



The FSP Connection

SPRING 2023 FSP NEWS UPDATE

President's Message



Qihui "Jim" Zhai, MD
President

Happy New Year, fellow FSP members! I hope you all had a happy and restful holiday season. Looking back, 2022 was an amazing year for the Florida Society of Pathologists. We held **THREE** successful conferences in February and July, as well as the second annual FSP & FLASCO joint meeting in September. Our meetings grew exponentially in 2022. We welcomed over 250 pathologists and 45 sponsors in February at our annual conference, 125 pathologists and 31 sponsors in July at our summer meeting and over 100 pathologists and

oncologists and 20 sponsors at our joint FSP+FLASCO meeting in September. With over 475 pathologists and 96 vendors participating in 2022, we had a record year! For our 2023 Annual Meeting we already have over 285 pathologists attending and we are still growing!

"...2022 was an amazing year for Florida Society of Pathologists. We held THREE successful conferences in February and July, as well as the second annual FSP & FLASCO joint meeting in September. "

I am thankful to connect with you through our thriving society, one that has made me a better

professional, and earned me life-long friendships along the way. As my presidential term comes to an end, I reflect on the position that has taught me so much, and I could not have steered this society successfully without the support of my board and our management company. We have seen tremendous growth since I first began my term in February 2021. I am proud to share that our membership has grown over 40% and our voice is stronger than ever! We have over 600 pathologists in our society to date, our largest number yet. When I began my term, the FSP was coming off a challenging year due to the pandemic. With the un-wavering support of our members and our industry partners and the dedication of our board we have recovered stronger and more financially secure than we have ever been before and have seen a 200% increase in our financials over

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the past two years!

I was privileged to be a part of our legislative team over the course of my term. Our advocacy impact has been strong under the guidance of our legislative team comprised of Amy Young, our FSP legislative consultant, Brett Cantrell, MD, Legislative Chair and our partners, David Smith of Medreceivables and Steve Weinstein of K&L Gates. In the summer months of 2022, our legislative team became aware of additional issues with the pathology component of the Medicaid fee schedule, particularly around COVID-related codes. The COVID codes were being paid on a global basis as opposed to splitting out the technical and

professional components of the fee. This posed a very unfortunate situation for many of our independent labs, who are able to stay independent in part because the Florida Medicaid fee schedule has been well-designed to split the PC and TC of the codes without increasing total costs. Our team sprang into action and as a result of our letters, virtual meetings, consistent weekly follow-ups and attendance at workshops, a decision was made by AHCA to add a PC/TC split to the other COVID codes. This important action ensures millions of dollars for the essential role the pathologist plays in health care. The fight is never over, and our team remains diligent and ready for the release of the 2023 codes.

As the new leaf turns, I am excited to see our next FSP president, Marilyn Bui, MD, PhD, come into this role when she starts her term on February 18 and I know she will flourish in this role and continue to steer FSP on an upward path. I hope everyone will plan to attend the upcoming annual meeting February 17-19 to not only watch me pass the baton on to Dr. Bui, but to participate in cutting-edge educational sessions, celebrate the FSP's 75th anniversary, and to meet some of the many new members to our society! To register for the meeting, visit our website, [2023 FSP Annual Conference | Florida Society of Pathologists](#). I look forward to seeing you there. Cheers to the excitement 2023 has in store for us!

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



Amy J. Young
Legislative Consultant

The 2023 Florida Legislature is Organized and has begun meeting in preparation for the Session, which convenes on March 7th. Before the bill drafting deadlines in March, we will be reviewing over 3,000 bills between 1-thousands of pages long analyzing the impact they may have on FSP members and pathology in general.

I have included some of the very few bills filed to date, that we are monitoring on behalf of you, our FSP members.

Included in this short list below, is a bill filed that would change a Florida law that we amended on behalf of pathology in 2021 regarding genetic privacy. As you may recall that session, I worked with the FSP Leadership to amend legislation that ensured that clinical laboratories, under the supervision of Pathologists, were not encumbered with

additional legal requirements or physician liabilities, including criminal penalties, that were intended to be exclusively applied to direct-to-consumer (DTC) genetic testing companies (non-diagnostic). The original legislation would have been extremely detrimental to the daily practice of pathology as well as liability for pathologists under very poorly understood supervisory responsibilities that pathologists must have to maintain oversight of clinical labs. The current form of this legislation does not jeopardize our 2021 amendments to protect you. However, we will be monitoring any efforts to reverse this outcome.

