



Volume 40 No. 2

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# The ABPath EXAMINER

*The mission of the American Board of Pathology, as a member of the American Board of Medical Specialties, is to promote the field of pathology and the continuing competency of practicing pathologists.*

## New Year's Resolution

1. Test CertLink Mobile App
2. Update PATHway site
3. Enroll in Safety Course
4. Be Professional

Follow the American Board of Pathology (ABPath) on Facebook and LinkedIn



Visit our Web site [www.abpath.org](http://www.abpath.org)

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## 2019 AMERICAN BOARD OF PATHOLOGY OFFICERS AND TRUSTEES

The American Board of Pathology (ABPath) is pleased to announce the ABPath Officers and Executive Committee for 2019, pictured below:

Dr. Rebecca Johnson is the Chief Executive Officer. She can be contacted at [rljohnson@abpath.org](mailto:rljohnson@abpath.org).

The Board re-elected Drs. Glassy, Goldstein, and Nayar to their second term.

Dr. Gary Procop's fourth and final term concluded at the end of 2018. ABPath wishes to thank him for his many years of dedication and service. His contributions to and passion for pathology will greatly benefit the profession for years to come.



Edward Ashwood, MD (Secretary); Steven Swerdlow, MD (Vice President); Susan Fuhrman, MD (President); Karen Kaul, MD, PhD (Immediate Past President); Michael Jones, MD, (Treasurer).



The 2019 Trustees of the ABPath are from left to right: Ritu Nayar, MD; Rebecca Johnson, MD (CEO); Edward Ashwood, MD (Secretary); Constance Filling, EdD; Steven Swerdlow, MD (Vice President); Jeffrey Goldstein, MD; Susan Fuhrman, MD (President); Eric Glassy, MD; Karen Kaul, MD, PhD (Immediate Past-President); James Stubbs, MD; Michael Jones, MD (Treasurer); Kathleen Beavis, MD; Mohiedean Ghofrani, MD, MBA; Barbara Sampson, MD, PhD.

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## MEET OUR TRUSTEES



### President Susan Fuhrman, MD

Dr. Fuhrman is board certified in Anatomic Pathology, Clinical Pathology and Chemical Pathology and is participating in the ABPath Continuing Certification Program. She is Clinical Associate Professor at The Ohio State University School of Medicine.

She has been a Trustee of the ABPath since 2011 and her current responsibilities include Chairperson, Test Development and Advisory Committee for Management and Informatics; Chairperson, Test Development and Advisory Committee for ABPath CertLink Clinical Pathology; and Chairperson, Credentials Committee. Dr. Fuhrman earned her medical degree from University of Michigan and completed her residency in pathology at University of Minnesota Medical School.



### 2019 New Trustee Kathleen G. Beavis, MD

The Trustees of the American Board of Pathology are pleased to announce the election of Dr. Kathleen Gleason Beavis to serve as a Trustee of the Board with a term beginning in 2019. She is certified by the American Board of Pathology in Clinical Pathology, voluntarily re-certified in 2014, and is participating in the Continuing Certification Program.

Dr. Beavis is the Director of the Clinical Microbiology and Immunology Laboratories and Medical Director, Laboratories' Quality, in the Department of Pathology at the University of Chicago, where she holds an appointment as Professor in the Department of Pathology.

Dr. Beavis earned her A.B. in Philosophy with an emphasis on logic and mathematical theory from Radcliffe College, Harvard University. She was a Rotary International Graduate Fellow for studies in theology and philosophy of science at Eberhard Karls Universitaet in Tuebingen, Germany. She received her M.D. degree from the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine. She completed an internship in Anatomic Pathology at the Massachusetts General Hospital and residency in Anatomic and Clinical Pathology and fellowship in Microbiology at the Cleveland Clinic Foundation. In 2009, she was honored with the CAP Lifetime Achievement Award and in 2016 she was honored with the CAP Distinguished Patient Care Award from the College of American Pathologists.



Karen Kaul, MD, PhD

## TRUSTEES IN THE NEWS

Congratulations to Dr. Karen Kaul, who has been re-elected as the Chair of the Association of Pathology Chairs (APC) GME Committee.

Congratulations to Dr. Gary Procop, who was elected to the ABMS Board of Directors and The American Society for Clinical Pathology (ASCP) Board of Directors in 2018.

Dr. Procop was featured in this article below about Cleveland Clinic and his success with test utilization, a great Continuing Certification Part IV activity.

<https://www.darkintelligencegroup.com/the-dark-report/laboratory-management/cleveland-clinic-lab-multi-year-test-utilization-success/>



Gary Procop, MD, MS

The Papanicolaou Award, established in 1958, is the highest award given by the American Society of Cytopathology, presented annually to a physician or PhD member in recognition of meritorious contributions to the field of cytology. This year's recipient is ABPath Trustee Ritu Nayar, MBBS, MD, MIAC, Professor and Vice Chair of Pathology Education and Faculty Development and Director of Cytopathology at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine. Congratulations, Dr. Nayar.



Ritu Nayar, MBBS, MD



Dr. Nayar is presented the award by Barbara A. Crothers, DO, president of ASC.

## MEET OUR STAFF



### Slide Librarian Patty Schnoor

Patty Schnoor is the ABPath's Slide Librarian. Patty joined ABPath in 1988 and has recently celebrated her 30-year work anniversary. Patty manages the thousands of microscopic glass slides used for certification exams. She maintains a detailed catalogue system and assures the quality of the slides in the ABPath library. She tracks slides from when they are initially submitted by the test committee to cataloguing the permanent slides used for exams. Patty coordinates the selected slides used for each exam, assuring each candidate has the correct quality slide for each question.

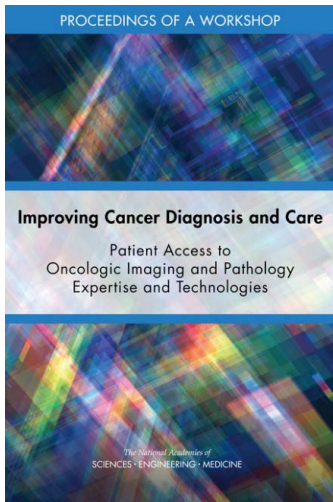
Patty and her husband have been married for 50 years and are the proud parents of four grown children and 11 grandchildren. Her oldest son is a Register Nurse in California and her second son is a Pharmacist in Vermont and also serves as a Lt. Colonel in the U.S. Army. Patty's third son also lives in Vermont and is an Insurance Agent. Her daughter lives close by and is a Realtor.

