



Summary of Consensus Statement on Effective Communication of Urgent Diagnoses and Significant, Unexpected Diagnoses in Surgical Pathology and Cytopathology

	Urgent Diagnosis	Significant Unexpected Diagnosis	Comment
Definition	A medical condition that in most cases should be addressed as soon as possible.	A medical condition that is clinically unusual or unforeseen and should be addressed at some point in the patient's course.	
Consensus Statement	Each institution should develop policies and procedures.	Each institution should develop policies and procedures.	The policy should be distinct and separate from critical result/panic value policies in clinical pathology with the expectation of a different timeframe for communication.
Determination of specific diagnoses	Should be made in collaboration with clinical staff. In hospitals, approval of appropriate institutional body is desired.	Heavily dependent on pathologist's judgment, but examples may be given.	Because of lack of consensus, specific diagnoses to be included in this policy should be agreed upon locally.
Communication of diagnoses	Because the diagnosis may directly impact patient care in the near term, we recommend that communication occur within the same day the diagnosis is made.	Communication should occur as soon as is practical, but pathologists may exercise their judgment as to the appropriate timing of communication.	Direct verbal communication is recommended; however, other satisfactory methods of communication may be established and validated.
Documentation of communication	In the original pathology report, as an addendum, in the electronic medical record, or by other mechanisms.	In the original pathology report, as an addendum, in the electronic medical record, or by other mechanisms.	Documentation should include the individual's name who discussed the case, the time and date, and when appropriate, the means of communication.