

Report for the Head and Neck Working Group (2019)

Chairperson: Tim Helliwell, Liverpool UK (2017-20)

Co-Chair: Nina Zidar, Ljubljana, Slovenia

Members of the Head and Neck Working Group contributed to a full programme of sessions at the 31st European Congress of Pathology from 7 to 11 September 2019 in Nice, France.

A long course entitled “Head and neck pathology: high quality reporting of head and neck cancers” provided practical guidance for both experienced and trainee pathologists on synoptic reporting for head and neck cancers, focussed on the recently published ICCR datasets. This session covered the optimal reporting of nasopharyngeal and oropharyngeal carcinomas, oral cavity carcinomas, carcinomas of the larynx and pharynx, salivary gland carcinomas and carcinomas of the nose and paranasal sinuses. The reporting of cancer in neck dissection specimens was also covered as this is a theme common to all site-specific cancers.

The slide seminar stimulated discussion on the theme of “Challenging diagnostic problems in head and neck pathology”, attracting contributions from working group members based in France, Portugal, Japan, Switzerland and Canada.

A short course provided the opportunity to reflect on the wide-ranging contributions to the Working Group of Leslie Michaels, Emeritus Professor in the Department of Histopathology at the Royal Free and University College Medical School, who died on 28 December 2018. Professor Michaels was a founder member of the Head and Neck Working Group and prolific writer of scientific papers and of books on head and neck pathology which have guided and stimulated pathologists over more than 40 years. The course centred on non-malignant diseases of the head and neck, with contributions on the pathology of the temporal bone, an update on squamous intra-epithelial lesions of the larynx, oral lichen planus and IgG4-related diseases of the head and neck.

A videomicroscopy session was particularly popular with members and covered aspects of the morphological and molecular complexity of head and neck pathology.

A poster session provided the opportunity for many members of the working group and junior colleagues to demonstrate a wide-range of interesting studies.

Outside the work for the Congress, members of the Working Group have been chairs or members of the authoring committees for the suite of head and neck cancer datasets being prepared by the International Collaboration for Cancer Reporting. The companion articles were published in a special issue of Archives of Pathology in April 2019.

Seven members of the Working Group contributed to an ENT Pathology study day in September 2019 at the University Paris Descartes. The day provided an opportunity to meet French head and neck pathologists and discuss a wide range of topics of mutual interest.