

# Ongoing Laboratory Erosions in NI Hospitals

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# Objective

- ▶ Laboratory Specialties
- ▶ Continuous erosion of Campbell River Hospital Laboratory
  - ▶ Effect on laboratory & pathologists
  - ▶ Effect on patient care
- ▶ Possible solutions (resolutions)



# Laboratory specialties

- ▶ Anatomical Pathology (AP)
- ▶ Clinical Pathology (CP)
  - ▶ Hematopathology / Transfusion Medicine
  - ▶ Medical Biochemistry
  - ▶ Microbiology
- ▶ General Pathology (GP - working in smaller /Community Hospitals)
  - ▶ Anatomical Pathology
  - ▶ Clinical Pathology



# Continuous laboratory Erosions

- ▶ Since 2006 there has been constant, multiple attempts in centralizing the clinical pathology work and its funding to Victoria.
  - ▶ In 2006, VIHA ordered all the outpatient clinical pathology samples to move to Victoria without any consultation. CR lab Director (AT) had to physically stop the courier and empty its load.
  - ▶ Many of these attempts faced with significant resistance from the pathologist and clinicians.
  - ▶ However, VIHA managed to centralize many of the tests,
    - ▶ one at a time by ordering the test to go to Victoria (mostly when the pathologist was away)
    - ▶ Replacing our old machines with the less capable ones so we were forced to centralize the tests.

# Continuous laboratory Erosions

- ▶ Effect of centralization:
  - ▶ Less work in CR lab would reduce budget allocation to the lab as a whole (eg. Unable to hire more techs...)
  - ▶ It transfer the FTE of pathologists manpower and its funding to SI pathologists (conflict of interest)



# Continuous laboratory Erosions (effect on the lab)

- ▶ CR lab workload until March 31<sup>st</sup>:
  - ▶ 2.4 FTE (AP) + 0.6 FTE (CP) = 3.0 FTE
- ▶ CR lab workload as of April 1<sup>st</sup>:
  - ▶ 2.4 FTE (AP) + 0 FTE (CP) = 2.4 FTE
- ▶ By taking the CP funding, VICPCC (with help from VIHA) has paralyzed CR lab for many years to come by blocking us to hire a third General Pathologist.



