



SONIC  
HEALTHCARE

Quality is in our DNA

# Sonic Reports

Issue 1 | 2019



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## CEO Message

On a recent visit to the USA, I had the privilege of meeting with more than 200 pathologists, as well as leaders and staff at most of the 32 practices that comprise Aurora Diagnostics – the newest addition to the Sonic Healthcare family. It was abundantly clear that Medical Leadership is very much a key component of Aurora's culture, a defining characteristic that they share with all of us at Sonic Healthcare, together with the commitment to deliver the highest quality medical services to healthcare providers and their patients. The talent, dedication and passion of Aurora's people were clearly evident, and the experience provided me with an opportunity to reflect, once again, on the crucial role that our people play in defining our brand and its embodied promise of service excellence.

In many respects, Sonic is the sum total of our people – our skills, experience, commitment and compassion. In joining Sonic, the staff of Aurora Diagnostics have enriched our organisation considerably.

This edition of Sonic Reports celebrates just some of the genuinely inspiring people who make Sonic the great company that it is today. From our Medical Leadership, which starts with divisional Chief Executive Officers, to the academic and professional achievements of many of our staff, through to the round-the-clock dedication that shines through in routine day-to-day practice and in the face of adversity when we encounter natural disasters, our people are what make Sonic great.

We now number 37,000 staff, including almost 1,000 pathologists, 200 radiologists and thousands of medical scientists, technicians, radiographers and nurses. Our primary care and occupational health divisions also partner with around 2,350 general practitioners at more than 240 centres across Australia.

It is an honour to lead each and every one of you and to support you in the delivery of outstanding medical and diagnostic services, which now reach more than 110 million patients each year. We are truly a formidable force for good and a trusted and highly respected healthcare provider on the world stage. I salute you for your ongoing commitment and dedication to Sonic and all those whom we serve.

**Dr Colin Goldschmidt**  
CEO, Sonic Healthcare

# Hot off the press



## Sonic Healthcare UK welcomes Dr Rachael Liebmann

Sonic Healthcare UK is pleased to welcome Dr Rachael Liebmann as its new Group Medical Director. Rachael is Vice President of the

Royal College of Pathologists and a Consultant Breast Histopathologist at Queen Victoria Hospital, Sussex. She has been an NHS consultant for more than 20 years and has held a number of senior leadership positions, including membership of the South East Coast Clinical Senate Council and the Advisory Board of the Faculty of Medical Leadership and Management. In 2015, Rachael was shortlisted for Clinical Leader of the Year by *Health Service Journal*, and was voted one of the world's 100 most influential pathologists in *The Pathologist's* 2015 and 2018 Power Lists. Sonic Healthcare UK CEO, David Byrne, says: "Rachael's experience and insight into the industry are second to none. Her in-depth understanding of both the clinical and practical realities of running a world-class pathology service means she is perfectly placed to help us continue operating at the very highest level."

## UK Bowel Cancer Screening update

Health Services Laboratories (HSL) recently launched its regional faecal immunochemical (Q-FIT) GP testing service, in collaboration with North London Partners and North Central London's Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP). The service is part of a wider, UK adoption program that receives clinical guidance from the National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE) and which uses technology similar to that employed by Sonic's Australian Pathology division (OC Sensor). HSL hopes this test will improve both screening uptake and analytical quality across its testing region, ultimately leading to the improved detection and treatment of bowel cancer.

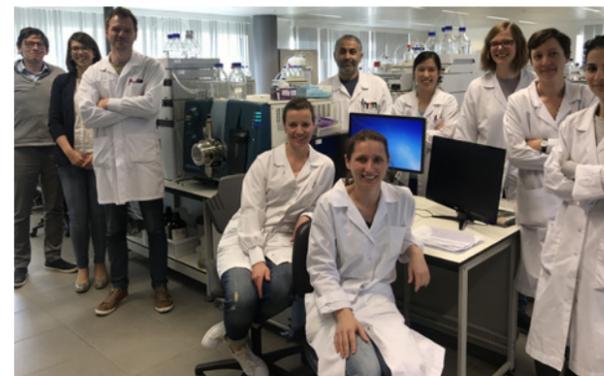
## Sonic Healthcare UK strengthens its academic leadership

HSL is excited to announce the appointment of Professor Bryan Williams as Chair of its Research and Innovations Board. Bryan takes over the role from Professor Stephen Powis, who has taken up a national leadership role as Medical Director of NHS England. Bryan has a wealth of experience in academic and clinical leadership and is currently a Chair of Medicine at UCL and Consultant Physician at UCLH. Bryan is also a director at the National Institute for Health Research Biomedical Research Centres, a partnership between UCLH and UCL, one of the leading biomedical research universities.