Outside of work, Patty helps her husband run his business. She grows beautiful orchids which she brings into the office while in full bloom.

Thank you for all you do, Patty!



Dr. Johnson and the ABPath Staff at their Holiday Party



## ABPath IN THE NEWS

The National Cancer Policy Forum hosted the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine’s workshop “Improving Cancer Diagnosis and Care: Patient Access to Oncologic Imaging and Pathology Expertise and Technologies” in Washington, DC this past February.

The workshop highlighted current diagnostic challenges and opportunities to expand patient access to diagnostic expertise and technologies in cancer care. As a part of the workshop, participants discussed efforts to move toward a more continuous process of learning and assessment of clinical knowledge, judgment, and skills based on the rapid advancements of new knowledge in medicine. ABPath was recognized as being receptive to pilot programs and progressive in our approach to measuring competency of physicians, including the longitudinal assessment pilot through ABPath CertLink®. The proceedings are available here:

<https://www.nap.edu/download/25163>



## ACVP AWARD

The American College of Veterinary Pathologists (ACVP) presented Dr. Johnson, MD, CEO and the ABPath with the *ACVP President’s Award* at their annual meeting in November in Washington, DC. ABPath was recognized for providing assistance to ACVP in revising their certification exam program.

## THANK YOU TO OUR COOPERATING SOCIETIES

The ABPath would like to thank the ASCP, CAP and USCAP for their support of the ABPath exhibit booths at their annual meetings. Stop by and meet our staff.



The ABPath will hold its annual meeting with our Cooperating Societies on May 7, 2019 in Chicago. Topics for discussion are still being finalized.



## 2018 BOARD ACTIONS

- ABPath is now the official acronym for the American Board of Pathology. ABP will no longer be used to represent the American Board of Pathology, eliminating confusion with the American Board of Pediatrics.
- ABPath has changed the name of Maintenance of Certification (MOC) to Continuing Certification (CC) in order to align with ABMS messaging.
- ABPath updated its fetal autopsy requirements for primary certification; see the ABPath Booklet of Information at [www.abpath.org](http://www.abpath.org).
- The Society for Hematopathology and the Society for Pediatric Pathology are new Cooperating Societies of the ABPath.
- ABPath will allow a 5-year period to take and pass the initial certification exam from the year certification lapsed/expired, due to not passing the CC exam during the 10-year CC cycle and not passing the exam during the one-year post cycle grace period. The exam can be taken as many times as it is offered in that 5-year period.
- ABPath will not require a diplomate with primary certification by another ABMS board to maintain that certification in order to maintain ABPath subspecialty certification; they must meet ABPath Continuing Certification (CC) requirements to maintain the subspecialty certification.



- In 2019, diplomates who no longer practice pathology and no longer have a current medical license will have their certifications reported as 'Retired' status.

In 2019, ABPath will adopt a new mission, vision and values.

### **Mission Statement**

The mission of the American Board of Pathology, a member of the American Board of Medical Specialties, is to serve the public and advance the profession of pathology by setting certification standards and promoting lifelong competency of pathologists.

### **Vision Statement**

The American Board of Pathology improves the health of the public by promoting excellence in the practice of pathology.

### **Values**

We are committed to the following values for our stakeholders who include: patients, the public, diplomates, trainees, specialty societies, trustees, program directors, ABMS member boards, volunteers, colleagues and employees.

*Integrity & Professionalism:* We are committed to the highest standards, ethics and moral principles in our work, actions, and decisions to serve the best interests of stakeholders.

*Innovation:* We embrace new ideas and change through teamwork to continually improve our board certification programs and internal processes.

*Transparency:* We are open and responsive in our communications and collaborations with stakeholders.

*Service:* We are committed to delivering exceptional and friendly service.

*Stewardship:* We ensure the ABPath is led responsibly and that our resources are managed effectively to address the needs of stakeholders.

*Accountability:* We are dedicated to the continuous improvement of diplomates' practice and the quality of the pathology profession on behalf of stakeholders.



## NEW ASSESSMENT INITIATIVE— ABPath CertLink®

2018 has been an exciting year with the launch of the ABPath CertLink® pilot in July. The online longitudinal assessment platform is being continually refined with added features and benefits. Over five thousand of our diplomates are currently participating and enrollment is steadily growing as the word gets out.

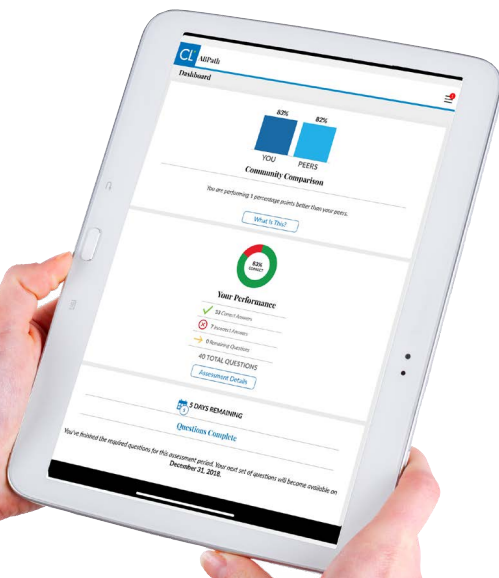
The ABPath CertLink Pilot was developed through a partnership with the American Board of Medical Specialties to enhance the CC Part III experience for diplomates, while also establishing that it is a reliable and valid assessment for making summative decisions about medical knowledge, judgment, and skills. Through CertLink, participants answer questions, many with images, using a web browser. Once answered, diplomates receive immediate feedback whether they answered the question correctly or incorrectly, a short narrative about the topic (critique), and references. They are also able to provide feedback on each individual item. Participants have a personalized dashboard which summarizes their ongoing performance and identifies their knowledge gaps. Participants in the pilot have given extremely positive feedback, with increased enrollment each quarter. ABPath CertLink is expected to be an eventual alternative to the current 10-year CC examination.



