

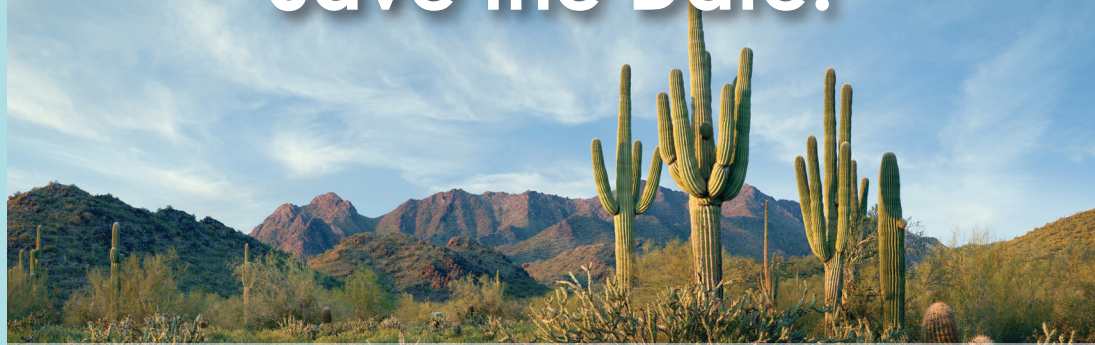


AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR
CYTOTECHNOLOGY

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the Voice

Save the Date!



2013 Annual Scientific Conference
April 19-21, 2013 • Hotel Valley Ho • Scottsdale, AZ

The American Society for Cytotechnology, as the collective voice for the profession, is committed to defining and promoting the profession of Cytotechnology.

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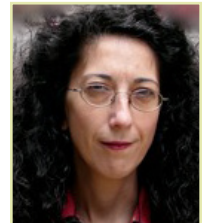
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Allen Achievement in
Writing Award

Volume XI
Issue 2
March 2013

Moving Towards a Green Lean Healthcare System

By Audrey Smith, BSc MIBMS, ASCT International Liaison



"Making Healthcare Green" is the new motto for the Gibraltar Health Authority's (GHA) Environmental Task Group (ETG), which was founded on March 10, 2011. The Group's membership comes from volunteers from a cross section of GHA departments. Two members of the Pathology Department, both with a particular interest in the environment and conservation, are actively involved in the group: Dr. Alex Menez, Pathology Services Manager, who serves as ETG Chairman and Biomedical Scientist; and Ms. Xenia Duarte, who was appointed ETG Secretary.

According to Dr. Menez, "The Group was started in response to a paper circulated by the then CEO regarding grassroots environmental movement, which in turn became a corporate program for environmental stewardship". Bringing forward this initiative proved to be a challenge, due to cultural opposition caused by misinterpretation of a main principle drive of the ETG, which was "not to cut costs, but to save costs along the line as well as saving resources". In 2012, a government with a strong commitment to environmental issues, as defined in their manifesto, was elected. With the backing of the Minister for both Healthcare and the Environment, the development of environmental policies became more amenable, both at a departmental and corporate level.

This unique advantage has resulted in the implementation of a series of schemes and initiatives in the pathology department. These include: a new tailor-made IT system called MODULAB, <http://www.systemlabsw.com/Products/Modulab.aspx>, creating a paperless multidisciplinary

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Upcoming Meetings

North Carolina Society of Cytology 2013 Spring Meeting

April 5-6

Hilton Garden Inn, Raleigh-Durham/Research Triangle Park, NC

For more info visit www.nccytology.org

Upper New York State Society of Cytology (UNYSSC) Annual Spring Meeting

April 6, 2013

Best Western PLUS inn of Cobleskill, Cobleskill NY

MSC 2013 Spring Meeting

April 12 & 13

Hilton Minneapolis, Bloomington, MN

The Vermont/New Hampshire Cytotechnologist Association, Inc. (VTNHCA) Tristate Cytology Conference

May 4, 2013

University of New Hampshire Conference Center, Durham, NH

2013 ASCLS-CNE Annual Convention

May 7-9, 2013

Rhode Island Convention Center, Providence, RI

Baystate Medical Center Annual Conference

May 10, 2013

The Log Cabin, Holyoke, MA

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Editorial Deadline: April 29, 2013

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Volume XI – Issue 4

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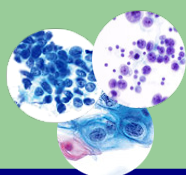
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ASCT Services, Inc. would like to extend an invitation for ASCT members to join its survey team.