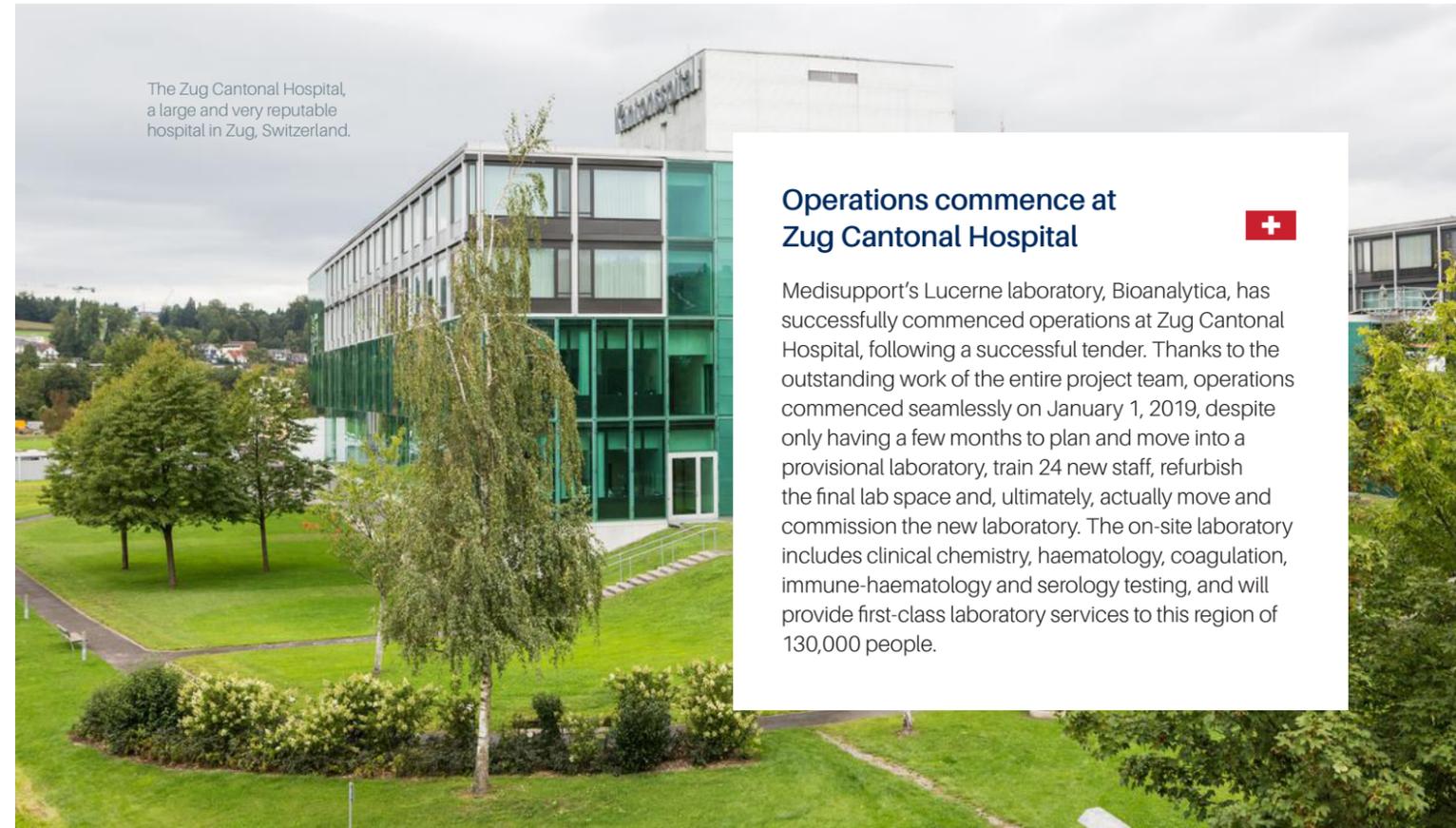
## Tandem mass spectrometry at AML's toxicology lab

Tandem mass spectrometry coupled to liquid chromatography (LC-MS/MS) has many advantages over classic gas (GC) and liquid chromatography (LC) techniques, including faster, more sensitive and specific testing, together with automated sample preparation and the ability to measure multiple analytes simultaneously. The toxicology lab of AML Belgium first introduced LC-MS/MS (4500 QTrap®, Sciex) in 2014, pairing the technology with a liquid handler.

Initially, LC-MS/MS methods for vitamins A, E, B1, B6 and 36 drugs of abuse (and their metabolites) were introduced. In the last five years, the AML toxicology lab has expanded significantly and now has three additional LC-MS/MS instruments and another liquid handler. In January, 2019, AML completed the transfer of vitamin B1 and B6 methods from LC to LC-MS/MS. With 60% of all analyses now performed using LC-MS/MS, AML has been able to achieve marked improvements in quality, sample throughput and turnaround time.



The AML Toxicology team



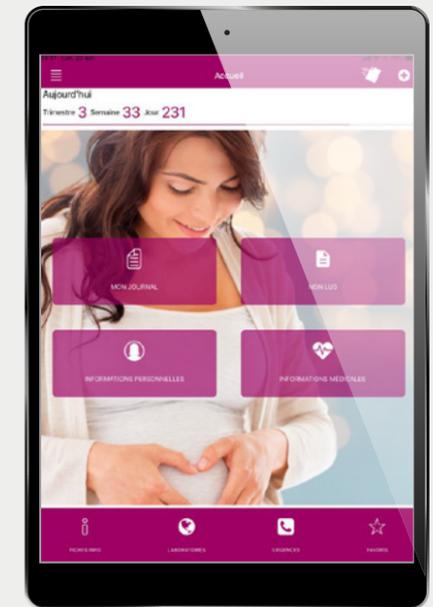
The Zug Cantonal Hospital, a large and very reputable hospital in Zug, Switzerland.