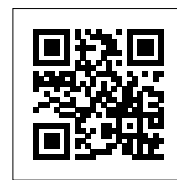
## CertLink® Updates

### New CertLink® Mobile App

The ABPath CertLink® mobile app is now available for download on tablets through Google Play (Android) and Apple (iPad) App Stores, making this platform even more accessible and easy to integrate into physicians' daily practice workflow.



Neither the app, nor ABPath CertLink in general, have been approved for use on smartphones. Since the app was developed for tablets only, it will only be displayed and accessible in the app store for the intended device (iPad and Android tablet); you will not see it as an available app from a smartphone.



### Answering Questions

The number of questions for participants to answer each quarter (quarter=3 months) has been reduced from 20 to 15 in 2019.

### Time-Off

ABPath Administrators have a feature to allow time-off from ABPath CertLink participation for a diplomate with an approved hardship. A diplomate may request to take 1-2 quarters off during each 2-year reporting period of the ABPath CertLink Continuing Certification program. Diplomates are also able to cancel time-off in any current or future quarter. Contact ABPath to elect or cancel time-off.

### Registration and Upcoming Key Dates

The next segment will begin **January 2, 2019**. (*Registration has closed for this segment.*) The following segment starts **July 1, 2019**. Registration is open now until May 13, 2019.

### Contributing Questions

Enrollment in ABPath CertLink® continues to grow and we have a great need for diplomates who would be interested in writing questions for the assessment. If you are interested please contact Kasey Davis, ABPath CertLink Coordinator at [pathcertLink@abpath.org](mailto:pathcertLink@abpath.org).



## CertLink® Feedback

As the platform is being refined we welcome feedback, please complete the surveys so we can provide the best user experience.

There is an option to submit feedback about each question; use the “Feedback” utility tool on the Critique page immediately after answering a question to provide more specific feedback.

**We wanted to share some of the recent comments ABPath has received from diplomates about the CertLink pilot. We appreciate the time participants have taken to help us further shape the program.**

#### 10/10/17 | Dr. Thom Bollinger

*Just tried it out. LOVED IT. This is such a cool tool for self-assessment. I like the layout, the quality of photos and the PEER COMPARISON! Thumbs up!*

#### 10/26/17 | Dr. Aaron Hubor

*Just wanted to drop a note and say that I had no problems with the functionality and the questions were appropriate. Thank you.*

**10/30/17 | Dr. Kenneth Youens**

*I just did ten questions as part of the Certlink pilot. I think this is fantastic. The web site, including how one interacts with the questions and images, etc. is very well done, in my opinion. The feedback provided giving my score vs. peer comparison group is great. I didn't hit any snags and don't have any suggestions for improvement. I am very impressed by this effort. Nice work, guys.*

**7/19/18 | Dr. Chris Hauch**

*Just wanted to say how much I'm enjoying the CertLink platform. I love the layout and functionality of the program and find it to be incredibly user friendly. I've only completed a few questions so far, but they've been great. They make you think, but are not impossible. The images are solid, as well as the explanations.*

*Having said all of that, my absolute favorite aspect of the program is the fact that I can customize the question bank to fit my specific professional needs. As a budding forensic pathologist, it's really nice to have relevant questions comprise a bulk of my assessments.*

*Thank you so much for rolling this out as a potential alternative to the 10-year MOC examination. I think this platform will serve as a much better resource for continuing education and lifelong learning.*

**7/28/18 | Dr. Samir Turakhia**

*I finished my first assessment. I just wanted to give some feedback. I think this has been a great experience. ABPath did a great job designing this. The questions are fair and relevant to my actual practice. I hope this becomes the new standard for MOC as the assessments provide greater learning and retention than having to do a single 10 yr exam. Keep up the great work and I look forward to the next assessment.*





## CME CREDIT FOR ABPath CERTLINK®

**The American Board of Pathology and the American Society for Clinical Pathology Announce an Opportunity to Earn CME/SAM Credits for Participating in ABPath CertLink**

The American Board of Pathology (ABPath) and the American Society for Clinical Pathology (ASCP) are pleased to announce a partnership to award Continuing Medical Education (CME/SAM) credits to participants in ABPath CertLink®, an innovative assessment program that drives physician professional development. ABPath has selected ASCP, a leading educational provider for pathologists, as the accredited ACCME provider. ASCP will enter into a joint providership agreement with ABPath to award diplomates AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™ for self-assessment for participating in the ABPath CertLink program. The two organizations believe that assuring that pathologists maintain continuing competence includes participation in Continuing Certification (CC, formerly known as MOC) and completing relevant CME/SAM.

“It is important that Continuing Certification is relevant to our physicians’ practice and ABPath CertLink is proving to be an effective means for physician self-assessment,” states Rebecca L. Johnson, CEO of the American Board of Pathology. “We are so pleased to work with ASCP to provide CME/SAM and greater value to our diplomates for this activity.”

ABPath CertLink meets ACCME requirements for continuing medical education with assessment. In response to feedback from our diplomates, ABPath wanted participating physicians to have the opportunity to receive CME credits. Through this partnership, ASCP will award 5 AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™ each year (1.25 credits/quarter) to diplomates participating in ABPath CertLink. These credits will be available in the first quarter of 2019.

ASCP has been reviewed by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) and awarded Accreditation with Commendation for six years as a provider of continuing medical education (CME) for physicians. This achievement has placed ASCP in the highest tier of all continuing medical education (CME) providers. Accreditation in the ACCME System seeks to assure the medical community and the public that ASCP delivers education that is relevant to clinicians’ needs, evidence-based, evaluated for its effectiveness, and independent of commercial influence.

“Through participation in accredited CME, clinicians and teams drive improvement in their practice and optimize the care, health, and wellness of their patients,” said ASCP CEO E. Blair Holladay, PhD, MASC, SCT(ASCP)CM.

For more information or to enroll in ABPath CertLink®, visit [abpath.org](http://abpath.org) or contact ABPath's CertLink® Coordinator at (813) 286-2444 x234 or at [pathcertlink@abpath.org](mailto:pathcertlink@abpath.org). For more information on the designation of AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™ for ABPath CertLink®, please contact Devon Cortright at (312) 541-4987.

