

MY LAB

DYNAMIC HISTOPATHOLOGY SERVICE

Trainee Specialist Biomedical Scientist **Megan Clarkson** gives a guided tour of her laboratory at Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust.

Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust is part of the Northern Care Alliance, known for its deliverance in safe, high-quality and reliable care to all the local communities and residents it serves. The trust's mantra, "saving lives, improving lives", is something we do with excellence. A recent merger with Oldham Hospital resulted in a larger geographical reach, which allows the pathology services to share and expand on best practice, rolling it out to all service users and patients in providing the best quality care and enforcing our mantra on a wider scale.

The histopathology department is the Greater Manchester centre for neuropathology, upper GI surgery, and sub-regional centre for dermatology and renal medicine. These specialist disciplines require the brightest in the field to run and maintain the service. I am proud to say the staff in the department are just that. They comprise a diverse, dynamic and dedicated workforce, which handles the pressures of a busy specialist lab with grace. The department consists of 15 pathologists, 21 biomedical scientists, 11 receptionist and 14 laboratory assistant staff, who go above and beyond the call of duty to help maintain the ISO 15189-accredited service, while running an additional core routine histology and electron microscopy service.

My role involves rotation through all aspects of the routine histology service, including handling renal and muscle



biopsies, frozen sections, a broad range of immunocytochemical tests and special stains on a monthly rota basis. The department makes use of 4 BenchMark Ultra platforms used for an array of over 150 diagnostic prognostic and predictive antibodies. We also provide an in-house DDISH service, with excellent breast core turnaround times. The laboratory is currently in the validation process of a new PDL1 antibody to add to our repertoire. The laboratory is expecting new equipment in the coming months, some of which includes four new tissue processors and the Ventana special stains machine.

The department is an IBMS-accredited training laboratory, offering training and development opportunities in the form of

registration, specialist, higher specialist and dissection portfolios, amongst others. I am currently undertaking my Specialist Portfolio and Masters at the same time, which is something that I would not be able to do without the positive support network the department has.

We collaborate with Lancaster University in order to give students the opportunity to gain invaluable experience, both theoretically and practically, in a real-life working environment as part of their undergraduate degree. The department receives consistent positive reviews and feedback from service users, patients and staff, reiterating the hardworking, positive and uplifting environment that we thrive in at Salford Royal. 