In the meantime, we have continued negotiations with the Agency for Health Care Administration regarding the 2023 Medicaid fee schedule, which has yet to be published. We did get good news that the professional component for COVID will be reimbursed at the same percentage as an 87426-26, the most used COVID code, which is 24.37% of the global fee. Due to our negotiations, we should see an approximate reimbursement of \$12.96 per unit.

CALENDAR OF IMPORTANT LEGISLATIVE DATES

2023 Interim Committee Meeting Schedule

- Tuesday, January 3 – Friday, January 6, 2023
- Tuesday, January 17 – Friday, January 20, 2023
- Monday, January 23 – Friday, January 27, 2023
- Monday, February 6 – Friday, February 10, 2023
- Monday, February 13 – Friday, February 17, 2023
- Monday, February 20 – Friday, February 24, 2023

2023 Regular Session Dates

- August 1, 2022 - Deadline for filing claim bills
- March 7, 2023 - Regular Session convenes.
- April 22, 2023 - Motion to reconsider made and considered the same day (All bills are immediately certified)
- April 25, 2023 - 50th day – last day for regularly scheduled committee meetings
- May 5, 2023 - 60th day – last day of Regular Session

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PRE-FILED BILLS OF INTEREST
TO FSP FOR 2023

SB 0046 - Health Insurance Cost Sharing sponsored by Wright. Health Insurance Cost Sharing; Requiring specified individual health insurers and their pharmacy benefit managers to apply payments by or on behalf of insureds toward the total contributions of the insureds' cost-sharing requirements; requiring specified contracts to require pharmacy benefit managers to apply payments by or on behalf of insureds toward the insureds' total contributions to cost-sharing requirements; requiring specified group health insurers and their pharmacy benefit managers to apply payments by or on behalf of insureds toward the total contributions of the insureds' cost-sharing requirements; requiring specified contracts to require pharmacy benefit managers to apply payments by or on behalf of insureds toward the insureds' total contributions to cost-sharing requirements, etc. Effective Date: 7/1/2023

11/22/22 - SENATE Filed
12/15/22 - SENATE Referred to Banking and Insurance; Health Policy; Fiscal Policy

HB 0079- Telehealth Practice Standards sponsored by Fabricio. Telehealth Practice Standards: Revises definition of term "telehealth."
Effective Date: July 1, 2023

12/27/22 - HOUSE Filed
01/10/23 - HOUSE Referred to Healthcare Regulation Subcommittee; Health & Human Services Committee
01/10/23 - HOUSE Now in Healthcare Regulation Subcommittee
01/18/23 - HOUSE Withdrawn prior to introduction

SB 0142 - Coverage for Skin Cancer Screenings sponsored by Harrell. Coverage for Skin Cancer Screenings; Requiring individual health insurance policies; group, blanket, and franchise health insurance policies; and health maintenance contracts, respectively, to provide coverage and payment for annual skin cancer screenings performed by a licensed dermatologist without imposing any cost-sharing requirement; specifying a requirement for and a restriction on payments for such screenings, etc. Effective Date: 7/1/2023
01/09/23 - SENATE Filed
01/19/23 - SENATE Referred to Banking and Insurance; Health Policy; Appropriations

SB 0222- Protection of Medical Freedom sponsored by Gruters. Protection of Medical Freedom; Prohibiting the Department of Health from requiring enrollment in the state's immunization registry or otherwise requiring persons to submit to immunization tracking; prohibiting business and governmental entities

from requiring individuals to provide proof of vaccination or postinfection recovery from any disease to gain access to, entry upon, or service from such entities; prohibiting employers from refusing employment to, or discharging, disciplining, demoting, or otherwise discriminating against, an individual solely on the basis of vaccination or immunity status; revising the purposes of the Florida Civil Rights Act of 1992 to include discrimination protection for vaccination or immunity status, etc. Effective Date: 7/1/2023
01/18/23 - SENATE Filed
01/26/23 - SENATE Referred to Judiciary; Health Policy; Rules

HB 0267 Telehealth Practice Standards Fabricio. Telehealth Practice Standards: Revises definition of term "telehealth."
Effective Date: July 1, 2023
01/18/23 - HOUSE Filed

