

Center of Excellence Program American Society of Cytopathology 2004

This background and timeline for the American Society of Cytopathology (ASC) Centers of Excellence (COE) program are described below. An application form is attached.

Definition

A Center of Excellence is a system/program with extraordinary expertise in all phases of Cytopathology practice, education and research; and through this expertise, can and will provide the opportunities necessary for all levels of Cytopathology education through on-site and/or distance learning programs.

Background and Purpose of the COE Program

The goal of the COE program is to recognize and support regional Centers of Excellence in Cytopathology that will serve as primary catalysts in supporting cytotechnology programs, the development of future laboratory professionals and the provision of educational opportunities for all individuals in the practice of Diagnostic Cytopathology. The COE Program can be used to foster support, both internal and external, to the program as well as the ASC.

The COE program is intended to provide a resource for cytotechnology schools and is not a replacement for them. The COE program will support schools, possibly through distance learning and support programs, through a comprehensive out-reach educational plan.

The COE program is new. Exact criteria for assessing specific areas (e.g. case numbers and mix) have yet to be defined. It is expected that these criteria may vary by region. Ideally, Centers of Excellence should be able to offer comprehensive instruction and expertise in all areas of cytologic practice, including "frontier" technologies. Please see the attached document, "Qualities that Define a Center of Excellence," for more detail.

Timelines for the 2004 Applications for the COE Program

- *February 2004:* COE Application materials and information available on ASC Web site.
- *June 15, 2004:* Deadline for receipt of COE applications from candidate laboratories/consortiums. These applications will be considered by the COE Committee. All directors of COE applications must be members in good standing of the American Society of Cytopathology. *There is an application fee of \$200.00.*
- *October 1, 2004:* Recommendations for approval made to the Executive Board by the COE Committee.
- *November 12-17, 2004:* ASC Executive Board announcement of Centers of Excellence.

Duration of COE Designation: The COE designation will be valid for three years from the date of the award. An annual report of activities is required during the three-year period to maintain COE status.

**Application for Recognition as a Center of Excellence
American Society of Cytopathology - 2004**

Institution/Consortium Data Form

Section "A"

Name of Sponsoring Institution: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

E-mail address: _____

Director(s) of Center of Excellence: _____

This individual(s) will be the primary contact person(s) for the Application.

The designated director must be a member of the American Society of Cytopathology.

If a consortium, list all institutions. Please include the name of a single contact person and address for each institution.

Section "B"

Attach a letter(s) of departmental or institutional support. This letter(s) should provide evidence for continuing support of a COE program within the larger department or institution.

Section "C"

Narrative Section:

Section "C" is a qualitative assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the program and of the extent to which the program is in compliance with the requirements of a Center of Excellence.

Respond to each *Standard*, in paragraph form, as to how the institution/program complies with each of the *Standards*.

Sponsorship:

Standard: The sponsoring institution/consortium must be accredited by recognized agencies.

A consortium is defined as two or more academic or clinical institutions that have formally agreed to sponsor the development and continuation of a Center of Excellence.

The sponsoring institution(s) assume the primary responsibility for providing educational and research opportunities for all training levels of cytopathology education through on-site and/or distance learning programs.

Guidelines:

List the laboratory accreditation(s) for each of the laboratories.

Provide a brief profile of each institution that demonstrates compliance with the standard.

If a consortium, define the institutions' interrelationships.

Indicate whether the institution/consortium has the following:

- _____ Residency Program (required)
- _____ Cytopathology Fellowship Program (required)
- _____ Cytotechnology Program (not required)

Personnel:

Standard: The program must have adequate leadership and management. These officials shall possess the necessary qualifications to perform the functions of a Center of Excellence. Preferably, the planning committee for the COE should include cytotechnologists, pathologists and representatives from the communities of interest. Faculty should include both cytotechnologists and pathologists who have adequate time for educational program development.

Guidelines:

List and identify members of the planning committee for the COE.

List the primary faculty involved in the COE and their qualifications and credentials. Include faculty at all levels of cytology/pathology training. List only the faculty who are willing to participate in the COE.

Describe the responsibilities of each faculty member in fulfilling the activities of the COE.

Physical Resources:

Standard: The program must demonstrate that resources are available for development and maintenance of a resource center. A broad range of both gynecologic (including liquid-based cytology), non-gynecologic, and FNA cytopathology specimens must be available. Some "frontier" technologies must also be available and in clinical use. These technologies may include but are not limited to the following: molecular diagnostics, flow cytometry, immunohistochemistry, electron microscopy, automation, and special histochemical staining.

Guidelines:

List the total annual laboratory volume, by body site (source) and diagnostic category for the laboratory(ies). For GYN cases, also indicate number of conventional, and liquid-based preparations (specify technology used).

List the standard ancillary testing services provided by the institution(s).

Describe the space and infrastructure, including office, laboratory, information and instructional systems that are available to support the COE.

Provide a list of equipment available to the program. Discuss the adequacy and availability of the physical resources to support the COE program.

Activities:

Standard: Educational planning and activities should be based upon a needs assessment of the communities of interest. The Center of Excellence must be able to provide on-site and/or distance educational and research opportunities as appropriate to the communities of interest in the designated region.

Guidelines:

Define the region that the COE will serve, and describe the outreach plan for delivery of educational activities.

Discuss how the COE will accomplish the following:

- Determine the educational and research needs for the communities of interest;
- Serve as a hub-site for educational opportunities for cytotechnology programs within region;
- Provide on-site research opportunities for all levels of cytopathology trainees;
- Develop educational resources for region;
- Provide access to educational resources.

Financial Support:

Standard: Financial resources to operate institution(s) services must be ensured. However, financial resources that support the outreach mission of the COE may be requested.

Guidelines:

Describe the resources required to fulfill outreach and in-house educational and research activities. Provide a budget for requested resources.

Operational Policies:

Standard: The COE must demonstrate a procedure or administrative structure under which it operates. The operational system must ensure the development and continuation of the Center.

Guideline:

Describe the operational procedure/policy.

Program Evaluation:

Standard: The program must have a continuous system for reviewing the effectiveness of the program utilizing objective evaluation methods. The annual evaluation shall assess overall performance utilizing process and outcome indicators to assist the faculty and sponsoring institution in reviewing the effect of any changes implemented and identifying areas for improvement, developing action plans, and setting future goals.

Guideline:

Summarize the process of program review and evaluation.

Section "D"

Signature(s) of Program Director(s): _____

Date: _____

Applications with the \$200.00 application fee must reach the ASC National Office by June 15, 2004.