

# The Bulletin

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**W**hat skills will be needed to support the practice of cytopathology in the future, and what kinds of professionals will be best suited to address these needs?

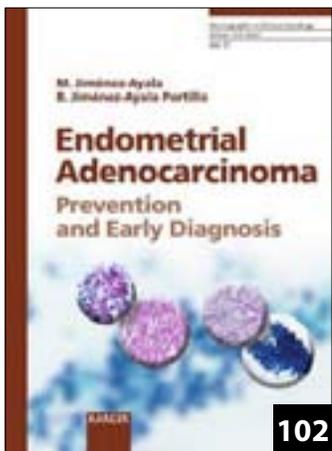
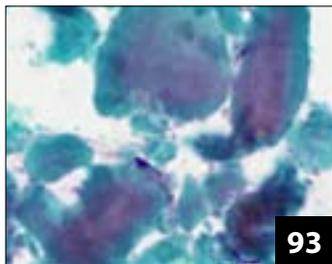
This question, developed by the ASC Multidisciplinary Steering Group on the Cytology Profession and the ASC Executive Board Officers, will be at the heart of our deliberations as we engage in the ASC Future of Cytopathology Summit.

The Summit will be held two days prior to the upcoming 57<sup>th</sup> Annual Scientific Meeting in Denver, Colorado. The Summit is the culmination of activities by the ASC and its members that have addressed changes in our profession over the last decade. The goal of the Summit is to engage us as a professional community as we explore knowledge-based strategies to reach a consensus recommendation for action. This recommendation, and the outcome of this Summit, will be vital to the ASC and the cytopathology community for the advancement of our profession.



**Lynnette C. Savaloja,  
SCT(ASCP)**

This recommendation, and the outcome of this Summit, will be vital to the ASC and the cytopathology community for the advancement of our profession.



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The ASC Future of Cytopathology Summit will give us the opportunity to take a proactive approach to the changes occurring in our field. In order for this endeavor to be successful, we need ALL of our stakeholders engaged in the process..

### In-Person Summit Participation

As mentioned in the e-mail notification sent to ASC members earlier this summer, participation in the Summit event in November is limited because of the need for a working group intimate enough to sufficiently explore complex issues, engage in meaningful dialogue, and come to a consensus recommendation for our organization and profession. The Steering Group has worked diligently to ensure the Summit participants reflect a balanced representation of cytotechnologists and pathologists from all sectors of the field, while maintaining workable size for the discussion groups. Summit participants were selected in two ways:

1. Invitations were extended to potential participants from the Steering Group and the ASC Executive Board, based on their previous investment in the profession and the Society, while ensuring that a balanced representation of pathologist and cytotechnologist leadership was achieved.
2. Applications were accepted by anyone interested in participating in the event. Participants from this group were selected based on work in the field that shows a dedication to cytology and interest in our future development, current work environment and geographic location.

On-site participants attending the Summit accepted their invitations with the understanding that they are responsible for document review and online discussion prior to the Summit, are actively involved in the Summit Agenda, are open minded and objective when evaluating what we do today, and what we should be doing tomorrow.

### Virtual Summit Participation

Although we are unable to accommodate everyone who would like to participate at the Summit, we have developed a mechanism for everyone to contribute to the process.

The Steering Group has developed a web site for the Summit using Google Groups, which will be released later this month. This web site will contain the working document Discussion Paper that will be used to facilitate the Summit activities. Also, it will contain all references used in the Discussion Paper for review, as well as discussion threads for the potential strategies listed in the Discussion Paper. **All ASC members will have the opportunity to add content to the Discussion Paper using this web site.**

Members interested in virtual Summit participation are encouraged to review the documents and threads on the web site and add their own thoughts and contributions, or start new discussion threads. Comments with references will be given preference for inclusion in the Discussion Paper as well as a Potential Strategies Discussion Grid. Suggested references from members will also be added to the Summit web site. The Discussion Paper, with added contributions from members posting on the web site, will be distributed to participants for use during the Summit.

### Discussion Paper and Potential Strategies

The Discussion Paper has been developed by the Steering Group as a working document that will guide the activities of the Summit. It includes an overview of past ASC activities surrounding this issue, as well as a background review of the current cytopathology work environment. In



## The ASC Web site has a NEW LOOK!

Christine Booth, M.D., Chair  
E-Learning Committee

Times have changed and so has the ASC Web site! For starters, we have gone green and gold. In an effort to brand the American Society of Cytopathology, we have adopted a new green and gold color scheme, including both logos and web format.

The biggest change on the site is that topic navigation has moved from the left side to the top of the screen. Categories have also been condensed in an effort to make the information we provide more 'user-friendly.'

Two additions to the Web site are the Educational Activities and Cytopathology Resources areas. Under the Educational Activities you will find our 'featured' educational programs. Under Cytopathology Resources, be sure to look for 'quick links' to additional ASC offerings: *The ASC Bulletin*, CytoJobs (the ASC job boards), the ASC Foundation and the new Vendor Directory.