The image shows a screenshot of the American Board of Pathology (ABPath) CertLink web application. The interface includes a top navigation bar with the ABPath logo, user options like 'Need Help?', 'Messages', 'My Account', and 'Sign Out', and a breadcrumb trail with 'Prev', 'Back To History List', and 'Next' buttons. Below this, there are performance metrics for 'Relevance', 'Confidence', and 'Response'. A red starburst graphic with the text 'NEW and Improved! Now With CME!' is overlaid on the left side of the screenshot. The main content area displays a question about 'aneous lesions of neurofibromatosis type 1.' and includes a histology image of a plexiform neurofibroma. A text block below the image describes the tumor's characteristics: '...shows a plexiform neurofibroma, a peripheral nerve tumor that is characteristic of patients with neurofibromatosis type 1. It is characterized by spindle cells separated by a myxoid matrix. The tumor exhibits an infiltrative growth pattern in contrast to a schwannoma, which has an expansile growth pattern. In contrast to schwannomas, plexiform neurofibromas can transform into a malignant peripheral nerve sheath tumor.'

# CertLink®

## CONTINUING CERTIFICATION/ MAINTENANCE OF CERTIFICATION

In 2018, ABPath began the process of changing its Maintenance of Certification (MOC) Program to be called the Continuing Certification (CC) Program. For the American Board of Pathology, this change is more than a superficial name change. Continuing Certification should be the embodiment of a modern and responsive continuing certification process. Since 2015, ABPath has issued certificates without expiration dates; certification will remain valid as long as a diplomate meets the requirements of Continuing Certification. In the past few years, ABPath has implemented new initiatives to facilitate diplomate participation in the CC program:

- Upgrades to PATHway for CC reporting and usability
- Diplomate access to ACCME CME Finder for search and selection of relevant CME
- Automated reporting of CME/SAM credits via ACCME PARS starting in 2019
- Additional patient safety courses to meet PSC requirements
- Changes to the Continuing Certification examination to increase practice relevance, including the use of books and notes during the exam and remote testing.

It is the ABPath's transition towards longitudinal assessment via ABPath CertLink® that also supports the name change. The ability to continuously assess a diplomate's knowledge, provide immediate feedback, and identify relevant educational gaps while also providing access to resources via CME Finder to address those gaps provides diplomates an ongoing process to increase their knowledge and continue their certification. The concept of "continuing certification" is key as certifications should no longer be thought of in terms of something to "maintain", but rather a sign of a pathologist's continuing advancement for both their career and the field of pathology. Board certification is the standard recognized by physicians, the public, and credentialers and Continuing Certification is the way certification and the knowledge it represents can continue to be that standard.

While ABPath has made great progress towards our vision of Continuing Certification, there are still changes and progress which need to be made. ABPath CertLink, for example, is still in a beta development phase. The board appreciates the understanding and patience from diplomates and looks forward to the continuing spirit of cooperation as updates to the CC Program are made in 2019 and beyond.





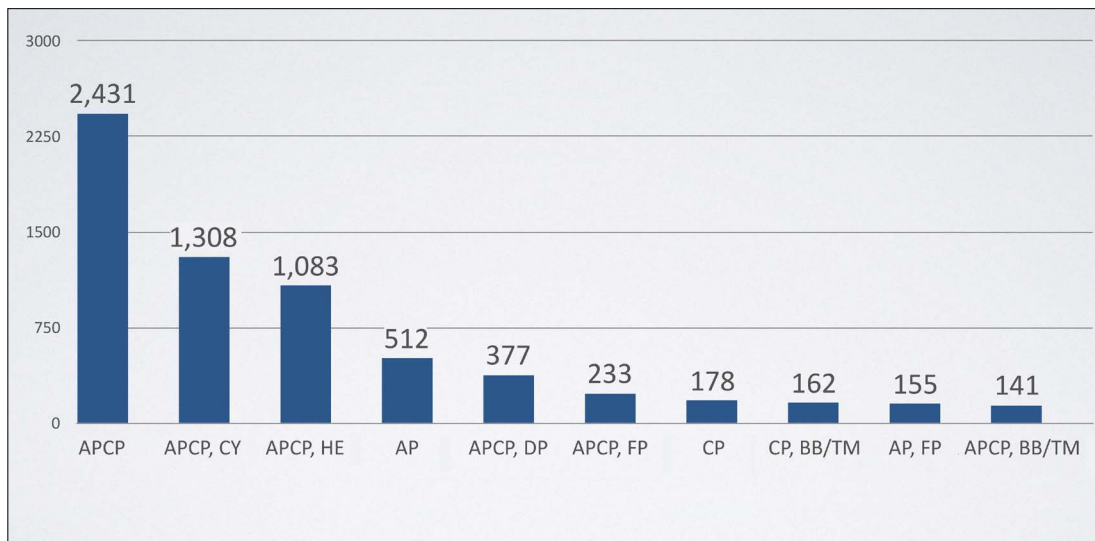
## INQUIRING MINDS WANT TO KNOW

ABPath receives many inquiries concerning the ABPath Continuing Certification (CC) Program, most of which can be answered in the ABPath Continuing Certification Booklet of Information. Some interesting facts about CC are included below:

### CC Program Certificate Combinations

There are currently 139 unique combinations of certificates held by diplomates currently enrolled in the ABPath CC Program. The top ten combinations are shown below.

## Top 10 Certificate Combinations in Continuing Certification



### Abbreviation Key for Primary and Subspecialty Certification

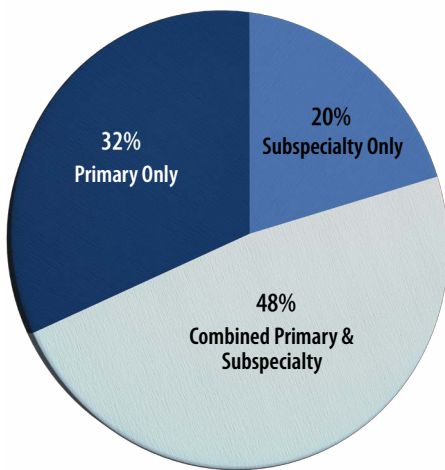
AP	Anatomic Pathology
CP	Clinical Pathology
BB/TM	Blood Banking/Transfusion Medicine
CH	Chemical Pathology
CI	Clinical Informatics
CY	Cytopathology
DP	Dermatopathology
FP	Forensic Pathology
HE	Hematopathology
MMB	Medical Microbiology
MGP	Molecular Genetic Pathology
NP	Neuropathology
PP	Pediatric Pathology