CMS/ASCT Services, Inc. Survey Team



Any supervisory level cytotechnologist or cytopathologist in good standing with ASCT is eligible to apply.

To obtain application information, please email Beverly Haigler-Daly, Project Director: beverly.haiglerdaly@asctservices.com.

The Humble Glass Microscope Slide

By Jennifer Gordon, CT(ASCP)



For those of us who practice cytology, the glass microscope slide is a purely utilitarian object; a necessarily transparent,

hard surface upon which cells of diagnostic interest can be permanently mounted for present visualization and future archiving. Although we may acknowledge a certain aesthetic appeal to the well-prepared, well-stained cytology specimen (or perhaps even the "artistry" of the occasional exuberant pleomorphic adenoma); *The Art and Science of Cytopathology* notwithstanding, most of us don't exactly consider glass microscope slides to be true *objects d'art*. However, a few weeks ago I discovered, to my great surprise, that there was a time in the not so distant past when the glass microscope slide was a medium of veritable artistic expression. It was an artist's canvas of sorts and actually a popular medium of entertainment for the middle class.

My foray into the curious history of this object, largely taken for granted by us cytologists, began when an ASCT colleague mentioned to

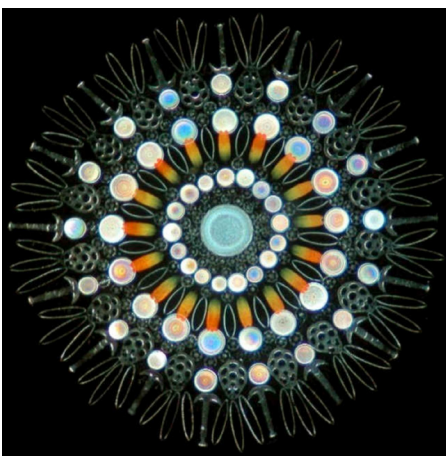


Figure 1: Arranged slide, Watson & Sons made from diatoms, butterfly scales, and plates and anchors of *Synapta*. Photo provided by Howard Lynk – www.victorianmicroscopeslides.com

me that she'd seen decorative Victorian microscope slides for sale online. She exclaimed over the beauty of these slides and suggested I see them for myself. Intrigued, I poked around a little further, and quickly found myself a visitor at www.victorianmicroscopeslides.com. The website greets you first with the slogan, *A Cabinet of Curiosities* and what looks like an image from a kaleidoscope (see figure 1). This image is actually a geometric (and microscopic) arrangement of butterfly scales, diatoms (microscopic unicellular algae), and calcified structures from the endoskeleton of a species of sea cucumber. As I perused this fascinating site further, I learned that *Cabinet of Curiosities* refers to an amateur Victorian era microscopist's home collection of slides. Indeed, according to Victorian slide enthusiast Howard Lynk - founder and proprietor of victorianmicroscopeslides.com, in the late 1800's, especially in England, the general public had a grand fascination with viewing the natural world through the lenses of privately owned microscopes.

Although the basic light microscope as we know it was more or less invented in the 1600's, it wasn't until the 1800's that technological improvements in optics and other mechanical aspects of the microscope allowed for the manufacture of instruments that provided convenient, reliable viewing. Coincident with these developments was a widespread interest in the natural world, as discoveries were made in various fields of science. In response to the public's fascination with exploring the previously invisible and unknown worlds of microscopic organisms and cellular structures, entrepreneurs began preparing and marketing glass microscope slides displaying a wide variety of "specimens" including whole organisms such as insects and dia-



Figure 2: Victorian era slides. Photo provided by Howard Lynk – www.victorianmicroscopeslides.com

toms as well as the microscopic parts of organisms such as cells, pollen, spores, hairs, and scales (figure 2). In addition, enthusiasts enjoyed preparing their own slides from "samples" collected from their local environments and further travels.