HB 0273 - Pub. Rec./Autopsy Reports of Minor Victims of Domestic Violence sponsored by Clemons, Sr. Pub. Rec./Autopsy Reports of Minor Victims of Domestic Violence: Creates exemption from public records requirements for autopsy reports of minors whose deaths were related to acts of domestic violence; provides exceptions; requires that any viewing, copying, or handling of such autopsy reports be under direct supervision

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of custodian of record or his or her designee; requires that certain surviving parents of minor whose death was related to act of domestic violence be given notice of petitions to view or copy minor's autopsy report & of opportunity to be present & heard at related hearings; provides for retroactive application; provides for future legislative review & repeal of exemption; provides statement of public necessity.

Effective Date: upon becoming a law

01/19/23 - HOUSE Filed

SB 0298 - Telehealth Practice Standards sponsored by Boyd.

Telehealth Practice Standards; Revising the definition of the term "telehealth", etc.

Effective Date: 7/1/2023

01/19/23 - SENATE Filed

01/26/23 - SENATE Referred to Health Policy; Banking and Insurance; Rules

HB 0315 - Civil Remedies for Unlawful Employment Practices sponsored by Andrade.

Provides limits on judgment for punitive & compensatory damages for certain claims; authorizes aggrieved party to bring civil action for certain claims within specified timeframe regardless of determination made by Commission on Human Relations.

Effective Date: July 1, 2023

01/20/23 - HOUSE Filed

HB 0401 - Sovereign Immunity sponsored by Beltran.

Sovereign Immunity: Removes statutory limits on liability for tort claims against state & its agencies & subdivisions; revises requirements for government entity to settle claim or judgment; revises timeframes within which claim must be presented & within which agency must make final disposition of claim after it is filed to prevent claim from being deemed denied; revises exceptions relating to instituting actions on claims against state or one of its agencies or subdivision.

Effective Date: October 1, 2024

01/24/23 - HOUSE Filed

HB 0427 - Health Care Authority and Consent sponsored by Michael.

Health Care Authority and Consent: Authorizes certain persons to act on behalf of ward before guardian is appointed; prohibits selling or transferring another person's DNA sample for DNA analysis; revises exemptions from prosecution of certain crimes related to unlawful use of DNA samples, DNA analyses, or results of DNA analyses; authorizes health care practitioners & providers to obtain verbal parental consent for provision of health care services, medical procedures, & prescription of medicinal drugs to minor child; requires health care practitioners & providers to document certain information when written parental consent is

not obtained.

Effective Date: July 1, 2023

01/24/23 - HOUSE Filed

HB 0481 - Physician Assistants' Prescriptive Authority sponsored by Melo.

Physician Assistants' Prescriptive Authority: Removes requirements that physician assistants may only prescribe or dispense drugs under physician's supervision. Effective Date: July 1, 2023

01/24/23 - HOUSE Filed

LEGAL UPDATE



Steven R. Weinstein, Esq
Legal Consultant

Many Florida hospital based pathology groups have long-standing provider contracts with Cigna, some of which contain contractually agreed-upon reimbursement rates for the professional component of clinical pathology (PC-CP). These PC-CP rates have been called into question and undercut by Cigna's repeated discussion (over the last two years) of changing its "Modifier 26 Professional Component Reimbursement Policy." In a minute or less, here is what you need to know.

Earlier this year, Cigna notified its participating pathology providers that, effective July 1, 2022, it would unilaterally reduce PC-CP reimbursement "to \$5" for PC-CP codes billed with a 26 modifier.

However, Cigna is required to pay materially higher rates for PC-CP than Cigna is proposing as part of covered laboratory services. Such higher rates are required by the federal Affordable Care Act, the 2022 Federal No Surprises Act, and Florida state law. Florida courts have repeatedly held that clinical laboratory oversight and supervision is medically necessary, "approved physician care . . . rendered to" patients, which must be paid for at reasonable rates by commercial payors. See *Health Options, Inc. v. Palmetto Pathology Services, P.A.*, 983 So. 2d 608 (Fla. 3d DCA 2008).