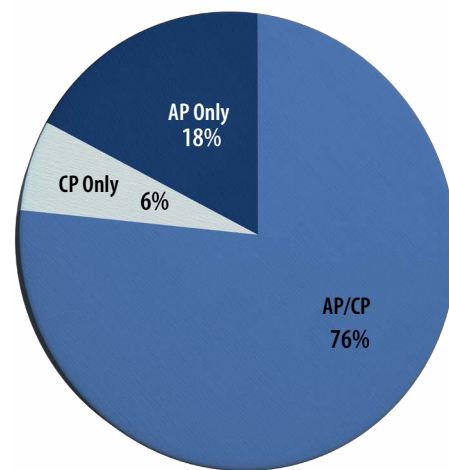
**CC Exam Breakdown**

Forty-eight percent of all CC Part III examinations ever taken are combined examinations, meaning the examination covers both primary and subspecialty certification. CY and HE continue to be the most frequent subspecialty examinations. These two certifications account for sixty-two percent of all combined examinations and fifty-five percent of all subspecialty only examinations.

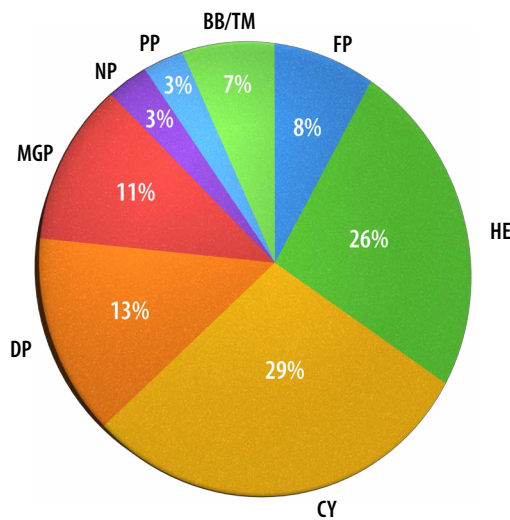
**CC Exam Breakdown**



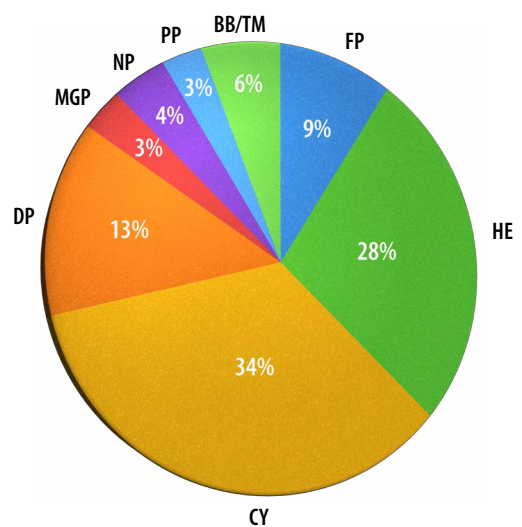
**Primary Exams Only**



**Subspecialty Exams Only**



**Combined Primary/ Subspecialty Exams Only**



### The Top Five Most Selected CC Examination Modules Historically

Module	Total
APCP-Anatomic Pathology and Clinical Pathology with AP emphasis	763
APCP-Anatomic Pathology and Clinical Pathology	747
SS Cytopathology	598
SS Hematopathology–General Hematopathology	507
SS Hematopathology–Blood and Bone Marrow Pathology	432

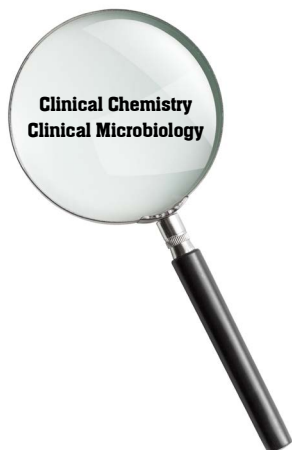


### ABPath Approved Patient Safety Courses

The approved ABPath Patient Safety Courses for 2019 are available through the following providers; additional information can be found on the ABPath website at <https://www.abpath.org/index.php/continuing-certification/cc-reporting/patient-safety-course>

- American Society for Clinical Pathology (ASCP)
- College of American Pathologists (CAP)
- Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI: Open School)
- Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine (JHUSM)
- National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME)
- National Patient Safety Foundation (NPSF)

\*United States and Canadian Academy of Pathology (USCAP) has indicated that they are developing an online patient safety course.

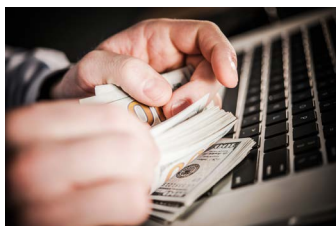


## FOCUSED PRACTICE DESIGNATIONS

The American Board of Pathology (ABPath) is pleased to announce our two new Focused Practice Designations (FPD) in Clinical Chemistry and Clinical Microbiology. The purpose of these two designations is to recognize and provide a credential to diplomates who have successfully completed training in a Commission on Accreditation in Clinical Chemistry (ComACC) or in an American Society for Microbiology Committee on Postgraduate Education Programs (CPEP) accredited training program. These designations will also be available to recognize ABPath certified physicians whose practice has been primarily or exclusively devoted to either of these two areas. These are not new areas of certification, but rather designations. The ABPath will continue to offer subspecialty certification in Chemical Pathology and Medical Microbiology to diplomates who have completed ACGME accredited training in these specialties.

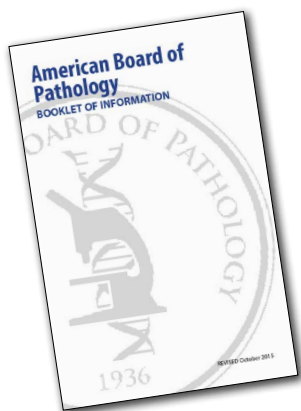
All the information, requirements, and applications for the designations are available on the ABPath website ([www.abpath.org](http://www.abpath.org)). 2019 applications are due by July 19, 2019. Secure exams will be administered remotely during a two-week period in September, dates to be announced.