## Operations commence at Zug Cantonal Hospital

Medisupport's Lucerne laboratory, Bioanalytica, has successfully commenced operations at Zug Cantonal Hospital, following a successful tender. Thanks to the outstanding work of the entire project team, operations commenced seamlessly on January 1, 2019, despite only having a few months to plan and move into a provisional laboratory, train 24 new staff, refurbish the final lab space and, ultimately, actually move and commission the new laboratory. The on-site laboratory includes clinical chemistry, haematology, coagulation, immune-haematology and serology testing, and will provide first-class laboratory services to this region of 130,000 people.

## 'BabySoon' app in final testing phase

BabySoon is a mobile app that is an enriched, digital maternity log (called pregnancy record or mother's pass in some countries). Developed in-house by the Medisupport team, final testing is underway for a formal launch at the Swiss gynaecologists' congress in June, 2019. This innovative solution will allow pregnant women to combine the typical content of a maternity log, such as lab results, ultrasound images, appointment dates, etc., with practical and lifestyle items, including personal notes, photos, dietary, emergency and other information. For the gynaecologists, the app will upgrade a traditionally manual element to the digital age and improve communication with both their patient and the lab.



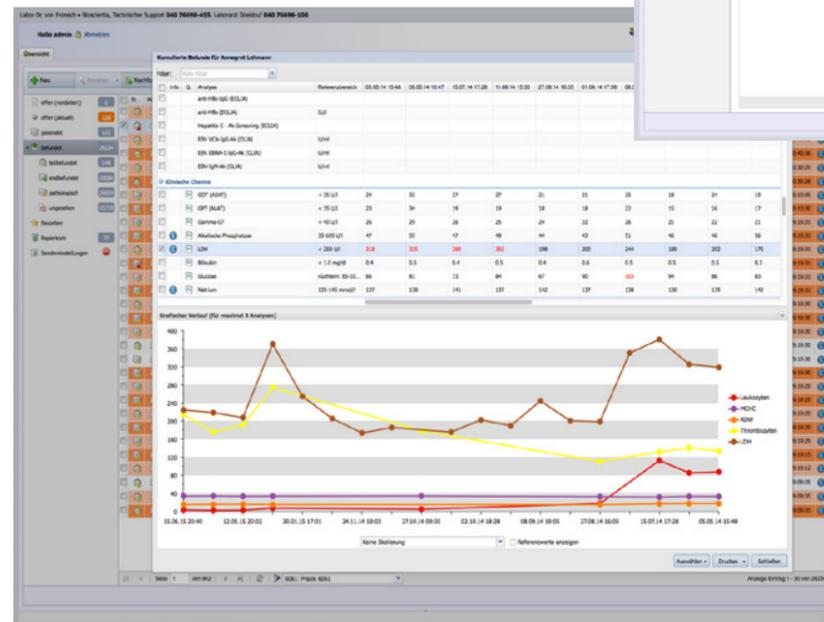
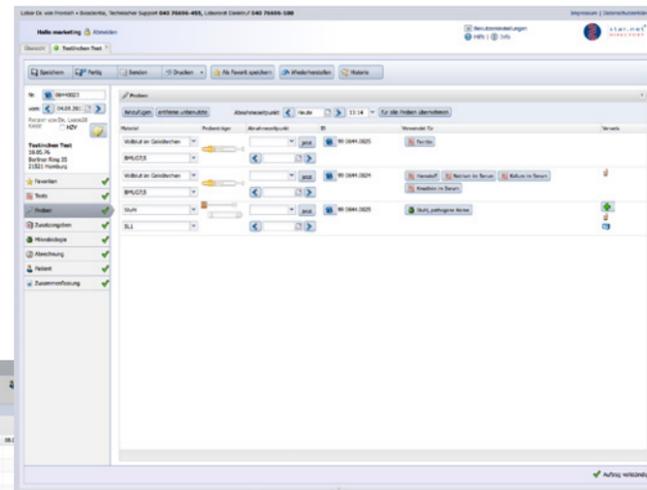


## Successful lab relocation in Northern Germany

In February, 2019, Medizinisches Labor Nord moved to a completely renovated building in the centre of Kiel, a city situated in the most northern region of Germany. Medizinisches Labor Nord offers services to referring GPs and specialists in Kiel, as well as doctors in the greater area of Schleswig Holstein, the German federal state adjacent to Denmark. The laboratory relocation was supported by an enthusiastic team from several Sonic laboratories in Germany, especially Labor Lademannbogen in Hamburg. As a result of these efforts, the move went unnoticed by referrers – except for the change in address. The new location will provide state-of-the-art services, such as order-entry with star.net® Labor, certified on-site lectures and a walk-in laboratory for patients.

## New major release of order-entry software

The latest version of star.net® Labor was released in Germany in April, 2019, providing its 15,000 daily users with new features that include email notification of critical results, support of complex insurance contract settings, graphical user interfaces for laboratory support issues and referrer customisations.