While visiting victorianmicroscopeslides.com I explored specimens prepared in the 1800's. Curiously, these specimens are macroscopically ornate and decorative (perhaps not entirely surprising if you're familiar with Victorian architecture). Upon "gross" inspection, the slides are like small collages, with the specimen mounted in the center and framed by colorful patterned papers that have been perfectly sized to cover the unused space around the specimen. The use of these decorative papers actually had a practical rather than solely aesthetic origin. Prior to the development of modern mounting media and coverslips, microscopic specimens were covered with a small piece of mica or thin glass and the paper overlays were glued on to hold these covers in place. Even as other methods of mounting specimens were developed (namely the use of resin from the Canadian Balsa tree), slide mounters continued to enjoy producing elaborately decorative

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The Unannounced Inspection

By **Connie Erdmann, CT(ASCP)**

In 2006, the College of American Pathologists (CAP) started conducting unannounced biennial laboratory inspections. Prior to that year, CAP scheduled their inspections with laboratories ahead of time. According to the CAP website, the unannounced inspection "...will not only reassure the public about the objectivity and integrity of the inspection process, but will also give laboratories the opportunity to demonstrate ongoing compliance with CAP standards." 2006 was also the year that The Joint Commission, the organization that accredits hospitals and other healthcare facilities, began its unannounced inspection process, although hospitals are only surveyed every three years.

With unannounced inspections, labs are able to "blackout" 10 days within the inspection window. Even if you plan your time-off around those 10 days something unexpected may arise, such as an illness, or a family commitment; there will always be the possibility that inspectors may show up when you're not there to defend your practices.

Allow me to share a personal experience. I am the supervisor of a small cytology lab located in a hospital. Back in the days of scheduled inspections, we once had an inspection scheduled for the same time my husband and I were to return from a trip to Prague. We had planned to return the evening before the inspection. I was scheduled to teach a class the morning of the inspection, so I knew that the inspectors were likely to show up before I could be there. I had put together a stack of documents that I knew the inspectors would want to see, along with a paper Procedure Manual. Everything was in order. However, while we were in Europe,

the pathologist leading the team of inspectors assigned to our lab contacted our medical director and asked if it would be okay to come a day early as he had a conflict on the following day. They showed up at our lab while I was flying back home, blissfully unaware of their arrival, and unreachable by any means. The hours I'd spent arranging my stack of documents were useless. The inspecting pathologist apparently didn't look through it. From what I heard later, he had our pathologists and cytotechnologists looking for all kinds of documents, many of which they couldn't find, but all of which were contained in the stack I'd prepared before leaving. Our staff knew of the existence of the documentation, they knew we were following the regulations, but they weren't always sure where to find the paperwork and evidence of compliance. Ooooh, so frustrating! I had to fill out post-inspection forms for deficiencies, even though we were actually compliant. I learned a very important lesson: it's not enough for me, as the supervisor, to know where to find things. It's essential that other members of the department know where to find the files and forms that document our compliance.

I put on my thinking cap and came up with a simple, low-tech solution: an expandable file. I have the file organized by CAP checklist category, so I have a section for "Interlaboratory Comparisons," one for "Quality Management," and so on. For each checklist item I have a form: "Cytopathology Documentation, CAP Survey Checklist." Each form contains the following information: CYP reference number, documentation included, original documentation location, policy and procedure reference, and notes.

Relevant samples of documentation are paper-clipped to each form when documentation is applicable. For example, CYP .00125, PT Participation, reads:

For laboratories subject to US regulation that perform gynecologic cytopathology, the laboratory and all individuals who examine gynecologic preparations participate in the CAP Gynecologic Cytology PT Program (PAP PT) or another proficiency testing program in gynecologic cytopathology approved by CMS.

Under the "Evidence of Compliance" section, it reads:

- Written policy describing proper handling of PT failures including retesting, remedial training, and imposition of limitations on slide examination AND
- Records that the laboratory is enrolled and all personnel have successfully completed PT AND
- Records of retesting, remedial training and imposition of limitations, if applicable.