You may contact Renee Holder, Coordinator of Subspecialty Certifications, at [Renee@abpath.org](mailto:Renee@abpath.org) or (813) 286-2444 ext. 223 with any questions.



## ABPath FEES

ABPath is often asked how our fees compare with other ABMS Boards. Recently ABMS did a data analysis comparing member boards. We are pleased to report that we are the lowest of the 24-member boards for operating revenue per diplomate, operating revenue per certificate issued, operating expense per diplomate, and operating expense per certificate issued. Our certification fee ranks at the 30th percentile of all ABMS member boards and the fees have not increased since 2003 even with the added services to our diplomates—ACCME PARS and ABPath CertLink®. The ABPath CC fees are among the lowest of all ABMS member boards, at \$1200, including the exam, over ten years. The most expensive board has 10-year CC fees of \$5,230.



## ABPath BOOKLET OF INFORMATION

The updated Booklet of Information is available on the ABPath Website, [www.abpath.org](http://www.abpath.org). This document should be reviewed by program directors, program coordinators and residents at least annually to ensure that certification requirements are met and ABPath policies and procedures are followed.



## ABPath AMBASSADOR PROGRAM/ SPEAKERS BUREAU

The ABPath Trustees and CEO are available to speak to pathology departments with residency training programs and national, state and local pathology societies on topics such as ABPath Updates, Certification Examinations, and Continuing Certification (CC, formerly MOC). Please contact Rebecca Johnson, MD, CEO, ([rljohnson@abpath.org](mailto:rljohnson@abpath.org)) if you would like to schedule a speaking engagement.





## ACCME PROGRAM AND ACTIVITY REPORTING SYSTEM (PARS)

The American Board of Pathology (ABPath) has partnered with the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) to create an automated process for reporting of a pathologist's AMA PRA Category I CME (including SAMs) to the ABPath for our Continuing Certification Program. The ACCME Program and Activity Reporting System (PARS) is now active and provides tracking of completed CMEs in a diplomate's PATHway account.

Once a CME activity is completed, with a pathologist's permission and their ABPath ID#, an accredited CME provider that is participating in PARS will report this information to ACCME, which is then sent on to ABPath. The CME credits will automatically show in the diplomate's CC reporting form in PATHway, beginning with 2019 CC reporting forms, and a transcript of CME credits reported via PARS will be available for download. Diplomates will still have the ability to manually enter CME activities from providers not participating in PARS. American Society for Clinical Pathology

(ASCP), College of American Pathologists (CAP), and United States and Canadian Academy of Pathology (USCAP) are currently participating in PARS and we expect other CME providers will participate in the future.

As an additional benefit of this partnership, diplomates will now be able to search for CME activities by credit type (CME, SAM, and Improvement in Medical Practice [Part IV]), provider, and key word in ACCME's **CME Finder** (<http://www.cmefinder.org/>).

This streamlined process has been developed for our diplomates' benefit through the joint commitment that

ABPath and the ACCME share to support pathologists' continuing professional development and to improving pathologists' performance for the care of patients.

Please Note: For automatic reporting of completed CME to ABPath, diplomates will be required to provide their ABPath ID# to CME providers. Your ABPath ID# can be found in PATHway on your profile page, top left corner.

For more information we encourage you to visit the following resources:

- The ACCME website page **CME that Counts for ABPath Continuing Certification** (<http://www.accme.org/abpath-cc>)
- ABPath's **Continuing Certification Lifelong Learning requirements** (<https://goo.gl/LWoqXA>).

If you have any questions, please email ABPath's Continuing Certification Coordinator at [John@abpath.org](mailto:John@abpath.org)

The screenshot shows the ACCME website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the ACCME logo and the text 'Accreditation Council™ for Continuing Medical Education'. Below this is a secondary navigation bar with tabs for 'FOR CME PROVIDERS', 'FOR ACCREDITORS', 'FOR VOLUNTEERS', 'FOR PHYSICIANS & HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS', 'FOR THE PUBLIC', and 'FOR MED'. The main content area is titled 'About PARS' and contains the following text: 'The ACCME's Program and Activity Reporting System (PARS) is a web-based portal designed to streamline and support the collection of program and activity data from accredited continuing medical education (CME) providers. The ACCME uses the information collected in PARS to support the performance-in-practice reviews that are part of the process for initial accreditation, reaccreditation, and progress report reviews. In addition, the ACCME uses data from PARS to produce annual reports as a service to accredited CME providers and other stakeholders.' There are also links for 'Printer-friendly version' and 'PDF version'. On the right side, there is a 'USEFUL VIDEOS' section with a video thumbnail and an 'ASK ACCME' section with a question and answer.



**American Board  
of Medical Specialties**  
*Higher standards. Better care.®*

# ABMS NEWS

The screenshot shows the website's navigation menu with options like 'ABOUT ABMS', 'MEMBER BOARDS', 'BOARD CERTIFICATION', 'INITIATIVES', 'VERIFY CERTIFICATION', and 'NEWS & EVENTS'. The 'INITIATIVES' tab is selected, leading to the 'ABMS Continuing Certification Directory' page. The page features a sidebar with various programs, a main heading 'ABMS Continuing Certification Directory', and a sub-heading 'Increasing Access to Relevant MOC Activities'. A video player is embedded, showing Dr. Anthony Chiodo, Chair of the ABPMR Board of Directors, discussing the directory. Below the video, there is a link to find board-approved CME activities and a note about the directory's purpose in helping physicians find quality CME programs.

## ABMS CONTINUING CERTIFICATION DIRECTORY

The American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) offers a centralized repository of approved MOC activities relevant to multiple medical specialties and subspecialties. Physicians can access approved CME activities for MOC categorized by ABMS specialty/subspecialty or by ABMS-ACGME competency. CME providers can submit and receive approval to list their CME offerings in the directory. This directory increases the inventory of MOC CME activities for diplomates and identifies activities that may be relevant to more than one specialty. The directory can be accessed at <http://www.abms.org/initiatives/abms-moc-directory/>.

The banner features the text 'CONTINUING BOARD CERTIFICATION' at the top, followed by 'VISION for the FUTURE' in large letters. Below this, there are navigation links: 'HOME', 'ABOUT THE VISION INITIATIVE', 'COMMISSION', 'NEWS', and 'PROVIDE COMMENTS'.

