



# Joint Pathology Center Goes Digital Signs Deals with Proscia, Huron

*Goal is to digitize a repository with 55 million slides and provide a digital pathology workflow solution*

IT'S A MAJOR ENDORSEMENT of digital pathology and whole slide imaging. Last week, the federal government's **Joint Pathology Center** announced agreements with two digital pathology companies. The goal is to digitize incoming slides and archived slides, support a digital pathology workflow, and make the digitized slides searchable to pathologists and researchers.

The first agreement was announced on Oct. 20. The Joint Pathology Center (JPC) will use Philadelphia-based **Proscia's** Concentriq "digital and computational platform" as the foundation for management of images, data, and workflow.

The second agreement was made public on Oct. 22. **Huron Digital Pathology** of St. Jacobs, Ontario, Canada, will provide its Lagotto image search engine "to index and search JPC's growing digital image archive."

## ► World's Largest Repository

Based in Silver Springs, Maryland, the Joint Pathology Center is the world's single biggest repository of anatomic pathology specimens. It is the successor to the **Armed Forces Institute of Pathology** (AFIP), which was founded in 1862. AFIP was closed by the **Department of Defense** as part of a realignment of military bases that happened in 2005.

The Joint Pathology Center received AFIP's archives and has continued to offer anatomic pathology services since its formation. In its repository, the JPC has more than 55 million glass slides, 35 million tis-

sue block samples, and as many as 500,000 to 700,000 wet tissue samples.

A key insight behind these two agreements is that the Joint Pathology Center is taking the first steps to create a fully-digital anatomic pathology laboratory service, while also making tissue specimens that date back as far as 1862 available for research and other purposes.

## ► Adoption of Digital Pathology

One consequence of this—once implementation is complete—is that pathologists in academic and community settings who are themselves using digital pathology (DP) systems will be able to access the digital images in the JPC repository. But that will require community-based pathology groups to adopt and use digital pathology systems.

Another interesting phenomenon may result from the JPC's adoption and use of digital pathology. Given the sheer size of the glass slides in the repository, there will be every incentive for Proscia, Huron Digital, and other digital pathology vendors who may contract with JPC to continuously improve the performance of their scanners, DP systems, digital image analysis tools, and artificial intelligence products.

Surgical pathologists everywhere should understand the significance of these two agreements. They further accelerate the adoption and regular use of whole slide images and digital pathology systems by pathologists in their daily workflow.

**TDR**