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NorDx | MaineHealth adopts first-in-the nation technology for processing tissue samples

The technology from Denmark-based Axlabs A/S is already in use in Europe and will lead to faster, better-quality Pathology test results.

Scarborough, Maine - NorDx | MaineHealth today announced that it is the first diagnostic laboratory system in the United States to install a fully automated tissue trimming and sectioning technology widely used in Europe.

“This technology represents more than automation - it is the modernization of a process that has not changed much since the first microtome was introduced in 1848,” said Dr. Guillermo Martinez-Torres, president and chief physician executive of NorDx | MaineHealth. “By integrating automated trimming and sectioning, we expect to improve the satisfaction of our staff, standardize image quality on our digital imagers, accelerate delivery of diagnostic results to patients and raise the overall quality of the services we provide.”

The automated platforms, known as the AT-192 and AS-410M, perform block trimming and microtomy to produce high-quality slides with remarkable consistency. Early adopters internationally have reported significant reductions in staff stress, measurable improvements in turnaround time, and enhanced section quality.

The decision to adopt the technology, which will be deployed this month, follows a multi-month evaluation process that included site visits to Denmark, workflow reviews, extensive input from NorDx histology professionals and from the pathology team at South Portland-based Spectrum Healthcare Partners. The new systems will be deployed within the NorDx laboratory network, the region’s highest-volume diagnostic services provider.

The new technology was purchased from Axlabs A/S, a Denmark-based developer/distributor of diagnostic technologies, working in partnership with Dainippon Seiki of Japan, the manufacturer behind the automated trimming and sectioning systems. With installations across Europe and the United Kingdom - including more than 30 systems currently being placed within the U.K. National Health Service - Axlabs is now looking to expand into the United States with a focus on addressing workload, staffing challenges and diagnostic quality.

“Axlabs is honored to partner with NorDx | MaineHealth as the first U.S. health system to implement our fully automated trimming and sectioning platforms,” said Søren Christensen, chief executive officer of Axlabs A/S. “This installation underscores a shared commitment to improving patient care, supporting laboratory staff and advancing the practice of histopathology through thoughtful innovation.”

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About MaineHealth

MaineHealth is a not-for-profit, integrated health system whose vision is, “Working together so our communities are the healthiest in America,” and is committed to a mission of providing high-quality affordable care, educating tomorrow's caregivers and researching better ways to provide care. MaineHealth includes a Level 1 trauma medical center, eight additional licensed hospitals, comprehensive pediatric care services, an extensive behavioral health care network, diagnostic services as well as home health, hospice and senior care services. With more than 2,000 employed providers and approximately 23,000 care team members, MaineHealth provides preventive care, diagnosis and treatment to 1.1 million residents in Maine and New Hampshire. MaineHealth hospitals include MaineHealth Behavioral Health at Spring Harbor in Westbrook, MaineHealth Franklin Hospital in Farmington, MaineHealth Lincoln Hospital in Damariscotta, MaineHealth Maine Medical Center in Portland, Biddeford and Sanford, MaineHealth Memorial Hospital in North Conway, N.H., MaineHealth Mid Coast Hospital in Brunswick, MaineHealth Pen Bay Hospital in Rockport, MaineHealth Stephens Hospital in Norway and MaineHealth Waldo Hospital in Belfast. MaineHealth also includes the MaineHealth Barbara Bush Children’s Hospital in Portland, MaineHealth Behavioral Health in Westbrook, MaineHealth Home Health and Hospice in Saco, the MaineHealth Institute for Research in Scarborough, the MaineHealth Medical Group and MaineHealth NoDx in Scarborough. MaineHealth affiliates include Maine General Health in Augusta and Waterville and St. Mary's Health System in Lewiston. It is also a significant stakeholder in the MaineHealth Accountable Care Organization in Portland and a joint venture partner in the New England Rehabilitation Hospital in Portland.