**Dr Ged Foley**

CEO, Sonic Clinical Services

Dr Ged Foley has been Chief Executive Officer of Sonic Clinical Services (SCS) since May, 2017, after serving as Chief Medical Officer then Chief Executive Officer of the SCS subsidiary IPN Medical Centres. Ged obtained his medical degree at the University of Liverpool (UK) in 1988 and then moved to Australia, where he worked in general practice. He became CEO of IPN Medical Centres in 2015, bringing an extensive knowledge of rural and metropolitan general practice, both in Australia and abroad. Ged is still a practising General Practitioner at IPN's The Mosman Practice on Sydney's lower North Shore, and is passionate about the central role of general practice in the delivery of quality primary patient care.



**Brian Madden**

CEO, MedLab Pathology, Ireland

Brian Madden was appointed as Chief Executive Officer of Dublin-headquartered MedLab Pathology in 2016, after holding several managerial positions in the practice since it was first established in 2010. With more than 18 years' experience in the Irish laboratory industry, Brian is responsible for running all facets of Sonic Healthcare's Irish business. Since taking up the leadership position, he has lead efforts to successfully streamline operations, strengthen processes and drive growth. Brian is a passionate leader who embraces Medical Leadership and has extensive executive experience, including general management, strategic planning and commercial operations.



**Dr Jerry W. Hussong**

CEO, Sonic Healthcare USA

Dr Jerry Hussong was appointed CEO of Sonic Healthcare USA (SHUSA) in January, 2019, after previously serving as its Chief Medical Officer. Prior to joining Sonic Healthcare, Jerry was Chief Medical Officer/Director of Laboratories at ARUP Laboratories in Salt Lake City, Utah, and Director of Haematopathology at Cedars Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles, California. He is co-author of *Kjeldsberg's Body Fluid Analysis* textbook and *Body Fluids Morphologic Bench Guide*, and has published numerous peer-reviewed journal articles. Jerry has served on several national committees, including the College of American Pathologists (CAP) Surgical Pathology and Cancer Committees. He is currently a member of CAP Economic Affairs Committee and Vice Chair of the American Clinical Laboratory Association.



**Blaise Mentha**

CEO, Medisupport, Switzerland

Blaise Mentha has been CEO of Medisupport since its inception in 2007. Born into a family of specialist medical doctors, he obtained a degree in law and economics before launching a series of businesses in the medical world, including a healthcare IT firm, medical clinic, medical centre, imaging practice and a laboratory. Until 2005, Blaise was CEO of a large, listed European laboratory company with approximately 3,000 staff. Together with a small group of former colleagues, he created the Medisupport group in 2007, starting with Dianalabs, a very small laboratory in Geneva. From this small nucleus, Medisupport has grown to more than 900 staff today. Medisupport and Blaise joined Sonic in 2015.



**Dr. Franz Käppeli**

CEO, medica, Switzerland

Dr Franz Käppeli is a specialist in clinical laboratory medicine (FAMH). He acquired the medica laboratory in Zürich more than 40 years ago. Under his visionary leadership and thanks to his entrepreneurial spirit, medica steadily developed into the leading single-site laboratory in Switzerland. Timely strategic decisions were accompanied by acquisitions and the creation of new departments. Today, medica employs a staff of nearly 300. Dr Franz Käppeli grew up in the Swiss canton of Aargau. He is also known as a generous supporter of numerous projects and cultural institutions in Switzerland.



**Geert Salembier**

CEO, Sonic Healthcare Benelux

Geert Salembier graduated as a pharmacist from Ghent University, Belgium, in 1978 and as a clinical pathologist, specialising in haematology, in 1983. He developed a specific interest in technological development and the automation of laboratories, striving to improve the technical quality and service to healthcare providers. These values were further implemented in his own laboratory, Medpath, established in 1989, which later merged with another Antwerp lab, Labo Riatol, to jointly form AML in 2001. AML and its parent entity, Medhold, became a part of Sonic in 2009.



**Evangelos Kotsopoulos**

CEO, Sonic Healthcare Continental Europe and Sonic Healthcare Germany

Evangelos Kotsopoulos has been Chief Executive Officer of Sonic Healthcare Germany since the establishment of the regional head office in 2011. A native of Hamburg, Germany, Evangelos studied Business and Economics in Hamburg and at Sydney University. In 2007, he joined Sonic in the Sydney head office, after a career in investment banking, initially acting as Business Development Director, which saw him involved in many acquisitions and growth projects, particularly in Europe. In 2011, following Sonic's growth in Europe, Evangelos and his family moved to Berlin, Germany, to establish Sonic's German head office. Today, he looks after the Sonic holding entities and operations in Germany, Belgium and Switzerland.



**Dr Cynric Temple-Camp**

CEO, Medlab Central, New Zealand

Dr Cynric Temple-Camp has been the Chief Executive Officer of Medlab Central's team of pathologists, scientists, technicians and phlebotomists since 1998, when it metamorphosed from a tiny provincial city laboratory into a four-laboratory group, providing community and public hospital services across New Zealand's lower North Island. Cynric completed his medical training in Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), before working as a registrar and pathologist in Cape Town, South Africa. He moved to New Zealand in 1987, where he worked as a consultant pathologist at Palmerston North Public Hospital before joining Medlab Central. Servicing a population of 250,000 people, Cynric and his team provide a broad range of pathology services, including police coronial work, providing him with a wealth of experiences that he has woven into a critically received book, *The Cause of Death*, about his sometimes extreme forensic investigations.

