

Nordic Course in Virtual Dermatopathology in Reykjavik, Iceland, April 27–28, 2017

ELLEN MOONEY AND ISMINI VASSILAKI, COURSE ORGANIZERS

Introduction

This course was held under the auspices of the NDA. It was directed towards trainees and specialists in dermatology, pathology and dermatopathology and the focus was on clinico-pathologic correlation using virtual slides or whole slide imaging (WSI). It was intended as preparation for two major pending changes: The approval of WSI for routine surgical pathological/ dermatopathological diagnosis, to replace diagnosis using conventional light microscopy and the requirement of European Board Exams and Certification for approval of credentials of medical specialists moving between countries.

Kristofer Thorslund’s review below nicely delineates the program, describes the software and how it was used, and gives his opinion of the course. James Fitzgibbon expands on Kristofer’s review and discusses the coming changes in dermatopathological diagnostics, as well as his view of the necessity of preparatory courses.

The congress venue was the National Museum of Iceland. Total number of participants was 22, coming from Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Ireland, Romania, Holland, and the USA.

The organizers hope to hold a second course in April 2018, as this first one was very well received. Among proposed scientific faculty are experts in pediatric dermatopathology and skin tumors. Lecture topics include genodermatoses, malignant epithelial skin tumors, drug eruptions and connective tissue diseases.



The congress venue: National Museum of Iceland, Reykjavik, Iceland.



Participants and organizers.



The Scientific Faculty: Jacqueline Junkins-Hopkins, Lisbeth Sviland, Ellen Mooney, and Ismini Vassilaki in the Harpa Concert Hall.



Ellen Mooney addressing the course participants.

Voices from the audience



Kristofer Thorslund
Stockholm Sweden

At the end of April I attended the first “Nordic Course in Virtual Dermatopathology” in Reykjavik organized by Drs Ellen Mooney and Ismini Vassilaki. This was a two-day course held at the National Museum of Iceland in an excellent lecture hall.

On the first day we were presented with the virtual platform and given short and informative lectures in different areas of dermatopathology (*Melanocytic lesions, Interface dermatitis, Cutaneous lymphomas and mimickers, Spongiotic reaction patterns, Neutrophilic dermatoses, Bullous diseases, Follicular and sebaceous tumours, and Dermatological signs of systemic diseases*) as well as interactive case presentations. The second day we were faced with a self-assessment exam of 20 cases. The software that was used was an interactive virtual platform where digital slides can be easily viewed along with clinical photos and clinical information. Best of all is that it was possible to save the case discussions and lectures as pdf-files. The quality of these files is so high that I can use them as reference literature in both dermatology and dermatopathology in the future.

The course instructors were Ellen Mooney, Iceland, Jacqueline Junkins-Hopkins, USA, Ismini Vassilaki, Sweden, and Lisbeth Sviland, Norway. This course is the start-up for the forthcoming increasing demand for self-assessment exams. The virtual platform is a very useful tool for these exams.

This course was something special and I hope the course will come back in the future.



James Fitzgibbon
Cork, Ireland

Let me just start by saying that the venue in Reykjavik was splendid. The cases and speakers were excellent as was the case material. The case presentations were sublime. The images were clear and easily interpretable.

We are on the cusp of one of the major breakthroughs of our era, i.e. *Virtual Dermatopathology*. With FDA approval of the Philip’s digital slide processor and cognizant of the fact that Europe is ahead in adapting Virtual Dermatopathology, it is indeed fitting from a geographic location, that the NDA and the Nordic Institute of Virtual Dermatopathology in Iceland should continue to hold this meeting, and be a center for re-training Dermatopathologists from both sides of the Atlantic on the use of this technology.

The Virtual technology will have a positive impact on standardizing the H&E stain in histology laboratories throughout the world and provide day to day feedback on the quality of staining, thickness, and unacceptable artifacts which could impede interpretation.

The advantages for archiving, conference presentation and ease of referral are well established. The technology is already in use for day to day signout of cases and will eventually replace the microscope, as we know it, throughout the developed world.

It is therefore vital to have centres such as the Nordic Institute of Virtual Dermatopathology in Iceland, to take a lead in training Dermatopathologists on both sides of the Atlantic.



Courtesy of Meet in Reykjavik.