

OEI PATHOBIOLOGY QUESTIONNAIRE CONCLUSIONS

DEAR OEI PATHOLOGIST, MOLECULAR PATHOLOGIST AND/OR BIOBANK MANAGER,

It was my pleasure to receive your responses to the recently send questionnaires. The responses to the questionnaire taught me many things about the OEI Pathobiology participants. I have received 15-16 responses on each of the questionnaires.

OEI Pathobiology Workshop

The most important lesson was that there is a strong need for the group to meet in regular OEI meetings. Many subjects to cover were suggested already. Therefore I will organize events on a regular basis and in the future organise those within the OEI General Assembly. Since we received a wonderful invitation to organize a meeting in Romania from our OEI Romanian OEI member in Cluj, "Oncology Institute "Prof. Dr. Ion Chiricuta' we have an opportunity to already have our Pathobiology workshop this year. Please read more in the announcement of the coming OEI Pathobiology Workshop, also attached to this message.

OEI TuBaFrost

The questionnaire on OEI TuBaFrost taught me all respondents see the OEI TuBaFrost platform as an important platform for the exchange of samples between European Cancer institutes. However, the database application appears too difficult to use and therewith a too large investment for not knowing the real benefits of the virtual tumour bank. In other words it takes too much trouble to upload and update the data of the samples that can be exchanged.

Plans have been prepared to enormously simplify the data upload procedure. The sample-to-sample upload will be reserved for those who see fit to upload this complex data and for special closed project environments.

Within the general access environment the data will be replaced by data assembled by a simple questionnaire that describes the general collection. This questionnaire will take only a few hours to fill out. A requestor can search these data to find a suitable collector to ask for cooperation. New features will be a scientific value of specific parts of the collection based on the impact factor of the articles published on the parts of the collection. This way the requestor can better look for the proper cooperation for the proposed research. The requestor needs to specify the demands and the number of samples he wants to use for the proposed research and will be asked how he sees the future cooperation with the collector. Resources to realise these changes are very scarce, but I hope I can realise these changes in the near future.

Most of you are associate members of the BBMRI project through the OEI TuBaFrost connection. A questionnaire will be developed that has many questions similar to the upload procedure in this format to start an Inventory of biobanks within this European FP7 project. Those that allow access for external cooperation and meet certain criteria (number of samples and standardisation) can be part of this inventory of European biobanks.

Many respondents did not know that the rules of the exchange procedure completely protects the collector's interests regarding the governance over the samples and that cooperation, reimbursement and/or reimbursement of the costs are negotiated by the collector. I hope this situation has changed already by the questionnaire. However this will be stressed in the accompanying web site as well so it will also be clear for the requestors from the start that the samples do not come for free.

The standardisation described in TuBaFrost is well known, however many deviate from the suggested method. Most deviations are found in the use of pre-cooled isopentane for snap freezing. This did amaze me a little because the tumour banks are situated in Pathology departments and Pathologists on average value highly the conserved morphology of the sample for later evaluation in future experiments.

The OEI Histopathology platform

All respondents want to start making use of this platform to discuss histology cases. The update from the Erasmus MC image server has taken place and the platform is now opened. Please feel free to register at the web site: www.pathobiology.eu and to start making use of the site by describing and illustrating new cases.

I hope to meet you all in Cluj to have a fruitful OEI meeting. Please do not forget to read the announcement.

Peter Riegman