# Continuous laboratory Erosions (effect on the lab)

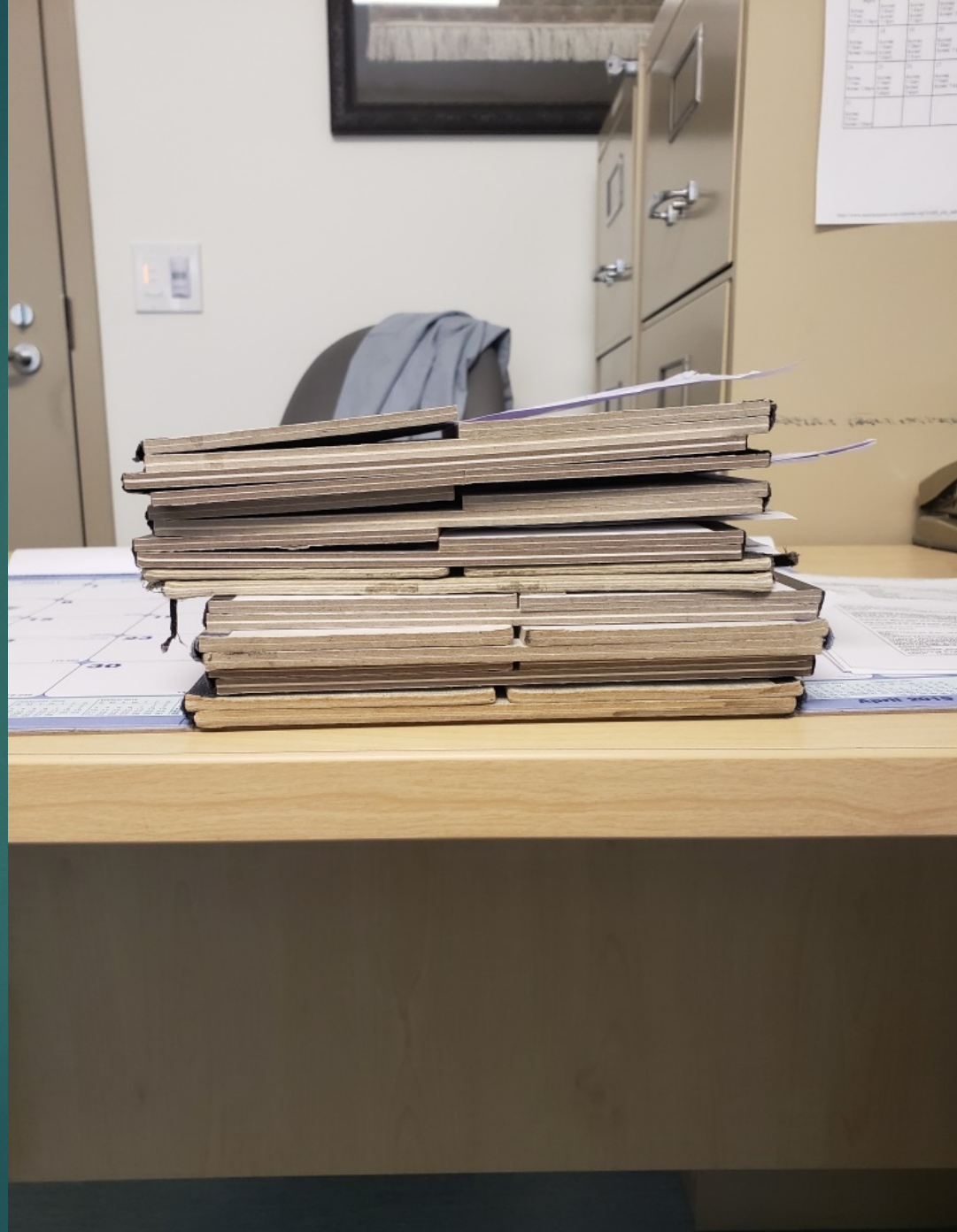
- ▶ General Pathologists pattern of practice has changed overnight.
- ▶ As a teaching Hospital, we would not be able to teach medical students and residents.
  - ▶ As a family medicine resident training in Campbell River, having access to in house general pathologists is valuable. I have already, on multiple occasions utilized the skills and expertise of Dr Tabarsi for my own education. I do not think that a remote consult would give me the same depth of learning. Learning face-to-face with an expert has helped me interpret difficult lab values and also taught me about being a good steward of lab services.
- ▶ Relationship between pathologists and technologists become quite disconnected and made estranged and awkward. Both pathologists and technologists are demoralized and traumatized in this demeaning situation created by VIHA.