Moreover, the American Medical Association's CPT Assistant (the official interpretation of CPT codes) confirms that there is a distinct and reimbursable professional component to hospital-based laboratory services, a concept that Cigna's purported new policy seeks to vitiate through nominal reimbursement. In May 1999, the CPT Assistant expressly recognized: "When the pathologist bills a professional component to a non-Medicare patient, no payment is made by the hospital to the pathologist for this service. The

hospital's bill for the technical component covers hospital costs for laboratory equipment, supplies and non-physician personnel-it does not include the professional services of the pathologist."

Any groups contracting with Cigna should carefully examine how their current claims are being adjudicated. Moreover, regardless of contract status, if your group's PC-CP claims are now being denied or paid at unilaterally set low rates by Cigna or any other commercial payor, your group should discuss with counsel potential legal recourse to seek full recovery of claims for these medically necessary and valuable professional services for which you are responsible and potentially liable.

This article does not contain legal advice and should not be relied upon as providing legal advice. Steven Weinstein is the Managing Partner of K&L Gates' Miami office, where he specializes in representing and counseling health care providers in claim adjudication matters involving insurers and commercial payors.

FSP MEMBERS IN THE NEWS



In recognition of his long and distinguished career in pathology, the College of American Pathologists named

Patrick E.T. Godbey, MD, FCAP, Pathologist of the Year. During his 30 years as a CAP member, Dr. Godbey served two full terms as a member of the CAP Board of Governors. He was the chair of the Council on Government and Professional Affairs, overseeing the direction of the organization's legislative and regulatory advocacy efforts on behalf of patients, pathologists, and medical laboratories, and he has led numerous CAP councils and committees.

"I am humbled to be named the Pathologist of the Year. So many pathologists immediately took up the fight against COVID-19 and we much more than answered the call," Dr. Godbey comments. "It was my privilege to lead the CAP during this most challenging of times. I am certainly honored to be the recipient of this prestigious award, but I know that there are a large, large number of Fellows

in this College who are also truly Pathologists of the Year."



We are delighted to announce that **Dr. Elizabeth Montgomery has been awarded the "2023 Maude Abbott**

Lecture", to be presented on Saturday, March 11th, 2023, 5:00 PM – 5:50 PM during the 112 USCAP Annual Meeting. The lecture will be delivered at the Great Hall of The New Orleans Ernest N. Memorial Convention Center in New Orleans, LA. The Maude Abbott Lecture is presented to distinguished pathologists who have made a significant contribution to the advancement of pathology in the areas of teaching, research, and clinical care. It is one of the most prestigious honors USCAP can bestow upon a speaker.



Stephen Vernon, MD, long-time member of the FSP was awarded the Distinguished Service

Award by the Florida Medical Association during the FMA Annual Meeting and House of Delegates on August 5-7, 2022 in Orlando, Florida.



FSP President-Elect, **Marilyn Bui, MD, PhD, FCAP** was elected **Vice Speaker,** CAP House of Delegates for a term

of 2022-2024. FSP President,



Qihui "Jim" Zhai, MD, FCAP was elected for a **second term to the CAP Board of Governors** through 2025.

Congratulations to Dr. Bui and Dr. Zhai!

Support the FSP - Pathology PAC

The Florida Society of Pathologists' number one priority is to protect our patients and our profession. We are committed to protecting to doing this through the efforts of the Pathology-PAC (FSP-PAC). The Pathology-PAC provides supportive candidates, political parties, and other political organizations with contributions to achieving our advocacy goals and ultimately protecting our medical license. To be successful in legislative efforts, the FSP needs strong financial support from its members. Consider making a one-time donation or enrolling for an automatic monthly donation on the FSP website.

[Donate Online Now to the FSP-Pathology PAC!](#)

FSP Pathology PAC Contributors

The FSP would like to thank the following for their contribution to the FSP Pathology PAC from January 2022 through January 2023:

John Accola, MD
John Alexis, MD
Sarah Alghamdi, MD
Susan Baker, MD
Piotr Borkowski, MD
Marilyn Bui, MD, PhD
Lizardo Cerezo, MD
Diane Davey, MD
Ronald Giffler, MD
Patrick Godbey, MD
Lydia Howard, MD
Edward Jones, MD
Rebecca Johnson, MD

