

Status Report

DHB Subcommittee for Pathology & Laboratory Services

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Defense Health Board

- Mission: “Provide advice/recommendations on matters relating to operation programs, policy development, and research programs and requirements for the treatment and prevention of disease and injury and promotion of health.”
- Subcommittees
 - Rehabilitation (Amputee Care)
 - **Pathology/Laboratory Services**
 - Mental Health/Health Care

DHB Pathology/Laboratory Services Subcommittee

- DHB expanded mission includes **treatment**
- Appropriate and effective **treatment** requires accurate and timely diagnosis
 - Excellence in pathology is **CENTRAL** to excellence in medicine and a **KEY** component in DHB issues
- Central role of pathology already recognized in DHB logo that prominently features the microscope



DHB Pathology/Laboratory Services

Subcommittee

- Origin from earlier AFIP Scientific Advisory Board
- **Proposed Mission:** To provide DoD with timely scientific and professional advice and guidance in matters pertaining to all aspects of pathology, including consultation (practice), education and research
 - *Collaborate* with other DoD and civilian institutions and agencies
 - *Emphasize* state-of-the-art diagnostic techniques and emerging technologies and procedures
 - *Promote* quality assurance/best practices in pathology
 - *Monitor* events with pathological data
 - *Promote* excellence in medical practice through AFIP's core strengths
 - Consultation activities
 - Educational programs
 - Tissue repository of carefully studied/categorized cases
- **Resource on all aspects of pathology**

DHB Pathology/Laboratory Services Subcommittee

- Many unknowns
 - Expanded mission of DHB--*in evolution*
 - Fate of the AFIP--*unknown with BRAC*
 - AFIP has served as the center of military pathology for decades
 - Providing pathology expertise for the US military and civilian medicine worldwide
 - Training of military pathologists--educational courses & first-hand experience
 - “Go-to” for difficult and unusual military and VA cases
 - Repository of difficult and unusual cases
 - AFIP has had a MAJOR positive impact on the practice and science of pathology

Important AFIP Activities

- Diagnosis
 - Providing expert interpretation
- Maintain active National Tissue Repository
 - Over 3 million carefully studied and categorized cases since 1862
 - Foundation of extensive research programs
 - National/international resource



Armed Forces Institute of Pathology (AFIP)--*brief history*

- 1862: Originally established as the Army Medical Museum as a public and professional repository for injuries and disease specimens of Civil War soldiers
- 1888: Educational facilities of the Museum were made available to civilian medical professions on a cooperative basis
- 1946: Scientific Advisory Board (SAB), the precursor of the current subcommittee, established to provide advice and guidance to the Secretary of Defense through the Secretary of the Army and the Director of the AFIP

AFIP and BRAC--*background*

- **May 13, 2005: Secretary of defense announced recommendations to close/realign military facilities in the US as part of the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC)**
 - **Close Walter Reed Army Medical Center (WRAMC)**
 - ***Disestablish AFIP***
 - **Medical Examiner's Office & DNA registry to Dover AFB**
 - **"Some educational services" to Fort Sam Houston, TX**
 - **Museum and tissue repository to remain in DoD**
 - **Other services currently provided by AFIP would be discontinued, transferred to other parts of DoD or contracted out to the civilian medical community (plans incomplete)**

Future of the AFIP--*UNCERTAIN*

- Mar 28-29, 2007: Kennedy amendment to Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Bill passed by House & Senate (HR1591):
 - Notwithstanding any other provision of law, *none of the funds in this or any other Act shall be used to reorganize or relocate the functions of the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology (AFIP)* until the Secretary of Defense has submitted, not later than December 31, 2007, a detailed plan and timetable for the proposed reorganization and relocation to the Committees on Appropriations and Armed Services of the Senate and House of Representatives.
 - The plan shall take into consideration the recommendations of a study being prepared by the Government Accountability Office (GAO), provided that such study is available not later than 45 days before the date specified

DHB Pathology/Laboratory Services Subcommittee

Vision/Directions--in evolution

- Recognize this is a changing environment, with evolving missions
- Future of AFIP is important to final subcommittee organization and scope
 - AFIP activities have been and are key factors in military pathology excellence
 - Build on existing AFIP strengths, including sub-specialty expertise, tissue repository and training
- **Dr. Florabel Mullick** appointed new AFIP Director, effective June 29

DHB Pathology/Laboratory Services Subcommittee

- **Future plans**
 - Finalize roster of subcommittee members
 - Meetings as needed
 - Deliberate issues & make data-driven recommendations as they arise or are presented
- **Pathology Subcommittee is *committed* to supporting the activities and mission of the DHB**