# Aurora Diagnostics joins Sonic Healthcare USA

Sonic Healthcare is pleased to officially welcome our Aurora Diagnostics colleagues to the Sonic Healthcare family. Led by Bruce Walton as President, Aurora is one of the leading providers of anatomical pathology services in the United States, operating 32 anatomical pathology practices in 19 US states. Aurora has 1,200 staff, including 220 board-certified pathologists. Aurora is Sonic's largest acquisition to date, and adds significant weight to Sonic Healthcare USA's ability to provide high-quality anatomical pathology services, in addition to its large footprint of practices providing laboratory medicine.

"Sonic's international leadership position in anatomical pathology and their culture of medical leadership is a natural fit for our pathology practices. This acquisition allows our pathologists to continue to focus on patient care with the backing of an organisation and leadership that intrinsically understands the value and needs of our pathologists and the local medical communities," said Bruce Walton.

Aurora Diagnostics strengthens Sonic Healthcare's position in the US marketplace by extending and complementing its existing clinical pathology services, and continuing to expand the medical leadership model. The inclusion of the Aurora team into Sonic's operations allows SHUSA to build upon the individual strengths of each of the Aurora practices, while integrating clinical and anatomical pathology offerings for its clients, enabling a comprehensive care delivery model.

Aurora Diagnostics will operate as the ninth division within Sonic Healthcare USA.

The addition of Aurora's 220+ pathologists brings the total number of Sonic Healthcare pathologists around the globe to almost 1,000, establishing us as the largest pathologist group in the world. This provides strong foundations for our individual and collective ability to foster enhanced partnerships with local healthcare communities.



The team at Aurora Diagnostics' central office in Florida celebrate joining Sonic Healthcare



Dr Bruce Latham, President, RCPA (L) and Dr Colin Goldschmidt, CEO, Sonic Healthcare (R)

## Honouring a lifetime contribution

In February, 2019, Dr Colin Goldschmidt, CEO of Sonic Healthcare and CEO of Douglass Hanly Moir Pathology, was recognised with a coveted Distinguished Pathologist Award, for his lifetime contribution to the field of pathology, by the Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia.

This award is the highest accolade that the College can bestow on a pathologist and reflects Colin's outstanding achievement and contributions to the administration of pathology in Australia, New Zealand and around the world. The award citation also recognised Colin's leadership and management philosophy that values and espouses a corporate culture of Medical Leadership.

While Colin is characteristically humble and low-key about his award, it is a well-deserved honour that reflects the passion, commitment and dedication that he has brought to the profession throughout his career - a passion that has seen Sonic grow from a single laboratory in Sydney to the third-largest diagnostic company in the world. It's that same passion that has seeded the culture of Medical Leadership and medical excellence, and which makes Sonic the high-quality healthcare provider that it is today.

Colin, we salute you for this well-deserved accolade.

# Milestones

## 2019 Australia Day Honours list

Congratulations to haematologist, Associate Professor Bev Rowbotham, from Sullivan Nicolaides Pathology (SNP) in Queensland, Australia, who has been awarded Officer (AO) in the General Division of the Order of Australia in the 2019 Australia Day Honours, for distinguished service to medicine through roles with professional associations, to pathology and to medical education.

Bev joined SNP in 1991 and was made Director of Haematology in 2000. She is also an Associate Professor of the University of Queensland School of Medicine, and has played a prominent national role in Australian healthcare over two decades, holding numerous key professional, government and board appointments. These include past-President of the Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia (RCPA) and ministerial appointments to four Federal Government peak bodies. She is currently Chair of the National Pathology Accreditation Advisory Council, a member of the International Commission of the American Society of Clinical Pathology and a member of the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO). She is also a past recipient of the Distinguished Fellow Award from the Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia.



## Distinguished Pathologist Award

Congratulations to Associate Professor David Ellis from Sonic's Clinpath Pathology in South Australia for his recent Distinguished Pathologist Award from the Royal College of Pathologists Australasia. David won this coveted award for his work championing the use of structured cancer reporting in Australia and around the world. The award cited David's work as a leader in the pathology of lymphoma in Australia, his services to education and organisations, including the International Academy of Pathology (IAP) and the Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia, as well as his involvement as one of the founding members of the International Collaboration on Cancer Reporting (ICCR), an organisation that is committed to developing a single internationally agreed dataset for all types of cancer.

We congratulate David for this well-deserved honour.



Professor Veit Krenn (third from right)

## Professor Veit Krenn receives prestigious research award

Professor Veit Krenn, former partner of the Trier anatomical pathology lab and one of its CEOs, is the recipient, together with Associate Professor Giggio Perino (HSS, New York City, USA), of the 2018 'Themistocles Gluck Award for Endoprosthetics', awarded by the German Society of Orthopedics and Orthopedic Surgery. The prize was awarded for the development of a histopathological classification system for the standardised diagnosis of implant-associated pathologies (published internationally as 'Histological Diagnosis of Implant-associated Pathologies' by Springer Science). The histological evaluation of periprosthetic tissues, according to this new SLIM-classification, is an important diagnostic tool to define the cause of inflammation (non-infectious versus infectious) and to distinguish implant-wear and non-implant-generated endogenous particulate materials in tissues.