## CONTINUING CERTIFICATION: VISION FOR THE FUTURE COMMISSION

**The Continuing Board Certification: Vision for the Future Commission** has released its draft report for public comment. The report, which includes the Commission's key findings and recommendations, is posted on the Vision Initiative website at <https://visioninitiative.org/>.

The graphic includes the text 'VISION INITIATIVE' and 'VISION COMMISSION PUBLISHES DRAFT REPORT: CALL FOR COMMENTS NOW OPEN'. It also features a 'VISION for the FUTURE' logo with a 'DEC' calendar icon and the word 'UPDATE'. At the bottom, it states 'December 11, 2018' and provides a link to the draft report: 'The Continuing Board Certification: Vision for the Future Commission (Commission) has posted its draft report for public comment. The comment period will run from Tuesday, December 11, 2018 - Tuesday, January 15, 2019 until 11:00 p.m. CST.'

In creating the draft report, the Commission considered the input received from key stakeholders reflected in the more than 21 hours of testimony and results of the open stakeholder survey posted this past summer on its website. The report outlines the Commission's findings and a set of recommendations for future continuing certification programs. The Commission will meet one last time to review and discuss the comments received and make revisions to the draft before submitting its final report to the Board of Directors of the American Board of Medical Specialties in February, 2019.



**Certification  
Matters™**

## NEW ABMS CERTIFICATION MATTERS WEBSITE

After much in-depth research with patients and the general public, the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) has revamped the Certification Matters website in order to make it more user-friendly for the consumer. The article below from ABMS provides an overview of the site's redesign and purpose.

<https://www.certificationmatters.org>

**“**  
It gives me peace of mind.  
**”**

 FIND OUT IF YOUR DOCTOR IS BOARD CERTIFIED AT  
[CertificationMatters.org](https://www.certificationmatters.org)

### CertificationMatters.org Helps Patients Find Out If Their Physician Is Board Certified

Our patients want the best care for themselves and their families. They believe Board Certification is an important factor when choosing a physician. In fact, more than four out of five people surveyed say a doctor's certification status is an important factor for choosing a doctor—second only to whether the doctor is covered by their insurance. For patients, knowing that the physicians who treat them and

their family members are Board Certified instills peace of mind and confidence, especially at a time when they may be worried or upset.

To help patients find out if a physician they're considering is Board Certified, and to educate consumers about the value of board certification, the American Board of Medical Specialties has redesigned the *CertificationMatters.org* website. This free public service is now mobile-friendly and features a simplified search tool, as well as information about the American Board of Pathology (ABPath) and the other specialty boards that certify physicians. Certification Matters provides information in consumer-oriented language about what it means to be a Board-Certified physician.

Our diplomates are skilled and knowledgeable experts in their specialty, having met a higher standard by choosing to be Board Certified. We want our patients to know this, and the Certification Matters website will do that.



## IMPROVED EXAM RESULT TURNAROUND TIMES

This year ABPath saw a marked improvement in turnaround time for the release of exam results. We are pleased to report, the Fall 2018 Primary AP/CP and the Blood Banking Transfusion (BB/TM) exam results were posted almost a month earlier than in 2017. Much of this year’s significant change is due to the addition of an in-house psychometrician, Dr. Aaron Douglas. Dr. Douglas came to ABPath with over 15 years of experience as a scientist in standardized testing and has worked diligently to streamline our methods and expedite the reporting of results.

In the past, ABPath has used an outside vendor for scoring exams and with the exception of the Continuing Certification exam, we now score all of the exams in house. We expect the turnaround time to continue to improve as we improve our processes.



## EXAMINATION ADMINISTRATION HISTORY

As science advances and the field of pathology evolves, ABPath continues to serve the profession of pathology with the most relevant and meaningful assessments. Here is a look at when we began offering each primary and subspecialty certification and how many certificates have been issued from inception through 2018.

CERTIFICATION	INITIAL YEAR	Number of Certificates Issued
Anatomic Pathology	1936	9,239
Anatomic Pathology and Clinical Pathology	1936	22,850
Anatomic Pathology and Neuropathology	1961	405
Clinical Pathology	1936	3,691
Blood Banking/Transfusion Medicine	1973	1,490
Chemical Pathology	1951	179
Clinical Informatics*	2013	107
Cytopathology	1989	4,419
Dermatopathology*	1974	1,700
Forensic Pathology	1959	1,632
Hematopathology	1955	3,024
Medical Microbiology	1950	349
Molecular Genetic Pathology*	2001	573
Neuropathology	1948	578
Pediatric Pathology	1990	536

\*in cooperation with another board





## CERTIFYING EXAMINATION PROGRAM AND CANDIDATE PERFORMANCE REPORTS

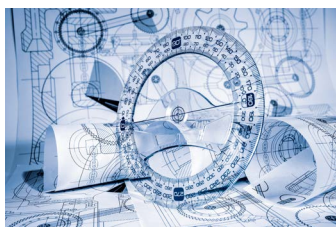
Program Performance Reports will be available to Program Directors in Resident Tracking in early 2019. The ABPath annually generates Program Performance Reports for each ACGME accredited primary and subspecialty training program. The report now provides more detailed exam content performance data. Subspecialty program performance reports are only provided if there are at least three fellows in the program during the past five years, in order to maintain candidate confidentiality. The program performance data (not individual candidate performance) is provided annually to the ACGME Review Committee for Pathology as part of the Next Accreditation System.

Performance reports provided to unsuccessful candidates now also provide more detailed exam content performance data. This should be useful to candidates to identify areas of weakness.

The feedback includes:

Reference based performance—how the candidate did as compared to others who took that exam in the same sitting; reported in tritiles—upper, middle, lower.

Criterion based performance—how the candidate did compared to a criterion of 50%; reported as either “good” (more than 50% of items in that category were answered correctly) or “low” (less than 50% of the items in that category were answered correctly). A candidate could theoretically be “good” but “low” if two-thirds of candidates scored better in that category (easy questions) or a candidate could be “low” but “upper” (difficult questions).



## EXAM BLUEPRINTS

The primary and subspecialty examination blueprints (grids) are posted on the ABPath Website. The blueprints give categories of topics covered in the examinations with the approximate percentage of questions for each topic.

