



Agilent Customer Testimonial: Dako Omnis

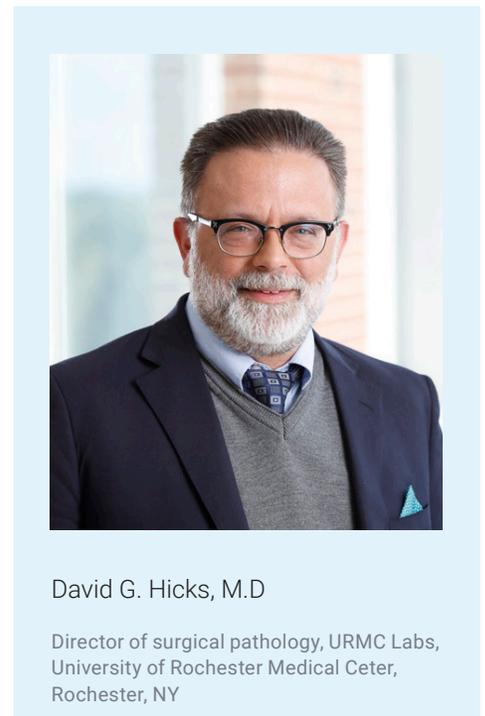
URMC Labs, University of Rochester Medical Center, Rochester, NY

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Dako

Background

The University of Rochester Medical Center is one of the top academic medical centers in the United States. The URMC Surgical Pathology Department is a modern and highly sophisticated facility that serves a network of several hospitals and centers, led by Director of Surgical Pathology, David G. Hicks, M.D., and a staff of seven. The laboratory examines a broad range of both clinical and research samples, and has a volume of approximately 60,000 surgical pathology cases per year, and around 40,000 IHC slides.

In 2013, the lab added Dako Omnis to their IHC and ISH lab setup as a way to improve overall efficiency, decrease turnaround times and handle their ever-increasing slide volumes. Interviews were conducted in October 2015 with Dr. Hicks and with IHC Supervisor Loralee McMahon to find out how their two Dako Omnis instruments have had an impact on their lab.



David G. Hicks, M.D

Director of surgical pathology, URMC Labs,
University of Rochester Medical Center,
Rochester, NY

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- **David G. Hicks, M.D.**
Director of Surgical Pathology, URMC
Labs, University of Rochester Medical
Center, Rochester, NY

A user-friendly instrument

Dako Omnis was designed to be a fully automated, walk-away solution with an intuitive interface that lets the user know when any action is needed. For the laboratory staff at URMC, there was an extremely short learning curve, and the instrument has proven exceptionally easy to operate in daily use.

“Loading slides is so simple. The instrument tells the technician exactly what to do, and what’s needed for the run. The touch screen is very user-friendly and allows us to easily track everything, particularly when a pathologist needs information on a particular case, which we can provide effortlessly for him or her in just minutes,” said Ms. McMahon.

“Dako Omnis has made the workday easier and better for our technicians,” said Dr. Hicks. “We have been able to adjust to and cope with increases in our slide volumes because of these two new instruments.”

Significantly decreased turnaround times

Before Dako Omnis, slides that came in late in the day to the lab at URMC were pushed until the next day for processing. Now, slides are processed continuously throughout the workday.

“Our turnaround time has been decreased by approximately 12 hours,” says Ms. McMahon. “At first, the pathologists couldn’t believe how fast they were getting results. This ultimately means quicker answers for patients, and has sometimes meant that a patient’s treatment can start on a

Friday rather than having to wait an entire weekend. We’ve had quite a few pathologists thank us for providing them with results so fast.”

Dr. Hicks agrees. “We now get answers sooner. People wonder how we can achieve such a quick turnaround and a big part of that is due to Dako Omnis.”

Urgent cases are also not a problem anymore, thanks to Dako Omnis. The technicians can now load single urgent patient cases at any time without compromising on their throughput, disturbing their workflow or having to wait for the next batch. “We get urgent cases a few times a week, and now we can easily accommodate them,” says Ms. McMahon. “This makes a huge difference, particularly with the pediatric cases.”

An evened-out workflow and increased productivity

With the continuous flow processing available on Dako Omnis, the lab technicians now have much more consistency in their daily routine, even with peaks in volume. And a reduction in the hands-on time required with Dako Omnis frees up the technicians to do other things, like work on research projects.

“We now are able to work steadily throughout the day, and whatever is left at the end is put on the instrument overnight. The Dako Omnis instruments are working much longer than we are,” said Ms. McMahon.



Figure 1. (from left to right) Loralee McMahon, Jason Ridgeway, David G. Hicks, M.D. and Qi Yang

"We constantly feed the instruments and constantly get finished slides off," she continued. "It's really great, since it has flattened and 'leaned out' our workflow. I don't think we could ever go back to how we did things before Dako Omnis. There's much less stress now."

Slide quality

Dako Omnis is equipped with an exclusive new technology called Dynamic Gap Staining, which uses rapid reagent distribution across the slides and switches to continuous movement of reagents during reagent incubation and washes. This process increases the consistency of the slides and prevents common staining artifacts, such as patchy staining, edge effects and air bubbles. There are also a host of robust processes within the instrument, like temperature-controlled reagent and staining conditions and the automatic mixing of reagents right before they are needed, which further ensure consistent results.

These things have made a big difference for the Surgical Pathology Department at URM.

"Our staining quality and staining consistency with Dako Omnis are very good," said Ms. McMahon. "We get a better slide in a faster time, which is great."

"Dako Omnis gives us consistent and reliable quality," agreed Dr. Hicks. "Our stains are crisp and sharp, and we have less folding and lifting. We also have many fewer repeats due to less tissue loss. I can't remember the last time I've repeated anything."



Figure 2. Qi Yang operating Dako Omnis

Summary

Dako Omnis: Reliable and very fast.

Ms. McMahon was asked to summarize her experience with Dako Omnis in three words. "I'd say 'reliable,' 'fast...well actually very fast,' and 'quality,'" she said. "I've been contacted by many labs about Dako Omnis, and I've given them my highest recommendation."

Dr. Hicks described his experience by saying, "We've had excellent customer service from Dako and consistent, reliable quality from Dako Omnis. And it's been fun, going from being a seed site to putting Dako Omnis into our daily operations. I have no regrets...I would do it all again in a heartbeat."

Exceptional service

The Dako team works very closely with the Surgical Pathology Department to ensure that any issues or needs that arise are met, and met quickly.

“Dako is a company that stands out from the crowd due to their outstanding customer service and support. They are great at responding to our needs, and that means a lot. Their responsiveness has been truly amazing.” said Dr. Hicks.

Ms. McMahon concurred. “Our service from Dako has been wonderful. If we need them, they are here quickly, and will answer any crazy questions that we might have. And they do what they say they will do. That is important,” she said. “With Dako, nothing unexpected comes up. The price they say is the price they mean, and this is not the case with some other vendors.”

Dr. Hicks also pointed out the savings that they have been able to realize, due to Dako Omnis. “We’ve also seen cost savings, which in turn makes us look good. Like most labs, we are asked to justify everything we do and cut costs even with increasing volumes. Having consistent quality, fewer repeats and increased productivity have been huge advantages for us.”

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