



AAPA 2026 **Annual Conference**

Here Comes the Sun:
Illuminating the Future of Pathology

September 13-17, 2026

Sheraton Phoenix Downtown • Phoenix, AZ

#AAPAfall26



Digital Pathology Without the Drama

A guide for pathology professionals who want a clear, practical path to move from glass slides to whole slide images...without getting lost in exorbitant costs, industry jargon, IT anxiety, or complex implementations

Todd Vanden Branden

Kelsie Anderson, PA (ASCP)

15-SEP-2026

8:00 am – 9:00 am

Phoenix, AZ

Disclosures

Todd Vanden Branden

- Full-time employee with Grundium and have a financial interest
 - Customer use cases and examples shared in this session are informed by this role
- AAPA speaker honorarium has been donated to the conference Student Delegate Program

Kelsie Anderson, PA (ASCP)

- Full-time employee at Phoenix Children's Hospital
- AAPA speaker honorarium has been donated to the conference Student Delegate Program.

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 - Ohio State University – Wexner Medical Center
- Kelsie Anderson, Brianna Kittredge, Dr. Eduardo Zambrano, Dr. Rachel Mariani
 - Phoenix Children's Hospital

Todd Vanden Branden: Who am I?

- Senior Director at Grundium
 - www.Grundium.com
- Experience
 - Ventana Medical Systems
 - Roche Diagnostics
 - Dreampath Diagnostics
- Current focus
 - Working closely with pathology labs and healthcare organizations to:
 - Advance the adoption of digital and remote diagnostic workflows
 - Modernize laboratory practices
 - Improve access to care



Kelsie Anderson: Who am I?

- Pathologists' Assistant at Phoenix Children's Hospital
 - Supervisor of Surgical/Autopsy Pathology and expert squirrel herder
- Experience
 - Torrance Memorial Medical Center, Scottsdale Healthcare, Children's Hospital Colorado
 - PA, Medical Laboratory Scientist, Hematology, Microbiology, Blood Bank
 - BS, Clinical Laboratory Science – Arizona State University
 - MHS, PA – Quinnipiac University
 - PhD, Clinical Research – (In progress) University of Jamestown



Workshop Objectives

1. Identify practical ways laboratories can address immediate workflow challenges with digital pathology while building a foundation for advanced computational pathology applications over time.
2. Assess DP implementation considerations based on real-world case studies and examples shared.
3. Recognize broader trends shaping the DP field
 - a) Continued market consolidation
 - b) Growing interest in computational pathology and AI

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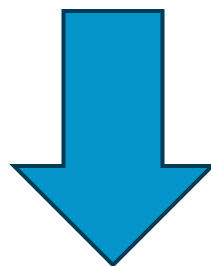
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Yesterday's keynote "The Story of Rapid Digital Pathology Transformation of Surgical Pathology at NYU Langone" (a.k.a. Digital Pathology With ALL the Drama) asked:

What can happen when an institution commits fully to enterprise digital pathology?



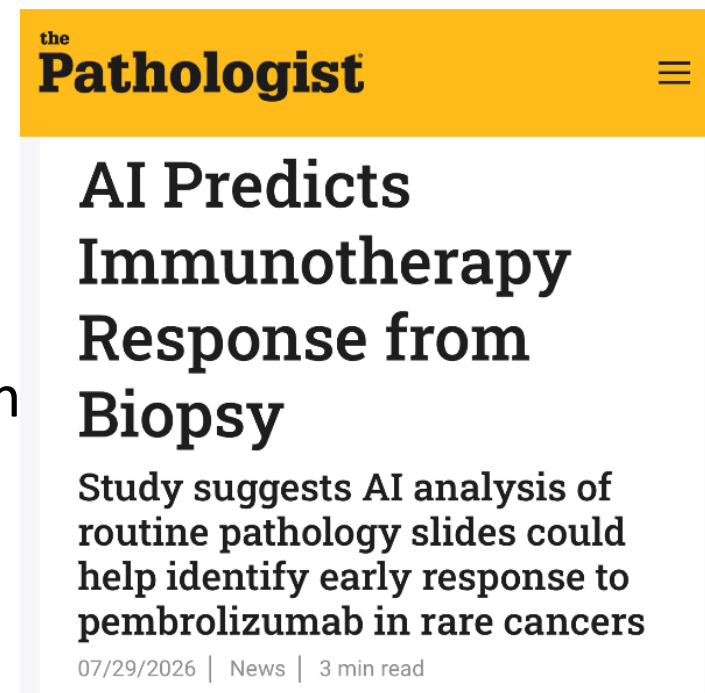
Today's session "Digital Pathology Without the Drama" asks:

How can pathology professionals begin making meaningful progress when that level of funding, IT support, staffing, or institutional readiness is not yet available?