In the expandable file, on the form for CYP .00125, under "Documentation included" I've written "PT test list," and I've attached a copy of our "PAP PT Enrollment Verification" to the .00125 form. I've described where the original documentation can be found and cited the policy and procedure relevant to proficiency testing in our facility.

Initially, filling the files with the forms and documents was a time consuming process, but now that it's put together it's been relatively easy to maintain. Of course, CAP regularly changes the checklist, so there are new items added and

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Inspection

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old ones deleted every year. Still, the file has been a fairly efficient way to coordinate inspection materials. For labs accredited only by CLIA/CMS, the regulations are not changed as often; so the maintenance of those files would only require trading out more up-to-date samples of compliance documents. Of course all labs are subject to CMS inspection, and those surveys are often unannounced. I haven't been through a CMS survey in my lab since adopting the expandable file strategy, but I'm hopeful the system would be beneficial in that circumstance as well.

Another important element of this strategy is making sure that several people in the lab know where to find the expandable file. It doesn't help much to go through the

work of organizing the materials if you're the only one who knows where to find them. I explained our process to the other supervisors during a supervisor meeting, and I sent out an email to several of my coworkers and pathologists explaining where the file was located.

In my humble opinion, it's important for all cytotechnologists and cytopreparation technologists to familiarize themselves with the regulations concerning cytology. Reading of CAP checklists and CLIA regulations as a part of continuing education is a great activity for all laboratory employees. In our lab there have been a number of times when one of our cytotechnologists found a problem with our procedures, or came up with a better or more efficient way to improve our processes. Allowing more of your cytology team to play a part in the compliance ef-

fort is beneficial; the employees of your lab are the best experts you have available for understanding the processes you follow, they are your most valuable resource for quality control, assurance, and improvement.

If you work in a laboratory, inspections are part of your reality. If you're doing good work, you want to be able to demonstrate your compliance to those who come to verify that you are following the regulations. I recommend that you find a system that streamlines the process for the inspectors as well as the laboratory employees. ASCT has a number of webinars that are relevant to inspection preparation and may be helpful. These informative on-line tutorials provide up-to-date information at a very reasonable price, especially for ASCT members. Visit our website at www.asct.com for details.

Upcoming Webinars

May 23, 2013 • 2:00pm EST

Personnel Management in the Cytology Lab

By Maria Friedlander MPA, CT(ASCP)
Lab Manager, Cytology Service Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center

Educational Objectives:

- Review requirements for personnel working in the cytology laboratory
- Discuss process, activities and records associated with personnel management including developing job descriptions, job orientation, job training, competency assessment, performance evaluation, continuing education and professional development, with a focus on cytology personnel
- Identify the role and responsibilities of lab management in each of the above activities



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The Humble Glass

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slide paper covers. The specimens are typically labeled in a flowery, calligraphic hand, each letter penned with a flourish; certainly quite a contrast to the computer generated labels found in the typical pathology laboratory today.

The artisans who prepared these early “commercial” slides did not limit themselves to simply displaying single objects of interest. Sometimes they combined a variety of microscopic objects to create a beautiful composite design such as the one that greets you on victorianmicroscopeslides.com. These “exhibition” mounts are quite strikingly beautiful and demonstrate the remarkable skill and creativity of those who prepared them. Figure 3 shows one such specimen, which features a variety of eggs from different butterfly species painstakingly arranged in a symmetric starburst pattern. Today, such microscope slides from the Victorian era are collectors’ items for enthusiasts such as Howard Lynk, who expertly photographs them for display on his website.

Lynk’s interest in Victorian microscope slides began when he purchased a 1960’s vintage research grade microscope for recreational use. Natural science has been



Figure 3: Arranged slide, Watson & Sons “Eggs of Butterflies, Etc.” shown in detail. Photo provided by Howard Lynk – www.victorianmicroscopeslides.com



Figure 4: Victorian era histology slides. Photo provided by Howard Lynk – www.victorianmicroscopeslides.com

a lifelong hobby of his and he had long dreamed of owning this particular microscope. As he searched for lenses and other parts for the ‘scope, he discovered prepared microscope slides from the Victorian era and became fascinated not only with the content of the slides themselves, but with the historical context of the times in which they were created. Not only can you view striking examples of the myriad of specimen types prepared for popular viewing during the 1800’s on Lynk’s site (including plants, crystals, diatoms, fossils, insects, and minerals), but you can also read about the artisans who prepared these specimens both for private and academic purposes, as well as about the general history of “popular microscopy”. Visiting victorianmicroscopeslides.com is like visiting a natural history museum dedicated to all things Lilliputian.

