



VCU Medical Center

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**TO:** Medical Staff

**FROM:** Hope Richard, MD, PhD *AR*  
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**DATE:** August 18, 2023

**SUBJECT:** Delay in Anatomic Pathology Reporting due to Severe Staffing Shortages

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**Cytopathology**  
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Bryce Hatfield, M.D.  
Valentina Robila, M.D., Ph.D.

**Dermatopathology**  
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The Anatomic Pathology laboratory is currently experiencing significant staffing challenges at the faculty and staff level. There is an aggressive recruitment effort in effect for open positions; however, we anticipate that our staffing challenges will continue for the remainder of the year.

**Currently, the turnaround time for non-complicated biopsy results (not requiring stains, ancillary studies, or outside expert consultations) may be delayed up to 14 business days. The final reports for complicated biopsies and large surgical resections may be delayed 3-4 weeks. The cytology lab is not currently experiencing delays in processing or reporting.**

We are sending a subset of cases to LabCorp for processing and interpretation to increase the overall efficiency in the lab and will continue to do so until staffing is appropriate.

If clinically indicated, surgical pathology and cytopathology results may be rushed by ordering the test “stat.” Please only order cases that are truly urgent as “stat” in order to maintain the integrity of the designation. Comments added to the order indicating the purpose of the biopsy or resection will also help us triage cases appropriately. **Timely communication with the pathologist involved in the case to alert them of the clinical situation is welcomed and we will do all we can to expedite getting a final diagnosis.** If you are unsure of which pathologist is taking care of a particular case, please call 8-PATH and a representative will help direct you.

We appreciate your partnership in caring for our patients and your support during this challenging period.