

## Greater Manchester advances digital pathology with Sectra

**NHS laboratories across Greater Manchester have begun to go-live with technology that will transform how pathologists across the region collaborate – helping to improve timely diagnosis of cancers and other illnesses.**

Stockport NHS Foundation Trust, which hosts one of seven NHS laboratories in Greater Manchester, has now become the first in the region's pathology network to complete technical go-live of the digital pathology module of an enterprise imaging solution from Sectra. The same system is already being used by every trust in the region to view and report on radiology imaging.

Stockport's technical deployment will be rapidly followed by other go-lives in the region, and a period of extensive clinical testing, that will eventually allow NHS pathologists across the entire of Greater Manchester to swap microscopes for digital images that can be rapidly accessed from anywhere by in-demand specialists. It is anticipated that enhanced utilisation of the region's pathology workforce will help to drive faster test results for patients.

Dr Shailesh Agrawal, clinical lead for Greater Manchester's digital pathology programme, and clinical director at Stockport NHS Foundation Trust, said: "This is so important for our speciality. Cellular pathology is a very physical process that has traditionally required pathologists to be in an office with a microscope. Digital pathology allows us to work from almost any location, and will help us achieve our goals for collaborative working across Greater Manchester's pathology network."

Current pathology processes involve glass slides of patient tissues being packaged and transported to different locations, so that different specialists can review. Delays like this will be removed once deployment across the region is complete, with digital images being instantly available through the region's picture archiving and communication system, or PACS.

Dr Agrawal said: "It means we can use capacity across our region to best effect, more easily share sub-speciality expertise across organisations, and potentially tap into growing national digital pathology initiatives. Clinically it is a huge help. Staff can work in more modern ways. Many needed to isolate during the pandemic – with digital pathology they can report from home. Many consultants around retirement, who no longer wish to work in a hospital, will still be able to contribute at a time that suits them. Whilst simple workflow and easily being able to see priority cases, will mean faster and appropriate turnaround for patients."

The deployment represents a significant move towards an integrated diagnostic record for patients across Greater Manchester. Eight trusts in Greater Manchester have already completed go-live of the same imaging system for radiology, which now contains x-rays, CT scans, ultrasound, MRI scans and an extensive range of other diagnostic images for patients in the region. Combining this with pathology imaging will provide pathologists with a more complete understanding of the patient, helping them to focus on the right areas in their reports.

Beth Tumilty, programme lead for Greater Manchester Imaging and Pathology Networks, said: "The digital pathology go-live comes at an important time, when elective recovery and cancer diagnostics represent a huge focus in Greater Manchester, and nationally. Digital pathology will be a huge enabler of our region's efforts to deliver faster cancer diagnoses for patients."

The deployment will lay the foundations for the application of AI into the pathology environment. It is also expected to support new ways of training the next generation of pathologists in the region.

Jane Rendall, managing director for Sectra in the UK and Ireland, said: "Greater Manchester is breaking down silos and creating an integrated approach to diagnostics at scale. Technology is only one part of this ambition. But it is positive to see clinical appetite for making use of imaging technology to help fulfil the region's goals around how its clinical and diagnostic professionals can work collaboratively. This has enormous potential to enhance patient care and I look forward to seeing benefits emerge."

## ENDS

### **About Sectra**

With more than 30 years of innovation and approaching 2,000 installations worldwide, Sectra is a leading global provider of imaging IT solutions that support healthcare in achieving patient-centric care. Sectra offers an enterprise imaging solution that provides a unified strategy for all imaging needs while lowering operational costs. The scalable and modular solution, with a VNA at its core, allows healthcare providers to grow from ology to ology and from enterprise to enterprise. Visit Sectra's website to read more about Sectra and why it's top-ranked in ['Best in KLAS'](#).

### **About the GM Pathology Network**

The Greater Manchester Pathology Network is a collaborative pathology network across the seven GM NHS provider organisations which include:

- Bolton NHS Foundation Trust
- The Christie NHS Foundation Trust
- Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust
- Northern Care Alliance NHS Foundation Trust
- Stockport NHS Foundation Trust
- Tameside and Glossop Integrated Care NHS Foundation Trust
- Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

The network strives to deliver better patient care across clinical and diagnostic pathways and address health inequalities across the region.