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Ericka Olgaard, MD
Yumna Omarzai, MD
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Monica Recine, MD
Jordan Reynolds, MD
Nicole Riddle, MD
Philip Robinson, MD
Richard Scanlan, MD
David Smith (on behalf of Medreceivables)
Vathany Sriganeshan, MD
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Stephen Vernon, MD
Cristina Vincentelli, MD
Qihui Zhai, MD



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850-591-5405
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MEMBERSHIP UPDATES



Jason Savell, MD
Membership Chair

Happy New Year, everyone! I am honored to have served as Florida Society of Pathology's Membership chair this past year. This is a fantastic organization to be a part of, and it's amazing to have watched it grow and expand. As 2022 has come to an end and we endeavor on a new year, I am grateful for what this Society offers Pathologists, from advocacy efforts to protect our profession, to education, to the camaraderie amongst Pathologists it has created. I am not alone in these feelings as our membership numbers are the highest they have ever

been. In 2022, FSP welcomed 99 new members! What a feat! We currently have 587 active members. I look forward to seeing all of you at the upcoming annual meeting to not only greet our new members,

"...I am grateful for what this Society offers Pathologists, from advocacy efforts to protect our profession, to education, to the camaraderie...I am not alone in these feelings, as our membership numbers are the highest they have ever been."

but also listen to sessions led by world-renowned professionals, connect and socialize with

fellow pathologists, and have a good time!

I encourage you to invite others to join FSP and be part of our great society. In 2023, be on the lookout for an upcoming FSP membership drive! It'll be a fun way for you to get involved and for new members to join the society. Prizes will be awarded to those who recruit the most members!

I am beyond excited to see what 2023 holds for the Florida Society of Pathologists.

Welcome our newest FSP members who joined in 2022, listed on the next page.

Welcome our newest FSP members, who joined in 2022:

Sam Albadri, MB, ChB
Jeremy Alder, MD
Abrar Alghamdi, MD
Rami Alhassan, MD
Ferial Alloush, MD
Michelle Alterman, MD
Grace Amable, MD
Hamza Ashmila, MB, ChB
Farhad Askarian, MD
Wyatt Bernardo, MD
Kirk Bourgeois, MD
Frank Boyd, MD
Jill Browning, MD
Elizabeth Davaro, MD
Arunima Deb, MD
Virendra Desai, MD
Daniel Diaz, MD
Adriana Doldan, MD
Daniel Dresser, MD
Katherine Drews-Elger, MD
Dereen Duhoki, MD
Nancy El Beayni, MD
Faysal Fedda, MD
Alexis Gardner, DO
Cheryl Garganta, MD
Zahraa Ghandour, MD
Elizabeth Godbey, MD
Sibel Gultekin, MD
Tara Hajarati, MD
J. Chris Hancock, MD
Erika Harper, DO
Nicholaus Hilliard, MD
Samuel Ho, Jr, MD

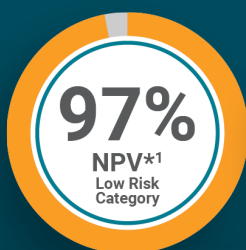
Ammoura Ibrahim, MD
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Deepan Mathur, MD
Zoltan Mayer, MD
Timothy McIntire, MD
Eduardo Medina-Parrilla, MD
Glenda Melgar, MD
David Metter, MD
Charles Middleton, MD
Joseph Migliozi, MD
Catherine Miller, MD
Sara Niyazi, DO
Andre Obua, MD
Deanna Oleske, MD
Gregory Olsen, MD
Atousa Ordobazari, MD
Zehra Ordulu, MD
Jle Ouyang, MD
Vince Patel, MD