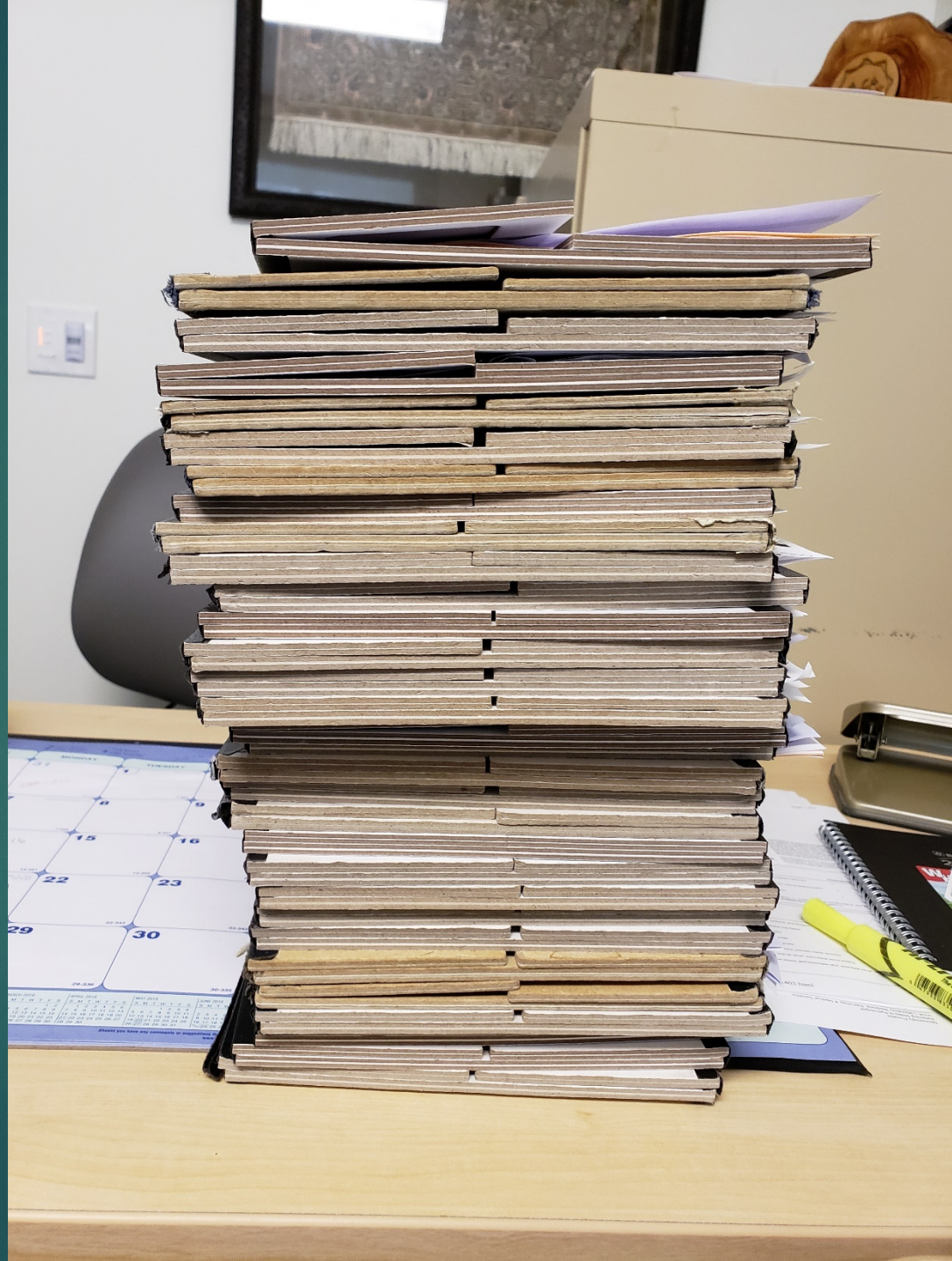
# Continuous laboratory Erosions (effect on the patient)

- ▶ Loss of urgent and emergent service to our clinicians, especially affecting the ICU and ER patients.
- ▶ No contingency plan for road closure.
- ▶ Patient now have to go to Nanaimo for their Bone Marrow biopsy.
- ▶ The Indirect negative impact on AP due to inability to hire a third pathologist is quite alarming.
  - ▶ TAT is going to worsen.
  - ▶ Quality of service is going to suffer significantly.











# Continuous laboratory Erosions

How could VIHA, a government agency, facilitate and enable this unfair treatment by a private for-profit corporation towards the pathologists, technologists and ultimately patients in NI?

# Solution/Resolution

- ▶ The following motion by the medical staff in Campbell River passed unanimously (71-0) prior to April 1<sup>st</sup> that so far has been ignored by VIHA:
  - ▶ In order to sustain and enhance the local delivery of pathologists services and prevent further erosion of said services, we, the medical staff of Campbell River Hospital, strongly support the continued provision of the currently provided services by the local general pathologists and recommend the hiring of an additional general pathologist in Campbell River.



# Solution/Resolution

- ▶ I would like the CSRHD Board to pass the following motion:
  - ▶ In order to sustain and enhance the local delivery of pathologists services and prevent further erosion of said services, the CSRHD Board strongly support the continued provision of the currently provided services as of March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019, by the local general pathologists and, in alignment with Campbell River MSA, recommend the hiring of an additional general pathologist in Campbell River.



# A note from one of the technologist

By removing the pathologists as a resource you are asking us to do more with less. They are our colleagues, resources, and friends. We used to be able to walk down the hall and ask for help. I have on many occasions brought slides to Dr T and he has always taken the time to go through it with me. This is valuable education that all staff will lose. When we send a slide off site we lose the feedback and knowledge of the patients clinical situation. This information is valuable to the education of staff here. We are feeling a huge loss that is impacting all staff here. We also feel that by removing the pathologists from core we have lost a very important voice for the work we do here. They have been an advocate for us through many changes.



Thank you