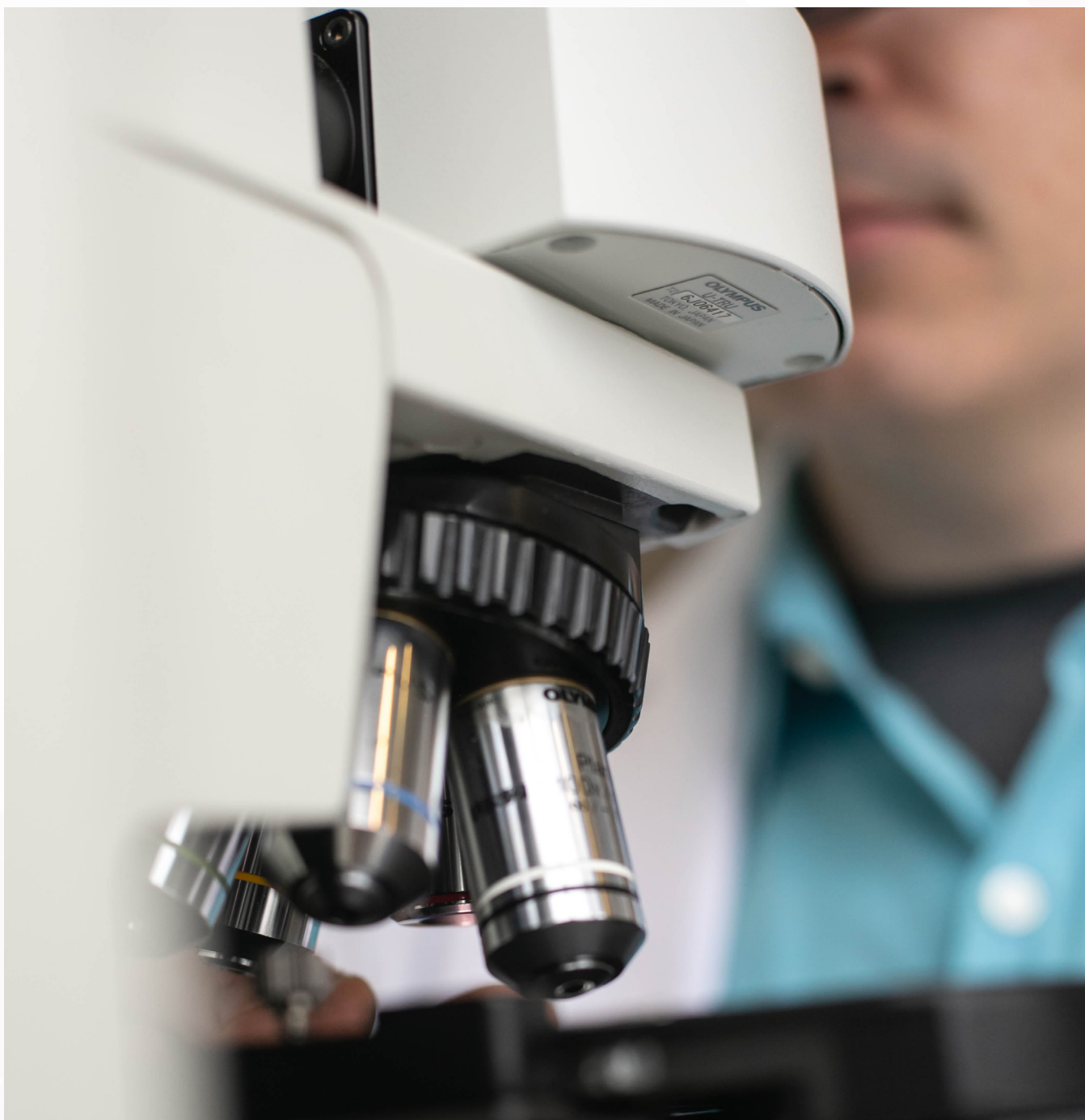




EASTERN CONNECTICUT PATHOLOGY CONSULTANTS



A TURNKEY LABORATORY SOLUTIONS PROVIDER

ECPCLAB.COM | (860) 647-6487



“RESULTS
DELIVERED IN
EXEMPLARY
TURNAROUND
TIMES... 87% IN
24 HOURS AND
99% WITHIN 48
HOURS.”

AN OVERVIEW:

EASTERN CONNECTICUT PATHOLOGY CONSULTANTS

Eastern Connecticut Pathology Consultants (ECPC) is a private pathology group that offers comprehensive services to community hospitals and physician offices. Our team includes fellowship-trained, board-certified pathologists whose expertise extends from anatomic and clinical pathology to oversight of hospital and physician office labs.