Please be sure to visit the new ASC Web site soon ([cytopathology.org](http://cytopathology.org)) to take full advantage of all the Society has to offer!

addition, it discusses the following strategic question and related issues:

What skills will be needed to support the practice of cytopathology in the future, and what kinds of professionals will be best suited to address these needs?

1. What are the needs, wants and preferences of the cytopathology community, and other stakeholders relevant to this strategic question? What do we know? What don't we know?
2. What do we know about the current and evolving environment of the practice of cytopathology relevant to this decision? What don't we know? What are the missing data points? What can we do?
3. What do we know about the current skill sets of those who support the practice of cytopathology today that is relevant to this strategic question? What do we wish we knew?
4. What are the ethical, practice and patient care implications?
5. What could we do? (nothing, develop a new profession, use different curriculum, etc...)

Using these questions as a guide, several potential strategies have been included for critical discussion:

1. **Do nothing.** This strategy assumes our profession will adapt to current and future needs without changes in training or developing a new profession or professional.
2. **Optimize the current scope of practice.** This strategy is a "Career Wheel" that optimizes the current scope of practice with the current level of education.
3. **Expand existing CT models using morphology skills with novel educational tools.** This strategy is a "Career Ladder" that would expand the current scope of practice and would require alternative or additional training, such as a master's degree or combining curriculum with CLS programs.
4. **Establish a model for core skills of a cytopathology assistant.** This strategy predicts that growing demands on pathology and practicing pathologists will necessitate the need for a new model of cytology professional. This would require the development of a new professional with additional training beyond what is discussed under Strategy 3.
5. **Other.** This strategy is intended to allow in-person and virtual Summit participants to suggest other strategies that are not currently included in the Discussion Paper.

At the conclusion of the Summit, we hope to develop this Discussion Paper into a White Paper that will include the outcome recommendations of the Summit.

### Summit Agenda Overview

The Summit begins in the late afternoon on Thursday, November 12<sup>th</sup>. This evening will include key speakers who will present the current state of our profession. Our consultant, Jean Frankel from Tecker Consulting, will discuss the ground rules with participants and review the Summit protocol and agenda with the Summit participants.

The Summit resumes on Friday morning, November 13<sup>th</sup>. During the Summit, small groups will be created to discuss the questions and possible strategies outlined by the Discussion Paper. The goal of the Summit is to achieve a consensus of the group for the direction of our future development, which will be recommended to the ASC Executive Board. A summary of the findings from the Summit will be presented during the *State of the Society* at the Annual Scientific Meeting following the Summit.

It is important to note that the outcome(s) of the Summit will not necessarily be the end result; the Executive Board will determine the next steps of the Society after they review the recommendations generated at the Summit.

### Now it is Up to Us (That Includes You)

The ASC Future of Cytopathology Summit will give us the opportunity to take a proactive approach to the changes occurring in our field. We can all agree that we are in a very dynamic time in the history of our profession, but there are many different viewpoints on how we should address the changes occurring in cytopathology. Cytotechnologists and pathologists in private labs and academic settings, cytopathology educators and administrators, new cytology and residency program graduates as well as veterans in the field – everyone has a different vantage point to share that should be considered.

With all this diversity of opinion, the following thoughts are offered for consideration:

1. We have a valued relationship between pathologists and the cytotechnologists who work for them.
2. It is in the best interest of our profession to help ensure that cytotechnologists and pathologists find satisfaction in the roles they perform everyday.
3. We have an ethical obligation to fulfill these roles in a way that provides the best service possible to our patients.

In order for this endeavor to be successful, we need ALL of our stakeholders engaged in the process. **We value your participation and encourage your contributions to the Summit activities. Please watch your e-mail for the announcement of the Summit Web site and join in the process, and at anytime you would like to contact us regarding the Summit, we can be reached at [future@cytopathology.org](mailto:future@cytopathology.org).** ■

## Comments from the Editor



**Donna K. Russell,  
M.S., CT(ASCP)HT**

*The ASC Bulletin* is making a necessary change and joining many other organizations by going **green**. Following the green path is a necessity in today's economic times. In an effort to conserve the amount of paper used, as well as decrease expenses, the Society has moved to paperless electronic distribution of the *Bulletin*.

A recent study according to Melinda Stoker, Director of Marketing at Xerox Corporations DocuShare Business Unit, shows that if the United States cut its office paper use roughly by 10% or 540,000 tons, greenhouse gas emissions would fall by 1.6 million tons. That would relate to taking 280,000 cars off the road for an entire year. This transition has taken some time, but the ultimate goal has been to provide members with a "state of art" delivery of the *Bulletin*.

With this issue, *The ASC Bulletin* has become an interactive electronic publication, with the ability to print or download in PDF format. The new look goes "hand-in hand" with the new ASC Web site that went live last month. The ASC membership has embraced this modification of circulation and will move forward with others into an increasingly, technology driven world.

Few issues present a more global challenge than meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It is easy to feel like you cannot personally make a difference to help the environment. We all can, and together our efforts will result in a greener ASC! I hope you enjoy the new design and format of *The ASC Bulletin*! ■

**Donna K. Russell, M.S., CT(ASCP)HT**  
University of Rochester Medical Center  
Editor, *The ASC Bulletin*