DP is here, but adoption still feels difficult

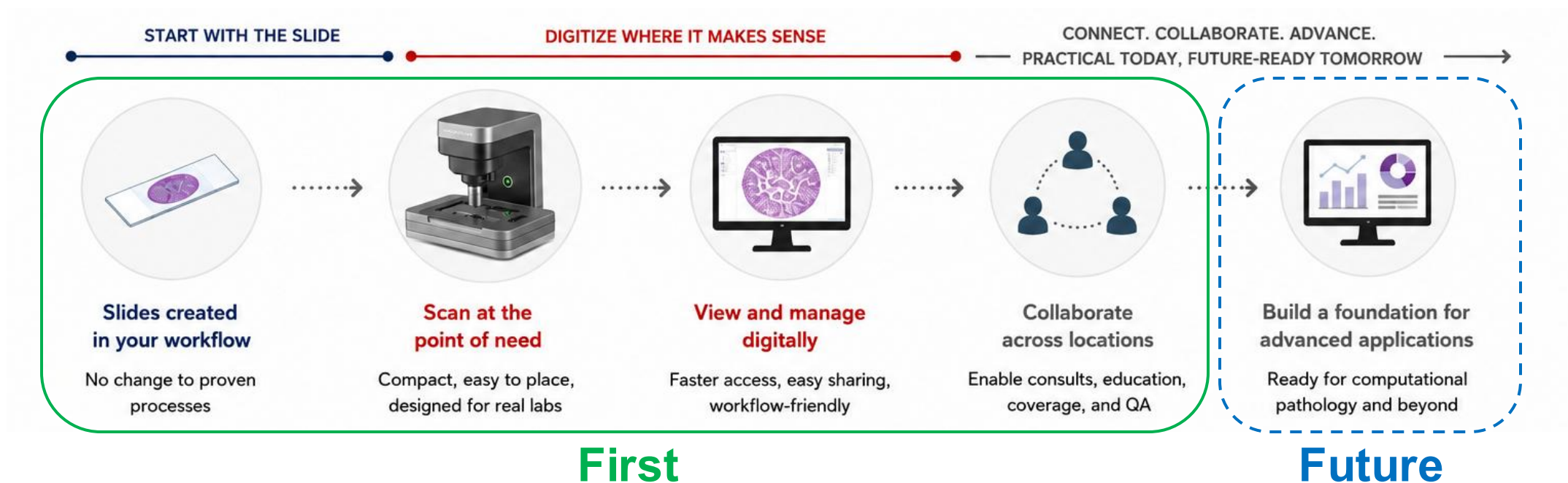
- DP + AI offers clear value to patients, but many labs hesitate because rollouts can be expensive, complex, space-intensive, and disruptive
- The issue is not whether DP matters
 - The issue is how to get started in a practical, sustainable way with “future ready” technology that lays a foundation for expansion
- State-of-the-art cannot advance as quickly with limited or slow DP adoption

*“Despite years of investment in digital pathology, roughly **three-quarters of U.S. pathology practices still do not use whole-slide imaging.**”¹*



DP is here, but adoption still feels difficult

- Most hospitals/labs do not have resources needed for a full enterprise DP transition
- Labs need practical ways to start DP that simplify adoption without waiting for a full enterprise transformation
 - Compact scanners that are low-friction and easy to integrate into existing workflows



Start with a clear workflow problem, not a complete transformation project

- The goal is never “digital for digital’s sake”
 - Must solve real coverage, access, and turnaround challenges
- Measuring ROI as a full-scale digital transformation is complex
 - Viewing enterprise digital pathology through the narrow lens of a five- or seven-year ROI fails to capture its full impact

“If you don't start investing now, you will not be able to really reap all the benefits that are coming.”

Orly Ardon, Director Digital Pathology Ops - Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

- The experiences shared here offer practical lessons for labs considering digital pathology adoption

Start with a clear workflow problem, not a complete transformation project



Start with frozen sections in the gross room

Why?