Francesca Polit, MD
Gary Procop, MD
Wenjing Qiu, MD
Sumra Rathore, MD
William Rogers, DO
Felipe Ruiz Casas, MD
Roberto Ruiz Cordero, MD
Christopher Ryder, MD
Marisa Saint Martin, MD
Fadi Salem, MD
Hina Samad, MD
Monica Sanchez Avila, MD
Joel Santiago-Martinez, MD
Rodrigo Santoscoy Valencia, MD
Mala Sengupta, MD
Sunaina Shrestha, MBBS
Anwer Siddiqi, MD
Juliana Sobczyk, MD
Sarah Starnes, MD
Jose Suarez-Hoyos, MD
Scott Taylor, DO
Katie Thoren, MD
Humberto Trejo Bittar, MD
Maria Wallis-Crespo, MD
Yan Wang, MD
David Ward, DO
Sarah White, MD
Sean Williamson, MD
Stephanie Wolanin, MD
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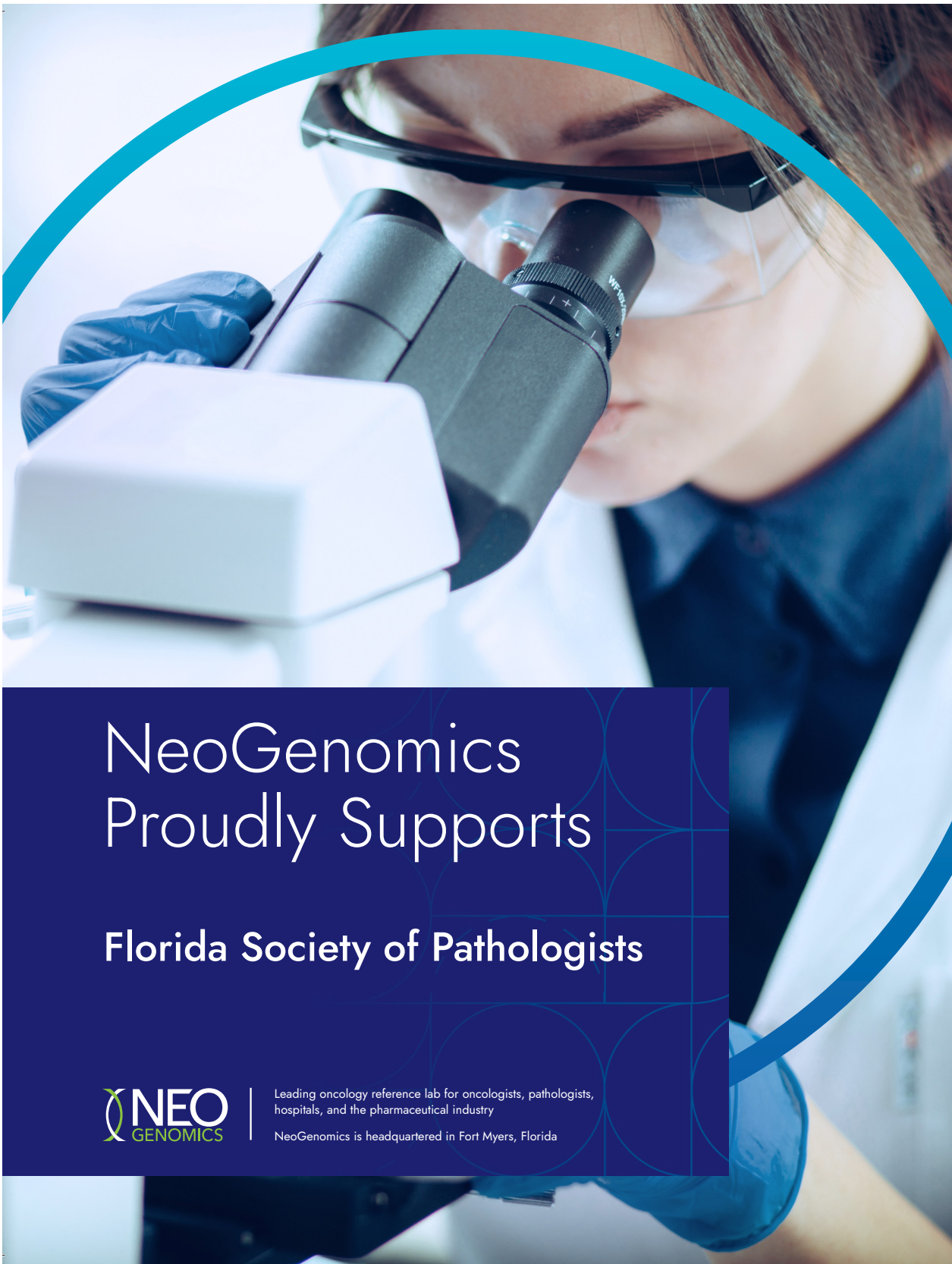
*Performance prevalence-adjusted to histopathologic subtypes. 3-category performance aligned to clinical decision-making in Bethesda III and IV nodules.^{1,5}

Patient management decisions are based on the independent medical judgment of the physician and molecular test results should be taken into consideration in conjunction with all relevant imaging, clinical findings, patient and family history, as well as patient preference.