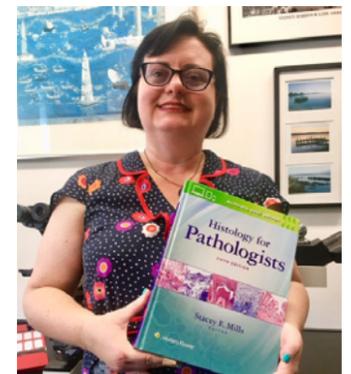


## Medical Leadership in action

German-speaking pathologists and clinical chemists consider the 'Lexikon der Medizinischen Laboratoriumsdiagnostik' (Dictionary of Medical Laboratory Diagnostics) to be a leading reference work of clinical chemistry and laboratory medicine. The three-volume third edition was recently released by Springer Science, and includes more than 3,600 articles, 8,800 search items and 1,100 figures and tables on the rapidly developing field of clinical chemistry and laboratory medicine. Professor Torsten Arndt, Clinical and Forensic Chemist at Bioscientia's Ingelheim laboratory, is the co-editor and author of this important reference work, and Sonic pathologist colleagues Dr Angela Ehling and Dr Birgit Gierden also made contributions as co-authors. This publication represents an example of Medical Leadership in action by Bioscientia and Sonic Healthcare Germany, and of their tireless efforts to deliver outstanding service to clients and their patients.

## A joint effort

For the last 20 years, *Histology for Pathologists* (edited by Stacey E. Mills) has been a go-to histology reference book for pathologists, and can be found in the bookshelves of most pathology departments throughout the world. Now in its fourth edition, the text is divided into 48 chapters, all of which are authored by leaders in their field. The latest edition includes a new chapter on the histology of joints, written by Associate Professor Fiona Maclean from Douglass Hanly Moir Pathology in Sydney, Australia. In addition to her expertise in urological pathology, Fiona is a recognised expert in joint pathology and continues to make important local and global contributions to the profession through her research, writing and numerous presentations at meetings and conferences around the world.



# We have lift off!

## Apollo LIS goes 'live' at AEL in Memphis, Tennessee



After several years of careful planning and testing, January 24, 2019, marked the official 'go live' date of the Apollo laboratory information system (LIS) at American Esoteric Laboratories (AEL) in Memphis, Tennessee.

The successful launch of Apollo, Sonic's proprietary LIS, at AEL signifies the first global collaboration of this scope between Sonic Healthcare USA (SHUSA) and Sonic Healthcare Australia, delivering cultural and operational benefits that have exceeded everyone's expectations.

Adopting a new LIS is a massive undertaking at any lab. It requires exceptional planning, complete dedication and cohesive teamwork to ensure that it proceeds as seamlessly as possible, with minimal disruption to referring physicians and their patients. AEL is the Mid-South Division of SHUSA, with eight laboratory locations in Tennessee, Alabama, Arkansas, Mississippi and Missouri. It is also the first US division to introduce 'Apollo International' - a new version of Apollo that has been adapted for global use - across its large-scale laboratory service network.

Apollo has been used in Sonic's laboratories throughout Australia for almost 20 years. This provided AEL with a deep pool of highly experienced Australian Apollo experts to support AEL during the IT and operational changeovers needed for a successful implementation.

More than 20 Australian Apollo experts visited AEL in the lead-up to go-live, providing an unprecedented opportunity to promote two-way exchanges of best practices, and facilitating collegiate collaborations across Apollo users worldwide. Experts came from Sonic IT, Douglass Hanly Moir Pathology in Sydney, Sullivan Nicolaidis Pathology

in Brisbane, Clinpath Pathology in Adelaide, Launceston Pathology, Capital Pathology in Canberra and Melbourne Pathology. They travelled periodically to AEL and, over many months, provided guidance and support that were crucial to the success of the launch. More than that, these collegial exchanges among laboratory staff from both countries have fostered the adoption of new approaches to technical operations and the practice of laboratory medicine.

Apollo has been developed as a unified, patient-focused LIS, enabling the expansion of patient management features throughout pre-analytical, analytical and post-analytical processes. "Apollo is now delivering significant operational improvements to AEL and driving standardisation of critical processes, from the test compendium and test ordering systems to overall operational workflow," said Dr David Smalley, President of AEL and the Mid-South Division. "These were not possible with the four legacy systems AEL used previously. These changes have already translated to better care for our patients and more efficient connectivity with our doctors," he added.

"The implementation of Apollo across all SHUSA laboratories in the coming years will greatly enhance our medical practice and competitive advantage by sharing our collective experience, expertise and innovations," said Dr Phil Chen, Chief Strategy Officer at SHUSA, reflecting on the ongoing benefits that are expected from a broader uptake of 'Apollo International'.

Our thanks go to all AEL, SHUSA, Sonic IT and Sonic Healthcare Australia staff, who spent long hours away from family, and often from home. Your tireless efforts have helped to pioneer a remarkable new chapter in LIS development for all SHUSA labs.



