Better promotion of the Laboratory Medicine Program at Memorial University including:
 - Increased undergraduate exposure
 - Compulsory exposure to Lab Medicine in the training of clinical specialists
 - Ability/flexibility to transfer to Lab Medicine during residency programs
 - Financial assistance/return in service arrangements offered in the first year
- The possible introduction of a stipend similar to Oncology. This would help to insure service stability and the continued future viability of the service
- The possible introduction of a block funding type arrangement for pathology

It was also suggested that we consider establishing a FFS schedule for pathology; however, after review this avenue was deemed to be least attractive as other avenues suggested should yield better results and require less effort and less uncertainty.

Decision:

All members felt that they had a very good grasp of the issues. It was determined that with a little more research we would be in a position to move ahead on this file. Therefore, Mr. Brown was asked to begin the development of a draft report based upon this meeting and all other information gathered.

Work Plan:

The time frame given for this initial work was approximately four weeks. A future meeting was tentatively scheduled for July 20th, 2005. At this time the draft report, and any new/pertinent information, will be reviewed and amendments suggested. With amendments completed, agreement from the group will be sought.

Full consensus on this report will be required from all working group members before the report proceeds back to the Service Coverage Committee. Once the document is received by Service Coverage it will then be immediately put back on the next agenda for review & approval.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 10:25 am.