the diagnostic pathology journal DIAGNOSTIC PATHOLOGY

13th European Congress on Digital Pathology Proceedings, diagnostic pathology 2016, 8:192
ISSN 2364-4893
DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.17629/www.diagnosticpathology.eu-2016-8:192

Proceedings

SP01.05 | **Opening**

History Of The European Conference Series On Digital Pathology: Memories And Perspectives

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The 13th European Congress on Digital Pathology is the most recent conference of a European Conference series that started in Heidelberg 26 years ago. It reflects to a continuous, unbroken exchange of technological and medical information. The digital world was still in its childhood at the date of the first conference. Technological research investigated in electronic communication and digital acquisition of coloured pictures. Frozen section services and its need for fast information transfer between different institutes and the surgical theatre dominated the application of technological development. Consecutively, all issues of telepathology were in focus at the start and the following conferences. The pioneers of that time tried to convince their colleagues of the promising perspectives and the increasing technological influence on pathology.

It took several conferences in this series until the majority of or nearly all pathologists recognized the power of this new technology. Retrospectively, some conferences remained at the scientific level of their preceding meetings, whereas others substantially promoted knowledge and application in research and routine pathology.

At present, digital pathology is well implemented and mainly used for education and enhancement of molecular biology methods such as next generation sequencing, predictive diagnosis, or risk associated investigations. Implementation in routine diagnostic pathology (virtual slides, etc.) is on its way.

In addition, digital pathology moves forward to explore still unknown areas in surgical pathology, and tissue – based diagnosis. These include considerations on morphology, function and order of structures, which can detect potentially endangered factors or repair of live threatening breakdowns, as well as biostatistics, data mining, or self recognition algorithms.