

## Novel use of Google sites to create a distributed toolkit for a hematopathology residency training program in Canada

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The current communication and resource paradigm in most residency programs involves a patchwork of email communications, a residency training handbook, various electronic or paper documents, and in-person communication. These resources are often found in different locations, and it can be difficult to ensure that they are all up to date. Not all information reaches all residents and, despite the existence of a central contact point for the program, not all information is received there. Therefore, having a distributed and dynamically updated resource could help by giving all members of the program the ability to contribute to the resource.

Our hematopathology residency program at Dalhousie University reports the creation of a novel distributed resident resource using adapting Google Sites. The core hematopathology residency at Dalhousie University consists of 3 active residents, 7 faculty, 2 secretaries, and 1 program assistant. Numerous residents rotate through on a regular basis.

In October 2008, a pilot internal website using Google Sites was developed, and used both Google Calendar and Google Documents applications. Selective modification and viewing privileges were given, as some documents were locked and could not be read by all. The site included areas such as "rotation specific objectives," "high resolution schedule," "academic resources," "canned goods," "file repository" and a practice examination question and case database. In addition, the website could be edited by anyone with proper privileges.

During the period October 2008 to February 2009, there were 356 visits featuring 1435 page views and 4.03 pages per visit. Weekday visits were more common, qualitatively. There was positive feedback on the concept; however, some staff and residents did not like having to click to access information.

Overall, this is a unique application of commonly available web applications to facilitate residency program communication. There were immediate benefits, including the ability of staff, residents and support staff to inform one another about events and deadlines as well as to provide a forum where program-specific objectives, "canned" comments, and resources could be edited. This application of Google has not previously been described in the literature, is scalable, and has no cost associated with it.