It is interesting to note that many of the techniques used today in modern microscopy in the Pathology laboratory were developed during the time that these exquisite slides were being prepared. The flurry of interest in the microscopic world, both for popular entertainment as well as for more academic and medical purposes, led to important technical advances in the display and staining of cellular specimens. The microtome was developed at this time in order to make very thin slices of tissue for microscopic diagnosis (figure 4), and it was during this time that many of the

cytology and histology stains still in use today were developed, some of them by amateur microscopists. The mucicarmine stain for mucin used for adenocarcinoma (and *Cryptococcus neoformans*) was developed at this time, as well as hematoxylin and eosin, silver stains for organisms, and many others.

In our day-to-day lives we don’t often pause to appreciate how the tools of our trade came to be. We certainly don’t think of glass slides as a means of artistic expression (figure 5). We have a rich history that, thankfully, individuals such as Howard Lynk have taken the time to preserve and make available to the public. The variety and artistry found in Victorian era microscope slides is truly impressive and definitely something worth checking out.

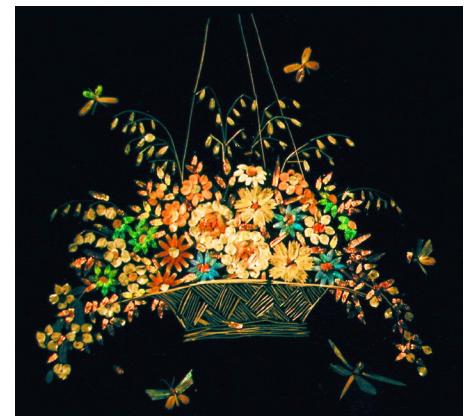


Figure 5: “Flowers, Grasses, Ferns, Insects, and Birds” probably made by H. Dalton, for W. Watson & Sons, London, c. 1880s. Imaged using combinations of Darkfield and or Reflected lighting techniques. Photo provided by Howard Lynk – www.victorianmicroscopeslides.com

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www.victorianmicroscopeslides.com

Progress in the Development of Microscopical techniques for Diagnostic Pathology, www.nsh.org/sites/default/files/march 2009 art.pdf

A Review of Techniques Used in the Preparation, Curation and Conservation of Microscope Slides at the Natural History Museum, London, www.natsca.info/sites/natsca.info/files/The Biology Curator Issue 10 Supp.pdf

Green Lean Healthcare

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laboratory; online requesting; Q-Pulse <http://www.q-pulse.com>, a paperless quality management system; and recycling paper.

ETG Secretary, Ms Duarte explained that the role of the group "is to identify initiatives that are already in place in the organization, consolidate them, promote within the organization that they exist, and maybe build upon them".

The Group has already implemented duplex (double sided) printing in an attempt to reduce paper usage across the organization. This also led to the purchase of recycled paper as a result of the introduction of corporate green procurement. Over a six month period a large reduction in paper usage, together with economic savings, was observed. Figure 1 shows the pyramid of paper that was saved as a result of this initiative.



Figure 1. Thinking Green Conference

The plan of action taken by the IT and Corporate Services Directorate resulted in end of day default switch off of IT systems/computers in designated areas, the usage of second generation photocopiers from the provider, and an ink cartridge recycling service.

Similarly, the switch from hard copy to electronic journals has just been completed, and as of this year, the health and clinical journals that the GHA currently subscribes to can be accessed online (E-Journals). This has not only resulted in a reduction of paper usage but provides an efficient service directly to the

healthcare professional for their personal and Continuous Professional Development (CPD) needs; with a view to developing an E-library, thus saving space.