Unique among community-focused pathologists, our team also offers subspecialty expertise and advanced fellowship training in many areas rarely found outside of academic medical centers, such as:

- **Breast pathology**
- **Hematopathology**
- **Gastrointestinal pathology**
- **Surgical pathology**
- **Gynecologic pathology**
- **Cytopathology**

Many of our pathologists work on local and national levels to inform protocols and best practices to improve the delivery of care.

ON-SITE LABS:

IMPROVE CLINICAL TURNAROUND TIMES AND REDUCE COSTS

While the motivations for owning and operating a physician-owned lab vary, practices typically see improved clinical turnaround time and new revenue streams for tissue processing. They also benefit from the highest standard of quality reporting and easy access to pathologists.

By working in an outpatient office setting, our partners avoid additional hospital fees. ECPC also helps to streamline payer management, minimizing professional and technical billing problems and eliminating losses from accounts payable, which typically average 10 percent for most offices.

The end result is comprehensive and cost-effective clinical care.

TURNKEY LABORATORY SOLUTIONS FOR PROVIDERS

We engage physicians in a customized, multi-step, collaborative process (typically taking 3-6 months) to establish and manage an on-site pathology laboratory.

Leveraging our team of pathologists, pathologists' assistants and specialists, we work with our partners to:

- **Identify physical space within their practice for the build-out of the lab**
- **Enlist specialists who help make decisions around equipment fitting and ventilation**
- **Identify and meet any necessary code and regulatory requirements, including state inspections**
- **Manage lab construction, legal matters, IT, billing and operations**
- **Find and hire an experienced histotech who runs the lab as an employee of the physician practice**
- **Establish an ongoing, collaborative, patient-focused relationship with ECPC's pathology team**
- **Provide customized reports**

The result is a fully-operational pathology lab owned by the physician group.

THE DISCOVERY PROCESS

To better estimate return on investment, ECPC begins each engagement with an in-depth discovery process. We start with a full confidential business review that includes factors such as the number of specimens generated by the office, patient volume and payer mix. This pro forma process helps providers better understand the potential profitability of their new lab.

Equally essential to this discovery phase is the human element of our collaboration: Getting to know our clients, understanding their specific goals and creating mutual understanding. Our goal is to build a strong partnership that guides the process and the ongoing relationship.

UNDERSTAND OUR PROCESS



COLLECTION

Specimens obtained at surgical/endoscopy center



PROCESSING

Specimens processed in physician-owned histology laboratory



COMMUNICATION

Direct communication between physicians and pathologists



DIAGNOSIS

Microscopic interpretation by ECPC



REPORTING

Fast, accurate, easy-to-read diagnostic reports with photomicrographs



our pathology services to him and his team. After careful consideration, he decided to transition the management of the lab to ECPC.

“It was a wonderful relationship that started back in 2008,” said Dr. Sridhar. “While we had an endoscopy center that generated biopsies, we thought that teaming up with expertise the likes of Dr. [Robert] Schwartz and Dr. [Dennis] O’Neill would be a good advantage for us.”

An ECPC pathologist became the medical director of the lab, and we developed a close working relationship with Dr. Sridhar and his team.

“Even though we had a commercial lab and a hospital lab within half a mile of our office, when we started working with ECPC, turnaround vastly improved, gradually decreasing to 24 hours or less. On top of that, we were able to connect with the ECPC doctors around the clock.”

Five years later, in 2013, NGI experienced a transition. Dr. Sridhar and Dr. Sang decided to split off from the group and form their own practice, Sang and Sridhar Digestive Disease Consultants, LLC (SSDDC). While we continued to manage the existing lab at NGI, we began the next chapter of our journey with Dr. Sridhar and his new office.

“I once again enlisted ECPC, and they were there for me and my team, guiding the entire process as we established our lab at SSDDC and then eventually constructed a brand-new lab in a new office building,” said Dr. Sridhar. “They assisted with all phases of the process, from getting legal and state compliance and handling regulatory requirements to helping us hire a histologist.”

CASE STUDY: SANG AND SRIDHAR DIGESTIVE DISEASE CONSULTANTS, LLC

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Our working relationship with clients is very much a partnership. This approach is best exemplified by our relationship with Kolala R. Sridhar, MD, a collaboration that goes back more than 10 years, when Dr. Sridhar was the head of a five-physician gastroenterology group in Connecticut called Norwich GI (NGI).

At that time, Dr. Sridhar was dissatisfied with the way his laboratory was run, from billing issues to the lag in report turnaround time. We approached Dr. Sridhar directly to offer

THE RESULTS

“The partnership with ECPC once again worked to our benefit,” said Dr. Sridhar. “Reporting continued to be timely and comprehensive. More than 95 percent of reports were received within 24 hours. We also had easy access to medical records, and reimbursement became easier.