Some of the AEL implementation team, including Dr David Smalley (CEO), front left

# Demonstrating Medical Leadership in the face of adversity

Several Sonic practices, in both the northern and southern hemispheres, were impacted by severe weather events during January and February, 2019. From arctic conditions cutting across swathes of the US, to flooding and bushfires (wildfires) in parts of Australia, the dedication of our staff shone through as we battled the elements and continued to provide uninterrupted services to the communities who rely upon us.



## Once-in-a-century disaster hits North Queensland



Townsville is a picturesque city of almost 200,000 people. Located in the tropical north-east corner of Australia, in the state of Queensland, residents here are no strangers to the merciless tides of nature, with annual wet seasons and the threat of Category 5 cyclones most years. Yet, despite a lifetime of extreme weather events, no one anticipated the severe flooding that took place in January this year.

Queensland X-Ray (QXR) is Sonic's imaging practice in Queensland, servicing a large cross-section of the population, including the people of Townsville.

Townsville had been experiencing a prolonged drought when the rain first hit, late on January 24. Everyone went to bed knowing it was going to be a wet week ahead. However, what they awoke to was nothing short of a catastrophe. Over the next 10 days, a year's worth of rain fell, totalling 1,143 millimetres (45 inches).

The impact of this downpour resulted in untold damage to the Townsville community - from QXR's businesses, to the homes of team members, to the infrastructure of the city and its surrounds.



Before

After

The long-anticipated opening of QXR's brand new practice in Fairfield was cancelled, with almost 50 centimetres (20 inches) of water blanketing the floor, resulting in the loss of a brand new CT scanner.

Three other QXR practices were also forced to close due to the severe flooding. However, thanks to the resilience and commitment of QXR's people, they were able to keep the doors open at their major hospital practice, Mater Pimlico. Despite the region being significantly impacted, team members who had the ability to get to their workplace did so, specifically to arrange alternative services for high-risk patients.

Over the course of the week, they provided diagnostic imaging services to 2,274 patients. This level of service was able to be maintained thanks to the commitment and strength of the QXR Townsville team who, despite sometimes suffering major personal impacts at home, still turned up to work to ensure the needs of their referring doctors and patients were met.

Once the rain had subsided, the total damage to the city exceeded \$AUD 887 million. Sadly, two members of the public lost their lives and 3,300 properties suffered major damage.

Despite this, the local community found a way to rise above the chaos (and water) and do what any North Queenslander would do – find the bright side, have a laugh, share a drink and get on with the tasks of the day.

Queensland X-Ray General Manager, Peter Davis, flew in to see the devastation for himself.

*“Through adversity comes strength,” he said. “And to hear and see some of the difficulties our people and the community faced just makes you realise how good our people are. Thank you to everyone at Queensland X-Ray in Townsville.”*



Medisupport Board of Directors (from left to right): Marc Drescher, Hubert Rüedi, Jean-Daniel Favre, Stephan Lorenzini, Blaise Mentha, Willi Conrad, Benoit Lorenzini (Secretary General)

## Practice Profile

### Medisupport, a laboratory network modelled on Switzerland’s famous cantons +

Switzerland is well-known for many things, including stunning mountains, excellent chocolate, precision-made watches and mouth-watering cheeses. But it is also famous for its cantons – the federation of 23 different regions or municipalities, each with its own cultural characteristics and specific regional needs. Unlike almost any other country in the world, Swiss residents have a very close connection with their own canton, despite the next canton often being only a few kilometres away. This geographic and cultural identification is seen as an intrinsic part of being Swiss, even though its citizens also strongly identify as being part of a unified nation with shared values.

Switzerland’s federated model acted as the guiding principle for the establishment of Medisupport, one of Sonic’s two laboratory networks in Switzerland. With more than 900 employees, Medisupport provides clinical laboratory testing, genetics, fertility, anatomical pathology, hygiene/ infection control and more, to different cantons across both the German- and French-speaking parts of the country. The practice is a series of regional laboratories that have existed for several decades, and which are focused on responding to local needs and sensitivities. Each laboratory weaves close links with universities and medical societies while delivering the highest quality, state-of-the-art laboratory medicine services.

Medisupport balances this federated model with centralised IT and analytical systems. It also fosters a collegiate

approach among its different laboratories, employing more than 80 pathologists, specialists in laboratory medicine and microbiology, biologists, biochemists and pharmacists, who collaborate to discuss rare and complex cases. With a wealth of experience in analytical laboratories for outpatient and hospital medicine, Medisupport has become a key partner in the world of Swiss healthcare.

Medisupport prides itself on its commitment to innovation. It developed Prendia, the first genetic prenatal screening test designed and implemented in Switzerland. It also provides advanced IT services that allow its electronic platform to be used for most interactions with referring doctors. This includes test requesting, result delivery, courier bookings, ordering of equipment and supplies and controlling point-of-care testing. Medisupport is also preparing to launch its new mobile app, BabySoon, in the near future, an app that is best described as a digital pregnancy notebook.

Further evidence of its commitment to innovation can be seen in Medisupport’s recent decision to establish a new genetics laboratory that aims to become the Swiss reference institution in this field.