References 1. Lupo MA, et al. *Diagn Cytopathol.* 2020;48(12):1254-1264. doi:10.1002/dc.24564. 2. Ghafouri-Fard S, et al. *Non-coding RNA Research.* 2020(5):88-98. 3. Steward DL, et al. *JAMA Oncol.* 2019;5(2):204-212. 4. Patel KN, et al. *JAMA Surg.* 2018;153(9):817-824. 5. Banizs AB, et al. *Diagn Cytopathol.* 2019;47(4):268-274.

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EDUCATION UPDATES

Join us at the FSP Annual Pathology Conference



Marilyn Bui, MD, PhD
Education Committee Co-Chair



Carmen Gomez-Fernandez, MD
Education Committee Co-Chair

Hello everyone, Happy New Year! Lots of exciting events and opportunities are happening in the educational sphere of FSP in 2023, and it is our pleasure to update you on our plans!

The closely approaching 49th annual pathology conference will take place February 17-19 at Disney's Contemporary Resort.

If you have not yet had a chance to register, do so at [2023 FSP Annual Conference | Florida Society of Pathologists \(flpath.org\)](https://www.flpath.org), trust me, you won't want to miss this! The conference will feature a variety of riveting sessions, symposiums, and events.

"The closely approaching 49th annual pathology conference will take place February 17-19 at Disney's Contemporary Resort."

Featured CME Sessions include:

- Digital Pathology Session: The Future of Pathology hosted by Quest Diagnostics
 - ◇ Digital and AI-Empowered Pathology: Opportunities - Piotr Borkowski, MD
 - ◇ H&E Based Computational Predictive and Prognostic Markers in cancer diagnostics - Juan Retamero, MD
- ◇ Molecular testing in a Digital Pathology Age: decreasing time to treatment - Mark C. Kruzel, MD, MBA
- 2020 WHO Classification of Female Genital Tumors: New Entities and Important Changes – Dr. Bell
- Serous Neoplasms of the Ovary and Fallopian Tube: A Survival Guide – Dr. Bell
- New Entities in Gynecologic Pathology – Dr. Bell
- Diffuse large B-cell lymphoma: An Update – Dr. Medeiros
- Histiocytic and Dendritic Cell Lesions – Dr. Medeiros
- Microscopy Read Slides Session on GI Pathology – Dr. Hernandez Gonzalo
- The Challenge of Evaluating Post-Neoadjuvant Systemic Therapy Breast Specimens – Dr. Schnitt
- Lobular Carcinoma in Situ and Problematic in Situ Lesions – Dr. Schnitt
- Unusual Breast Lesions Every Pathologist Needs to Know About – Dr. Schnitt

Furthermore, the University of
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Miami will host an educational symposium on Interactive GI Pathology: A practical approach to GI biopsies. This symposium will be held Friday, midmorning. Be sure to attend and support one of the strongest pathologist-producing institutions in our state.

Be sure to join FSP for the 75th Anniversary Celebration held Saturday evening of the conference. Come dressed to impress at this black-tie event as we share in the many successes and memories of the

past 75 years of FSP's history. Your \$25 ticket will include a plated dinner, open bar, live band, interactive photo booth and most importantly a special evening shared amongst friends. Tickets can be purchased online when registering for the meeting at [2023 FSP Annual Conference | Florida Society of Pathologists](#). We hope to see you there!

In addition to captivating educational content and fancy evening soirees, FSP will host a business meeting with updates on membership, finance, advocacy as well as a rare and

interesting case session. This agenda is jam-packed with great opportunities to learn new skills, connect with fellow pathologists, and have some fun! We look forward to seeing you all in Orlando this February, and again in Palm Beach this July! Please stay tuned to [Florida Society of Pathologists](#) to register for the meetings and stay up to date with developing details on the summer meeting.

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RESIDENT OPINION PIECE



Anthony “Tony” Tuzzolo, MD
Resident, PGY-3
University of Florida
Department of Pathology

The updated 2021 WHO guidelines for the classification and grading of CNS tumors introduces numerous changes from the previous 2016 edition, including the addition of 22 newly described entities as well as 13 previously classified tumors with revised grading schema. These changes reflect tremendous advancements in brain tumor molecular diagnostics with the identification of clinically relevant genetic alterations. This article will highlight a few revisions that are relevant to adult CNS tumor diagnosis.

