(Re-)Certification for Pathology in Germany

Wilko Weichert

on behalf of the German Society of Pathology
......some general data
Pathology

...an ageing profession

Warth et al.,
Virchows Archiv, 2015
Recruitment of young pathologists

In Germany Pathology Departments usually have a shortage of applicants

➢ General availability of physician positions excellent

➢ (Almost) no one is studying medicine to become a pathologist
### Pathologists in Europe 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Staff positions (A)</th>
<th>Resident positions (B)</th>
<th>Minimum duration of training (yrs)</th>
<th>Staff per Resident (A : B)</th>
<th>Inhabitants (m) (C)</th>
<th>Inhabitants per Staff (C : A)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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Increasing workload

Warth et al., Virchows Archiv, 2015
Pathology education is a two tier system in Germany

Resident training with board certification

Continuous education/re-certification
Pathology education is a two tier system in Germany

Resident training with board certification

Continuous education/re-certification
Residents in Germany

- University: 48%
- Outpatient setting: 11%
- Hospital (non-university): 35%
- Other: 6%

Male:
- University: 57.5%
- Outpatient setting: 7.5%
- Hospital (non-university): 32.5%
- Other: 2.5%

Female:
- University: 42.5%
- Outpatient setting: 13.75%
- Hospital (non-university): 36.25%
- Other: 7.5%
......the Curriculum
Applications for residency must have...

- an accomplished medical university training (usually 6 years, one of it is a practical year)
- passed the third state exam
- The approbation, which is the formal allowance to practice as physician in Germany

*Residency usually starts between age 24 and 30*
Modular system

according to Weiterbildung zum Facharzt für Pathologie (Muster-WO 2003, Fassung 2013 BÄK)

- Basic module (24 months)
- Module General and Surgical Pathology (48 mo)
- Module Neuropathology (48 mo)
Basic module (24 mo)
according to Weiterbildung zum Facharzt für Pathologie (Muster-WO 2003, Fassung 2013 BÄK)

**Autopsy**
- Preparation techniques
- Histology
- Epicritical evaluation
- Case demonstration

**Macroscopic dissection**
- Preparation techniques
- Description
- Foto documentation
- Organ specific guidelines

**Histopathology**
- Gastrointestinal
- Gynecological
- Urological

**Molecular pathology**
- Techniques
- Interpretation

**Frozen section diagnosis**
- Techniques
- Interpretation
- Communication

**Cytology**
- FNA cytology
- Exfoliative cytology (Gyn)
- Body cavity cytology
Module General and Surgical pathology (48 mo)
(according to Weiterbildung zum Facharzt für Pathologie (Muster-WO 2003, Fassung 2013 BÄK)

Autopsy
Preparation techniques
Histology
Epicritical evaluation
Case demonstration

Necessary cases: 150

Since autopsy numbers are dramatically declining this poses a problem although we are constantly reducing the number of necessary autopsies

Macroscopic dissection
Preparation techniques
Description
Foto documentation
Organ specific guidelines

Necessary cases: n.s.
Module General and Surgical pathology (48 mo)

(according to Weiterbildung zum Facharzt für Pathologie (Muster-WO 2003, Fassung 2013 BÄK))

Necessary cases: 15,000

Histopathology

- Gastrointestinal, including liver/pancreas
- Endocrine
- Gynecology
- Urology
- Head/Neck
- Soft Tissue/Bones
- Transplant
- Derma
- Hematology (w/o cytology)
- Kardio/pulmonary
- Padio

Necessary cases: 500

Frozen section diagnosis
- Techniques
- Interpretation
- Communication
Module General and Surgical pathology (48 mo)  
(according to Weiterbildung zum Facharzt für Pathologie (Muster-WO 2003, Fassung 2013 BÄK)

Cytology (esp. Gyn) is outpatient setting  
therefore numbers are often problematic since University Departments do not have enough cases

Necessary cases:  
10.000 (5.000 Gyn)

➢ Molecular pathology usually done by Molecular biologists 
➢ Residents are only „visiting“ 
➢ Novel techniques (MPS, others) are complex and thus hard to train

Molecular pathology
Techniques interpretation

Necessary cases: N.S.
In Departments for General Pathology often basic and advanced modules are combined.
......board certification and academics
Pathology Residents in Germany and scientific ambitions

*General interests*
Integration of clinical training and academics

MD thesis

Habilitation (postdoctoral lecture qualification)

Assistent/Associated Professorship (W2)

Full Professorship/Chair (W3)

Change of color = usually change of institution
Two (sometimes combined) models for clinical, research and teaching education exist.
Pathology education is a two tier system in Germany

Resident training with board certification

Continuous education/re-certification
There is no such thing as a mandatory re-certification in Pathology in Germany...

...however...

1. The Physician Accreditation Body (Ärztekammer) in Germany has a mandatory system in place which is based on the collection of qualification points (CME analogue)

2. The IAP Germany has a very broad continuous educational program which is widely used
Physician Accreditation Body (Ärztekammer) qualification points

Each board certified physician has to collect within 5 years 250 qualification points to maintain his/her board certification.

Points are awarded for conferences, attendance to lectures, CME articles, etc.

It is entirely up to the physician, in which field he/she wants to collect these points, e.g. a pathologist can attend a conference on neuropsychiatry to fulfill these requirements.
Dedicated (continuous) teaching programs

International Academy of Pathology – German Division Inc.

Education training program (average number of events per year):

- 20 Full day tutorials
- 2 Workshops Molecular Pathology
- 2 Junior Academies for pathologists in training
- 1 International Junior Academy (aimed at pathologists in training and in the post training period).
- 1 Baltic German Symposium for Pathology held in Latvia, Estonia or Lithuania
- 1 Winter Course Hematopathology
- 1 Winter Course Cytopathology
- 1 Academy for Cytopathology
- 1 Symposium (Annual Meeting of the GDIAP)

259 teaching series on different organ systems are available as part of the self-training program

- Approx. 1200 teaching series per year are borrowed as part of the self-training program

...plus most Pathologists read the curricular overview articles in „der Pathologe“ (6 per year)

For all this Accreditation points are awarded.
International Academy of Pathology – German Division

...app. 1,900 pathologists in Germany
Pathology education in Germany - key points

➢ Resident training is based on a flexible modular system, with mandatory modules and case numbers

➢ Integrating clinical training and academics remains a major challenge

➢ Continuous education in mandatory for physicians but not on a subspeciality level

➢ Highly frequented programs for continuous education are implemented mostly through the IAP - German Division
Thanks for your attention

Franz Henckendorf

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