Medisupport joined Sonic Healthcare in July, 2015, bringing a close cultural alignment with Sonic’s federated model and commitment to Medical Leadership. Medisupport’s philosophy is best summed up as, ‘More than just being a company, Medisupport is the combined efforts of our people to provide the best possible outcomes for patients, as well as highly customised services to the medical practitioners we serve’. These principles echo those of Medical Leadership, which define Sonic practices globally.

# Catalyst Update



## Kivulini Maternity Hospital

Nearly a kilometre from the main route from Arusha to Dodoma in Tanzania, down a dusty, unsealed road, stands a large white building that houses the Kivulini Maternity Hospital. The hospital was opened in June, 2018, with the purpose of providing maternity services to the poorest women in the region. It runs daily antenatal clinics, with special programs for teenage mothers, as well as family planning advice. It also provides surgery to women suffering from debilitating fistulas resulting from injuries sustained during largely unsupervised childbirth. In the near future, the hospital will also provide a vaccination clinic, postnatal services and an extension to their teenage-mother program to include vocational and lifestyle training. The hospital is also running an accredited midwifery training program to help fill a shortfall in the region.

The clinical targets for this 44-bed facility in its first year of operation are to perform 2,500 births, 150 fistula surgeries, 1,200 family planning consultations and to graduate 60 qualified midwives from their training program.

Sonic Healthcare sponsors the hospital's laboratory and will continue to offer help, guidance and support for the next few years. The laboratory processes approximately 40 patients per day, providing cross-matching, urine MCS, FBE, biochemistry, malarial parasites, BHCG and serology testing.

Josephine Farahani is the senior technician in the laboratory and has worked there since the hospital opened. Josephine was born in Iringa, Tanzania, before moving with her mother and sister to Dar Es Salaam, where she completed her Diploma in Medical Laboratory Science in 2013. She then worked in the government hospital in Morogoro until 2016, after which she was employed by the Tanzanian HIV Impact Survey until she joined Kivulini in June, 2018. She currently lives in Arusha, a city of one million people, about 30 minutes' drive from Kivulini.



Josephine Farahani with a patient

Josephine's aunt and grandmother were both nurses, so she wanted to work in the medical field from a very young age. She enjoys all disciplines in pathology, with the possible exception of histology. It can be difficult to keep her skills up to date in regional Tanzania, but she loves a challenge and takes every opportunity to develop her knowledge and expertise. She is held in very high regard by the senior staff in Mt Meru Hospital, who are very supportive of the work being undertaken by Kivulini and the lab in particular.

Josephine works closely with Jonas Matula, the other laboratory staff member at Kivulini, and together they run what we feel is one of the best small labs we have sponsored so far in Africa.

# My Story



## Profile: Manizheh Davies

Senior Programmer, Sonic IT, Australia



When Manizheh Davies arrived in Australia in 1986 as a single mother fleeing religious persecution in Iran, she couldn't have predicted the professional path her life would take over the next three decades.

If you had to find a single word to describe Manizheh Davies, it would be 'passionate'.

Manizheh is passionate about every aspect of her life - her family, her religion as a devoted member of the Baha'i faith, and her work as a senior developer in Sonic IT.

As the support coordinator for Apollo queries across Australia, Manizheh oversees a critical function that facilitates the smooth running of the laboratory information systems supporting the entire Australian laboratory network.

But her path to professional success hasn't followed a conventional track, and that's not just because she is a woman in technology whose career dates back to the late '80s.

Manizheh arrived in Australia in 1986 as a single mother and refugee fleeing religious persecution in an increasingly fundamentalist Iran.

Despite her training and professional experience as a teacher and statistician, her qualifications were not recognised in her adopted homeland, so she went back to school as a mature student to improve her English and to retrain as a computer scientist.

Two years later, she emerged with a degree and a hunger to work, both for herself and also to support her eight-year-old daughter, but the IT landscape was not exactly welcoming to women, especially those coming from a migrant background. She applied for scores of jobs, but barely got an interview. That was until she met with Wilfredo Jose and Peter Joseph, who were both working at Melbourne Pathology at the time. They conducted a series of interviews with Manizheh over several weeks, however, it was her final interview with Peter Joseph, now the CIO of Sonic Healthcare, which remains the most memorable for her.

"I will never forget that interview," she says. "They were so relaxed and so down to earth. They knew I was just a new person in this country and I was doing my best to fit in and get a job."

"A few days later Wilfredo called me and said 'When do you want to start?' and that was actually one of the biggest days of my life, because I realised that I have a job."

Manizheh joined a small team of five people in IT, a training ground that would prove to be invaluable in giving her a broad understanding of all aspects of the pathology IT landscape.

Thirty-one years later, she is still working with many of those same colleagues who first welcomed her to the department all those years ago, and she is both humbled and grateful for the care and jocularly they extended to her crucial first years in a completely new role.

"I was lucky to find a job with people who helped me every step," she explains. "It was such a loving environment and still is. Work is like my second home, and we are all very close and united."

This is the first in a series of staff profiles from Sonic practices across the globe. If you would like to suggest a colleague who would be suitable to profile in this section, please email [sonicconnect@sonichealthcare.com](mailto:sonicconnect@sonichealthcare.com)



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