

Micrographic Surgery Certification by the ESMS

Preface

At present there are no guidelines for setting up and managing a Micrographic Surgery (MS) service. The main goal of these guidelines is to define terms and conditions for Micrographic surgeons and services in order to guarantee the quality of this specific health care procedure in Europe. National health care laws in each European country supersede these guidelines.

A variety of methods of complete margin control during surgical removal of skin cancers exist. This document is about MS with paraffin sections.

General considerations

Facilities

The MS facility will consist of a procedure room suitable for dermatological surgery located adjacent to (or in close proximity to) a Histo-pathology laboratory.

The facility for MS will usually consist of two or more procedure rooms certified as operation ward or room for dermatological surgery according to the specific definitions required in each country with all the necessary equipment for Micrographic cases of all complexities and including access to appropriate surgical beds and recovery areas, surgical ceiling lights with at least 100.000 lux, electrosurgical equipment (monopolar and/or bipolar coagulation), suction tips and tubes and sufficient surgical instruments.

The Micrographic histopathology laboratory will have all the required instruments. Micrographic laboratory technicians have to be well-trained and regularly perform MS to maintain a high technical expertise in preparing Micrographic sections. Ideally, a multi-headed microscope is used for slide interpretation.

Risk Assessments, Equipment and Safety

National risk assessments of the MS facility must be carried out. Safety standards should be guaranteed. Cleaning and decontamination should be done according to the existing national guidelines. Hospital-based MS facilities should be available 24 hours in case of complications. Non-hospital-based MS facilities should at least provide their patients with access to another medical facility with a procedure room such as the one described above in case of complications after hours. It is advised to register complications.

Team

MS services should have a team with a named MS lead clinician. The supporting team ideally consists of well-trained dermatology nursing staff, or in some cases appropriately experienced health care assistants.

Micrographic Surgery

Before MS is planned, a skin biopsy must be performed to confirm the diagnosis. When a patient is referred, independent revision of histopathology is advised.

MS is generally performed under local anaesthesia. The sections are looked at by the Micrographic surgeon him/herself or together with the pathologist. Due to local laws in some European nations

the Micrographic surgeon will first look at the slides him/herself and afterwards the pathologist will check the slides and sign the pathology report. It is also possible to use telepathology. If MS is performed under general anaesthesia we advise a multidisciplinary approach and an experienced Micrographic surgeon (at least Micrographic surgery trainer, see definition below).

Referral management

A MS service will provide skin cancer diagnosis and treatment to a Cancer Network on a sub-regional or regional basis, and take referrals from colleagues in dermatology, oculoplastic surgery, plastic surgery, maxillofacial surgery, ENT, General Practitioner with special interest in Dermatology and others involved in the diagnosis and treatment of skin cancer. Referrals to the Micrographic service will be in line with the national recommendations of the skin cancer guidelines.

Generally, the reconstruction is performed by the Micrographic surgeon when margins in the paraffin sections are clear. Where local anaesthetic reconstruction is not possible by the Micrographic surgeon, for example if extensive reconstruction is required, or specialist site-specific repairs, it may be appropriate to enlist the help of surgical colleagues working closely with the Micrographic surgeon, in a multidisciplinary approach, to undertake surgical repairs perhaps under general anaesthesia.

How to become a Certified Micrographic Surgeon by the ESMS:

MS training should consist of a traineeship with a duration of at least 12 months. The Micrographic surgery trainee will only be able to be certified as a Micrographic surgeon if he/she is a specialist in Dermatology and a specialist member of the EADV.

In order to become certified as a Micrographic surgeon by the ESMS one of the following options must be fulfilled:

Option 1: Carry out at least 100 Micrographic cases independently, including interpretation of Micrographic section pathology (in some nations this must be done with supervision of a specialist in pathology). This will be performed under the supervision of a ESMS-certified Micrographic surgeon.

Option 2: Prove that the criteria in option 1 are fulfilled through an audit carried out by an auditor appointed by the board of directors of the ESMS.

Option 3: If individuals have consistently performed a high volume of MS cases (>150 cases per annum) prior to 2012 then the ESMS board of directors will consider their CV and logbook of cases to determine the adequacy of their training and expertise.

The applicants will need to provide recommendation letters from two certified members of the ESMS or one ESMS board member and a CV including a short summary of their training.'

After fulfilling any of the abovementioned options, the applicant must obtain subsequent approval by the board of directors.

How to stay a Certified Micrographic Surgeon by the ESMS

Micrographic surgeons are recommended to carry out a minimum of 300 Micrographic cases every 5 years. The Micrographic surgeon should remain a member of the EADV and of the European Society for Micrographic Surgery. Interpretation of Micrographic section pathology will be performed by the Micrographic surgeon himself or in collaboration with a pathologist if law in their country requires it.

These requirements will guarantee both the health care quality and the safety of MS services.

How to become a Certified Micrographic trainer:

1. >500 Micrographic cases
2. >3 years of experience with MS.
3. Be a certified member of the ESMS.
4. Be approved by the board of the ESMS.