“As far as billing is concerned, we had always accepted assignment insurance... and previous to working with ECPC we really had no way of helping patients who had billing questions or had issues of financial hardship. We had no control over this in the hospital setting, for example. But with our own lab and our partnership with ECPC, there were people who could help our patients resolve their concerns.”

There was yet one more chapter for ECPC and Dr. Sridhar. In 2015, three years after the launch of his new practice, SSDDC was acquired by the large physician group CTGI, and in 2017, Dr. Sridhar retired. CTGI expanded the lab and retained ECPC to be the on-site pathologist group for the lab. To this day, after three lab iterations, we continue to serve Dr. Sridhar’s same community of patients.

“ECPC assisted with all phases of the process, from getting legal and state compliance and handling regulatory requirements to helping us hire an histologist.”

– Kolala R. Sridhar, MD



CASE STUDY: MIDSTATE GASTROENTEROLOGY SPECIALISTS, PC

PROJECT OVERVIEW

In 2018, we helped MidState Gastroenterology Specialists, PC establish a pathology laboratory at their Meriden, Connecticut location.

The practice offers highly specialized and comprehensive care in gastroenterology, liver diseases and endoscopy. Affiliated with Midstate Medical Center, the doctors at MidState Gastroenterology Specialists strive to provide the highest quality medical care and continuity of services in a compassionate, professional and personalized environment.

The single specialty group enlisted our team when opening their second endoscopy location in Meriden. While the endoscopy function was previously owned and managed by MidState Medical Center, doctors Madhavi Bhoomagoud, MD, Thomas Jung, MD, and Housein Wazaz, MD, now had the opportunity to determine the best structure for processing specimens.

“Before we decided to open our own pathology lab, our thinking was to hire a full-time pathologist,” said Dr. Wazaz.

However, hiring an individual pathologist can come with its own set of challenges, such as concerns around skill level or breadth of expertise and delayed turnaround times when the pathologist is out sick or away.

“We instead decided that building a physician-owned lab was the best choice for us, allowing freedom of practice and the ability to keep an eye on quality. We felt that ECPC were real go-getters, people who had a better understanding of our needs than other consultants who wanted to come in and reinvent the wheel.”

Our discovery process with MidState Gastroenterology Specialists began by establishing the return-on-investment for the venture.

“ECPC understands the medical economics of this process, and they have street credit,” said Dr. Wazaz.

Dr. Wazaz and his team were also clear from the beginning that while the financial incentive exists, it was not the motivating factor for establishing an on-site lab. “Building out our own lab was very much about overseeing quality and improving efficiency and patient experience.”

“ECPC understands the medical economics of this process, and they have street credit.”

– HOUSEIN WAZAZ , MD

THE RESULTS

Highlights of the partnership between ECPC and Midstate include clear, comprehensive reports from our team delivered in exemplary turnaround times (87 percent in 24 hours and 99 percent within 48 hours) that consistently outperform the industry standard (90 percent within 48 hours).

Efficiency has increased in part as a result of the IT platform (data delivery happens immediately) and by virtue of comprehensive, state-of-the-art reports delivered in above average turnaround times. The close working relationship between ECPC and the practice has also created efficiencies as a result of our personal connection and shared focus on the community.



Dr. Wazaz concedes that this entire process has been no small undertaking, taking just under a year to go from concept to fully operational lab. "There is a legal layer, there is regulatory, and there is education required," he said. "But we had very open discussions with ECPC, and the clarity of thought was evident from the beginning. They outlined the core actionable steps which would prove to make the transition very smooth overall."

ECPC worked to streamline the process from the start with minimal impact on the office, connecting the practice to skilled lab contractors, IT team, specialized equipment and eventually a skilled, licensed technician to run the lab itself.

"We worked well together," said Dr. Wazaz. "It was a strong collaboration that made real business sense. Now we have a high-quality successful lab, financially and professionally. It has helped the practice because we have independence and can control the quality of the work. We can also now provide ancillary services to our practice.

"ECPC is still acting as a great partner. We receive very good, very comprehensive pathology reports in a timely manner. Quality of care has improved. A journey of 1,000 miles begins with a single step. It was well worth it."

“WE FELT THAT ECPC WERE REAL GO GETTERS, PEOPLE WHO HAD A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF OUR NEEDS THAN OTHER CONSULTANTS.”

– HOUSEIN WAZAZ , MD

Dennis G. O'Neill, MD
Department of Pathology



EASTERN CONNECTICUT PATHOLOGY CONSULTANTS

To learn more, visit ECPClab.com | (860) 647-6487

© 2019 Eastern Connecticut Pathology Consultants