Other initiatives include promoting the work of the group via a campaign to reduce energy consumption and encouraging alternative modes of transport (e.g. travel by local bus service, cycling or walking). This has a huge impact on society by creating invaluable public space to cater to a small community whilst targeting obesity.

Gibraltar's strategic geo-political location in the Mediterranean means that it can effectively explore and benefit from its surrounding natural resources to reduce its carbon footprint. In fact, the GHA Department of Estates and Clinical Engineering has been particularly involved in introducing numerous ingenious energy saving measures even prior to the ETG initiative taking place and being consolidated. Derek Alman, Director of Estates and Clinical Engineering, said that a number of measures have been introduced to conserve energy. One such measure is a green cooling system that uses seawater as the primary cooler and a carbon dioxide monitoring system in each room. The system measures the activity in the rooms and hence air conditioning levels can be adjusted accordingly. This "set back system" aims to reduce the air conditioning requirements during times of least activity in the departments.

Currently the GHA is exploring other avenues to benefit and make use of maximum sunlight to further reduce its carbon footprint. This pilot project is the installation of a solar thermal plant which would decrease the consumption of diesel in the boilers feeding the calorifiers. Another initiative in the pipeline is replacing all current conventional bulbs, fluorescent lights, and spotlights with an LED lighting system; and changing the

current hand drying system to a more eco-friendly alternative that complies with health and safety regulations. This would prove to be of low impact to individual departments, but highly effective on the whole.

Cultural change in a small community such as Gibraltar is always a challenge. The way to facilitate this shift towards giving healthcare a green makeover is by gradually introducing stages that are not overwhelming; hence patients and staff can slowly embrace this positive transformation. It goes without saying that education, and educational programs, are paramount. This has already resulted in an energy conservation poster campaign across the organization to raise awareness. In addition, GHA participation in the "Thinking Green" conference, held in October 2012 <http://www.thinkinggreen.gov.gi>, provided the perfect opportunity to promote and market the Group to the community (Figure 1). The Group is planning on expanding this campaign to local schools by making environmental literature available at the GHA Pathology stall at the Annual Careers Fair.

The GHA School of Health Studies is also participating in this project and is currently in the process of developing an E-Learning pilot using MOODLE www.moodle.com for the theoretical aspects pertaining to mandatory training courses. Awareness of environmental issues and procedures shall also be included during staff mandatory training.

Green doesn't end behind pathology laboratory walls. It is extended to the local community. The department has always promoted recycling, and lab equipment we no longer have a use for has been donated to school science labs. We have also donated microscopes to both primary schools and to the Gibraltar Museum and

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Green Lean Healthcare

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Botanical Gardens, furthering natural history research.

Furthermore, our green philosophy reaches beyond borders. The GHA occasionally receives donations of equipment from benefactors. Morocco is a stone's throw away from Gibraltar. For many years, the GHA has had strong ties with North Africa and has since donated repaired and/or refurbished equipment to the "Croissant Rouge Marocain" (their Red Cross equivalent). In March 2012, we as a department donated redundant equipment to the Red Crescent Hospital of Tetouan in Morocco via this means. Amongst many items we donated were a fridge, water bath, incubator, autoclave, microscopes, computers, and pipette fillers (Figure 2 and 3). From across the organization beds, radiology equipment, vital signs monitors, endoscopy equipment, and operating tables were also donated; as was the case in 2008 to Monserrat following the devastating volcanic eruptions.



Figure 2: Donations to Red Cross Tetouan, Morocco



Figure 3: Donations to Red Cross Tetouan, Morocco

In fact, the GHA has just donated an ambulance, wheelchairs and other healthcare equipment to Chefchaouen, a city in northwest Morocco, situated in the Rif Mountains. The GHA also supports The Vine Trust Diamond Jubilee Project (www.vine-trust.org). A third medical ship, an ex-Royal Navy tender, is currently being refitted in Gibraltar with GHA repaired/refurbished medical equipment with the aim to provide primary care facilities in the Lake Victoria basin in East Africa.

Going green is not a matter of being "en vogue" or "trendy". Instead, it's investing in a new model for delivery of healthcare based on synergy sustained between the community and the environment. Clearly, the key to designing and developing a green healthcare system stems from a collective effort from all departments across the organization acting on the identification of the specific needs in the community (Figure 4).

