IAOP2020 – Model abstract and guidelines

HOW PATHOLOGISTS DETERMINE DIAGNOSTIC COMPETENCE- A QUALITATIVE STUDY

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Background: There is no clear description of what constitutes "diagnostic competence" in histopathology. Recent evidence indicates that the majority of assessors and trainees feel the current work based assessments do not identify diagnostic competence in trainees.

Objectives: To explore and understand the judgement ecology of how consultants determine diagnostic competence in their trainees.

Methods: Semi-structured interviews were conducted with consultants and trainees, transcribed and analysed using Framework method.

Results: 26 sub-themes were identified and grouped into five major themes: Process, Person, Stage of Training, Trust and Time. Diagnostic competence comprised several component parts, although forming accurate diagnoses supported by sound pathological principles appeared particularly important. The judgement is longitudinal in nature and modified by trainee stage with competence ultimately manifested in actions which demonstrate trust between trainee and consultant.

Conclusions: Our study offers insight into the complex task of determining diagnostic competence in trainees, while helping to understand the cues and context that underpin the judgement ecology. This is the first study to explore diagnostic competence in histopathology and may help to create an evidence base to design future assessment tools.