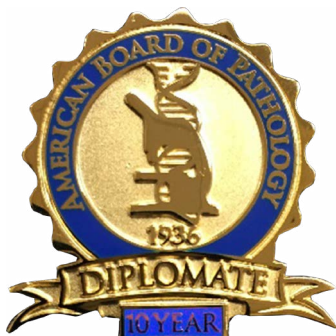


## HONOR CODE

The Board has an honor code statement that must be signed by applicants and registrants for ABPath certification exams. We are aware that in the past residents and fellows have used recalled items to prepare for Board exams. The ABPath considers this practice to be cheating, unethical and unprofessional behavior. Program Directors are encouraged to talk with their residents about the honor code, professionalism, and ethical behavior.



Diplomate pin awarded upon Board certification



Diplomate pin awarded upon completion of first 10-year cycle

## ABPath AWARDING LAPEL PINS IN RECOGNITION OF PATHOLOGISTS' ACHIEVEMENTS

The mission of the American Board of Pathology (ABPath) is to serve the public and advance the profession of pathology by setting certification standards and promoting lifelong competency of pathologists. Part of fulfilling that mission is recognizing the individual achievements of pathologists. Starting in 2017, ABPath began awarding lapel pins when a physician first becomes a diplomate of ABPath and also when they complete their first Continuing Certification 10-Year Cycle.

ABPath is pleased to offer these custom-made ABPath logo pins at no charge to newly certified diplomates in recognition of the important contributions our certified pathologists make to patient care. We hope diplomates who receive a lapel pin will wear it proudly in recognition of their achievements.

Each lapel pin comes in its own velvet box with ABPath's logo printed on the inside. The board's name is highlighted in blue enamel on the pin.

If you were certified prior to 2017 and would like to purchase a lapel pin, or have general questions, please email [lapelpins@abpath.org](mailto:lapelpins@abpath.org) or see the Certificates and Lapel Pins (<https://goo.gl/JwmPPs>) page on [www.abpath.org](http://www.abpath.org).





## EXAMINATION PERFORMANCE

All of the ABPath examinations are graded using the criterion-referenced method. Visit the ABPath Website for examination information. The number of candidates passing the examinations does not match the number of candidates certified for several reasons: (1) Some AP/CP candidates, both first-time takers and repeaters, take only one portion (either AP or CP) of the examination. These candidates are not certified until both AP and CP are passed. (2) Certified candidates include AP/CP candidates who passed either the AP or CP examination previously and requested single certification during the reporting year. (3) Certified candidates also include AP/CP candidates who passed the examinations in a previous year, but did not provide documentation of licensure or other required information until the reporting year.

### Primary Certification Examinations

#### 2018 Primary Examination

	Total Candidates		First-Time Takers			Repeaters		
	#	% Pass	#	# Pass	% Pass	#	# Pass	% Pass
AP	664	85%	578	530	92%	86	37	43%
CP	588	91%	534	503	94%	54	33	61%

#### 5-year Certified Report

Primary	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
APCP	495	504	484	498	485
AP only	105	90	79	72	78
CP only	65	48	36	50	43
APNP	6	17	7	14	11

## Subspecialty Examinations

### 2018 Subspecialty Examinations

	Total Candidates		First-Time Takers			Repeaters		
	#	% Pass	#	# Pass	% Pass	#	# Pass	% Pass
BB/TM	55	89	46	44	96	9	5	56
CH	2	100	2	2	100	-	-	-
CI	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CY	145	98	143	141	99	2	1	50
DP	58	90	53	48	91	5	4	80
FP	52	94	50	48	96	2	1	50
HE	142	98	138	137	99	4	2	50
MMB	12	100	12	12	100	-	-	-
MGP	61	98	57	56	98	4	4	100
NP	26	100	24	24	100	2	2	100
PP	26	81	23	18	78	3	3	100

### 5-year Certified Report

Subspec.	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
BB/TM	39	67	57	49	49
CH	1	2	2	1	2
CI	25	21	25	16	-
CYP	154	160	144	141	142
DP	48	40	56	43	52
FP	42	45	48	41	49
HE	143	156	142	125	140
MMB	7	11	7	9	12
MGP	40	55	57	45	59
NP	9	14	12	17	15
PP	20	26	21	16	20

## Continuing Certification Examinations

### Continuing Certification

MOC	Total Candidate #	% Pass
Fall 2018	371	97
Spring 2018	339	97
Fall 2017	331	95.8
Spring 2017	265	97.7
Fall 2016	304	100
Spring 2016	437	100
Fall 2015	187	100
Spring 2015	213	100

### Continuing Certification Participation Stats

	2015	2016	2017	2018
Certificates Enrolled	1190	1177	1133	1148
Certificates Lapsed/ Revoked	56	68	75	88
Diplomates Enrolled	677	626	651	626
Diplomates Lapsed/ Revoked	50	54	64	68

## 2019 ABPath EXAMINATION DATES

Exams	2019 Dates
<b>Anatomic / Clinical Pathology</b>	
Spring (Tampa)	Starts May 13
Spring (Tucson)	Starts June 4
Fall	Starts October 14
<b>Continuing Certification</b>	
Spring	Starts March 4
Fall	Starts August 12
<b>Subspecialty</b>	
Cytopathology	Starts August 26
Neuropathology	August 29
Forensic Pathology	September 4
Blood Banking/Transfusion Medicine	September 5
Chemical Pathology	September 9
Medical Microbiology	September 9
Dermatopathology	Starts September 10
Pediatric Pathology	September 12
Molecular Genetic Pathology	Starts September 16
Hematopathology	Starts September 18
Clinical Informatics (Prometric)	October

*NOTE: Dates are subject to change. Start dates are the first date that specific exam is administered; a candidate's assigned date may be that date or on a following date within that week. Please check the ABPath Web site for current information.*

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**About the American Board of Pathology**

The mission of the American Board of Pathology, as a member of the American Board of Medical Specialties, is to promote the field of pathology and the continuing competency of practicing pathologists. Founded in 1936, the ABPath accomplishes this mission by establishing certification and continuing certification standards and assessing the qualifications of those seeking to obtain voluntary certification in the specialty of pathology.

*Revised in 2015, the logo of the American Board of Pathology depicts the origin and evolution of pathology. The traditional microscope in the foreground symbolizes cellular pathology and laboratory medicine. In the background the double helix reflects the evolving discipline in the molecular era.*

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