One major change is the decision to use Arabic

rather than Roman numerals in tumor grading in order to conform with other subspecialty WHO grading systems. This will also decrease the likelihood of typographical errors when grading within tumor types. Further efforts to increase clarity include updated usage of “not otherwise specified” (NOS) and “not elsewhere classified” (NEC) designations.

“One major change is the decision to use Arabic rather than Roman numerals in tumor grading in order to conform with other subspecialty WHO grading systems.”

The NOS qualifier indicates that there is not enough diagnostic information for a specific diagnosis to be rendered and is often due to lack of available molecular testing. NEC is utilized when a complete work-up has been

performed, but the findings are not compatible with a defined WHO entity. Since some aspects of brain tumor grading are still different from other WHO grading systems, the new designation of “CNS WHO grade” is now used. While these are general changes, the majority of alterations are entity-specific and few entities have undergone as much revision the diffuse gliomas that are now defined as “adult” and “pediatric” types. We will focus on glioblastoma, the most common diffuse glioma in adults, and also mention some changes in meningioma grading.

Concerning glioblastoma nomenclature, while the term “multiforme” was removed by the WHO in 2000, the abbreviation of “GBM” is still considered acceptable. The 2021 WHO guidelines define malignant gliomas based on IDH (isocitrate dehydrogenase) mutational status. Specifically, WHO grade 4 astrocytomas with IDH1 or IDH2 mutations are

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now called “astrocytoma, IDH-mutant, CNS WHO grade 4” while IDH-wildtype tumors are designated “glioblastoma, IDH-wildtype, CNS WHO grade 4”. This distinction reflects the overall better prognosis of IDH-mutated gliomas, even those with GBM-like histological features. On the other hand, IDH-wildtype diffuse gliomas that have TERT promoter mutations OR EGFR amplifications OR gain of 7/loss of 10 copy number may be designated “glioblastoma, IDH-wildtype, WHO grade 4” even without traditional histopathologic features such as microvascular proliferation or necrosis. One caveat for IDH-mutant astrocytomas is that co-existent CDKN2A or CDKN2B homozygous deletions portend a poor prognosis and allow a “CNS WHO grade 4” designation despite a lack of microvascular proliferation or necrosis in some cases. IDH-mutant astrocytomas with significant mitotic activity but without microvascular proliferation, necrosis, or CDKN2A/2B homozygous deletions are now called “astrocytoma, IDH-mutant, CNS WHO grade 3” (with grade 2 tumors lacking significant mitotic activity). Finally, the oligodendrogliomas are

now defined by having IDH mutations and co-deletions of chromosomes 1p and 19q. Both molecular features are included in a final diagnosis of “oligodendroglioma, IDH-mutant, 1p/19q-codeleted, CNS WHO grade 2 (or 3)”.

***“...the
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Concerning meningiomas, 15 histological variants are still recognized by the WHO although there are some notable changes. Meningiomas with rhabdoid or papillary features were previously designated as WHO grade 3 by default; however recent literature suggests that while these variants are commonly associated with more aggressive clinical behavior, this is not always the case. As such, these variants no longer automatically qualify as WHO grade 3 meningiomas without histologic criteria including 20 or more mitoses per 10 high power

fields or frank carcinoma, sarcoma, or melanoma-like anaplasia. Of note, chordoid and clear cell subtypes still qualify as WHO grade 2 by default. Furthermore, a number of newly described characteristic molecular features for meningiomas have been recognized by the WHO. Most importantly, meningiomas exhibiting either TERT promoter or CDKN2A/B mutations are now considered “CNS WHO grade 3” regardless of mitotic activity. Other mutations that do not impact grading include BAP1 (associated with rhabdoid and papillary variants), SMARCE1 (clear cell variant), and loss of nuclear H3K27me3 (worse prognosis).

These entities were discussed due to their frequency in adults and the relative importance of their changes; however this article should not by any means be considered exhaustive. Instead, it is to serve as a primer, outlining how significant these changes truly are. The degree to which the field of surgical neuropathology has advanced in the last few years cannot be understated, and this is reflected in the overhaul in recommendations presented by the 2021 WHO guidelines.



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