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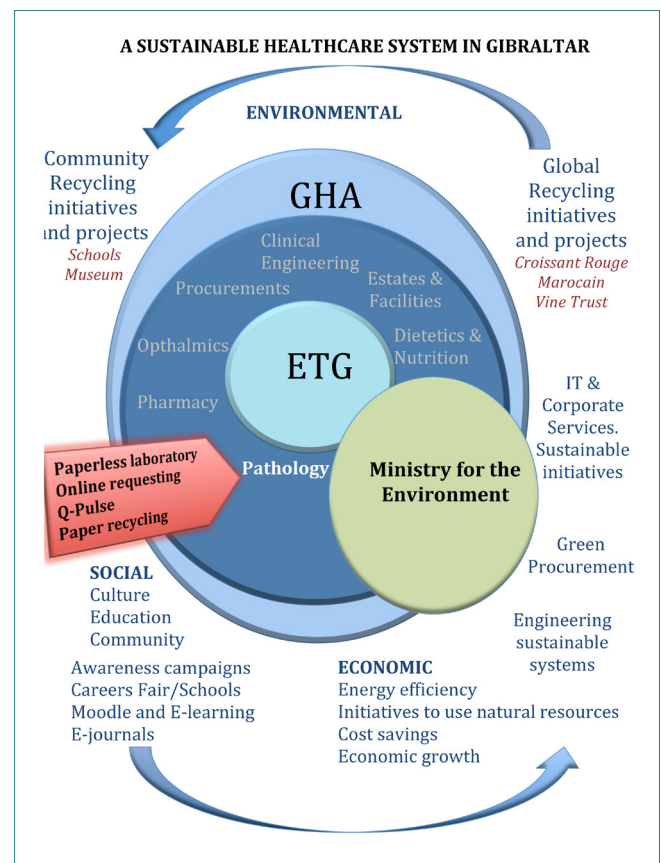


Figure 4: Diagram: a sustainable healthcare system in Gibraltar.

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International Meetings

18th International Congress of Cytology

May 26-30, 2013 • Paris

Organizer: International Academy of Cytology (IAC)

www.cytologyparis2013.com

Histopathology, Cytopathology and Forensic Pathology Scientific Meeting

June 6-7, 2013 • London

Organizer: Association of Clinical Pathologists (ACP) / British Association for Cytopathology (BAC)

www.britishcytology.org.uk

Biomedical Science Congress

September 23-25, 2013 • Birmingham, England

Organizer: Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS)

www.ibms.org

Allen Achievement in Writing Award

Members! *The Voice* editors are always seeking new articles; whether creative, fun or educational. In addition to the opportunity to see your name in print, anyone who submits an original article is eligible to win the Allen Achievement in Writing Award. This year's award will be presented at the **2013 ASCT Annual Scientific Conference, April 19-21 in Scottsdale, AZ.**

The Allen Achievement in Writing Award is the newest Award to be granted by the ASCT Foundation. This award is named after Karen Allen, who was the 2002-2003 President of the ASCT and served as the editor of the ASCT NEWS from 1996 to 2004. She established this award in 2004 to acknowledge and encourage excellence in writing. All articles with a byline published in *the Voice* are eligible for the annual award with no application necessary. Selection by a panel will be made based on the quality of writing and the subject matter.

Winners of this award receive \$100 and a commemorative plaque.

Past Allen Achievement in Writing Award Recipients

2005	Beverly Haigler Daly	2009.....	Michele Smith
2006	Thomas Scherbl	2010.....	Katherine Mycek
2007	Mary Ann Friedlander	2011.....	Carol Colasacco
2008	Barbara McGahey- Frain	2012.....	Tim Feit

Reminder!

ASCT 2013 Annual Scientific Conference

April 19-21
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ASCT's Annual Conference is just around the corner! Join us at the Hotel Valley Ho in Scottsdale, Arizona for a fun and educational weekend. Registration for the 2013 Annual Conference is now open. For more information, please visit our website at www.asct.com. Be sure to register before March 19 to receive a reduced rate!

