
To the Editors:

Use and interpretation of phrases in histopathology reports: interdisciplinary meetings will help to reduce the confusion

The results of the research letter by Hewavisenthi and Fernando [1] have indicated that there is a wide variation in interpretation of phrases used in histopathology reports between pathologists and clinicians. Misinterpretation of histopathology reports could influence management of patients.

We wish to reiterate that this problem is avoided in other countries by discussion of patient management at interdisciplinary meetings, where pathologists are invariably present. In such situations, the final histopathology report becomes merely a summary, because most of the clinically relevant histopathological features have already been discussed at the meeting, with clarification of any queries [2]. Such meetings would also help to correlate clinical features, radiological findings and laboratory investigations with the ultimate pathology, and patient management,

where histopathology is inconclusive. We feel that this is especially relevant in liver, renal and skin biopsies where despite the presence of histopathological changes, sometimes a definitive diagnosis cannot be made, but where therapeutic decisions could be arrived at after discussion.

Inter-disciplinary meetings should not be regarded as time consuming affairs, which would add to an already busy schedule. They are essential for optimal patient management. Furthermore, they are a forum for continuing medical education.

Reference

1. Hewavisenthi SJ De S, Fernando P. Use and interpretation of phrases in histopathology reports. *Ceylon Medical Journal* 2005; **1**: 37–8

NR Perera, Senior Lecturer, and **MVC de Silva**, Professor and Head, Department of Pathology, Faculty of Medicine, Kynsey Road, Colombo 8.

Correspondence: NRP, e-mail: <nrperera@sltnet.lk> (Competing interests: none declared). Received 13 May 2005 and accepted 26 May 2005.