- Common workflow
 - A familiar starting point for many hospitals
- Resource-constrained setting
 - A place where workflow support can matter
- Focused use case
 - Digitization can solve real problems here

A practical workflow creates a strong setting for training and adoption.



How telepathology fits the frozen section workflow



“The scanner should fit into your process, not vice versa.”

Start with a clear workflow problem, not a complete transformation project



Early success creates a path toward broader DP adoption and impact to solving legacy problems

Operational impact chain of telepathology

Ease of adoption

- Minimal WF disruption
- Short learning curve



WF flexibility

- Off-site coverage
- Timely intraoperative consults



Collaboration

- Subspecialty input
- Multi-location collaboration

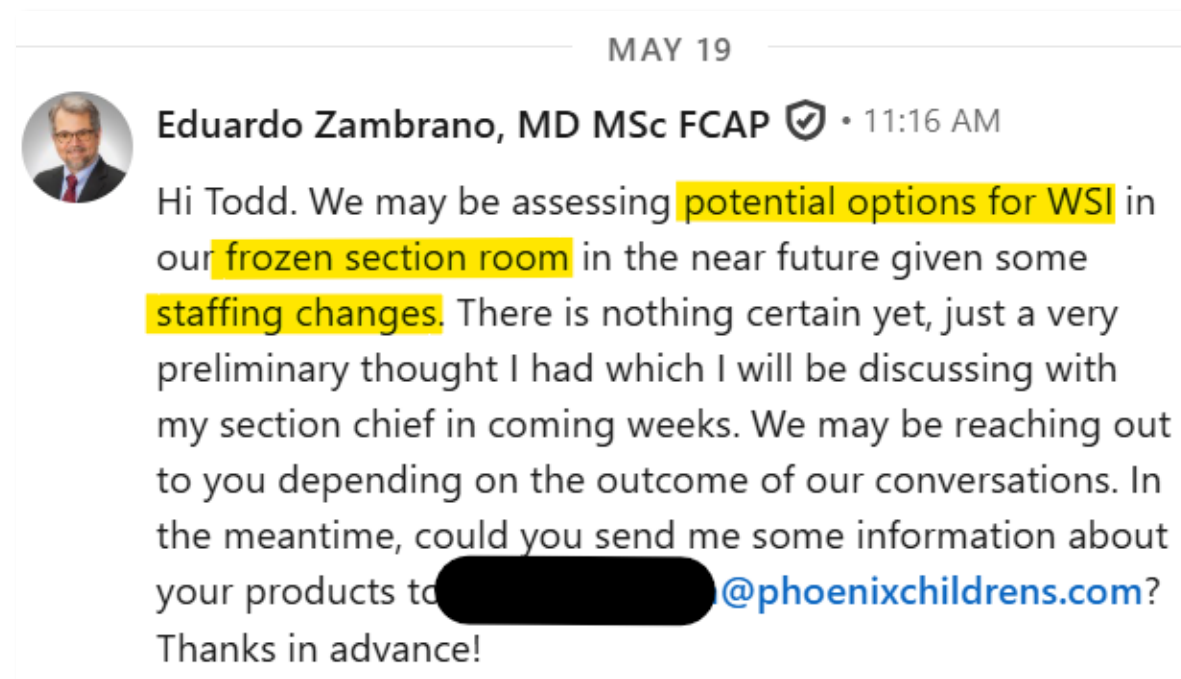


Patient Care

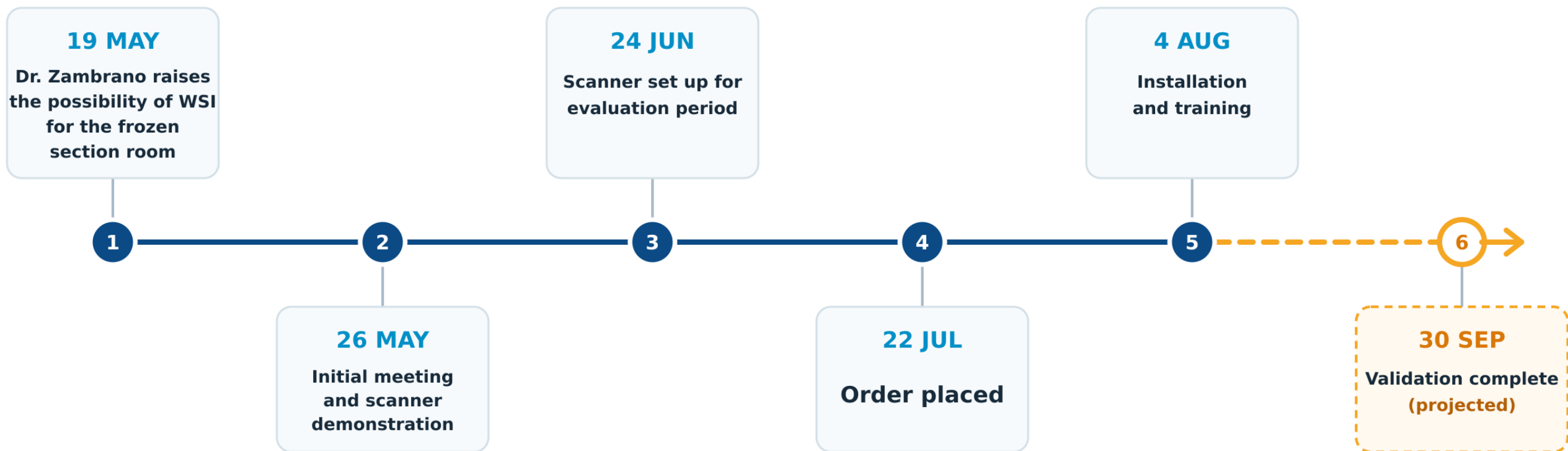
- Access to expertise
- Timely decision support

At PCH, digital pathology began with a coverage problem

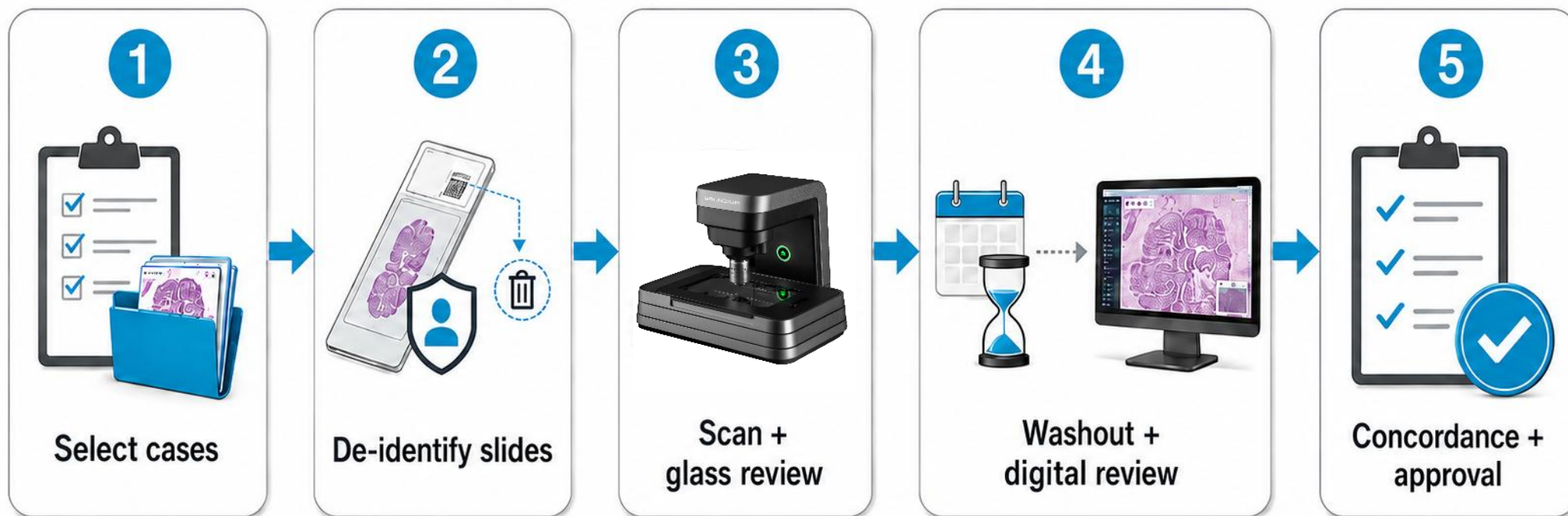
- Neuropathologist departed, creating an immediate need for dependable neuropath coverage
- Frozen sections made the gap significant because intraoperative decisions cannot wait for expertise to travel
- Began exploring how WSI could connect our frozen section room with neuropath expertise at outside locations
- The clinical problem defined the use case before the technology was selected



In < 4 months, a preliminary question became a defined path

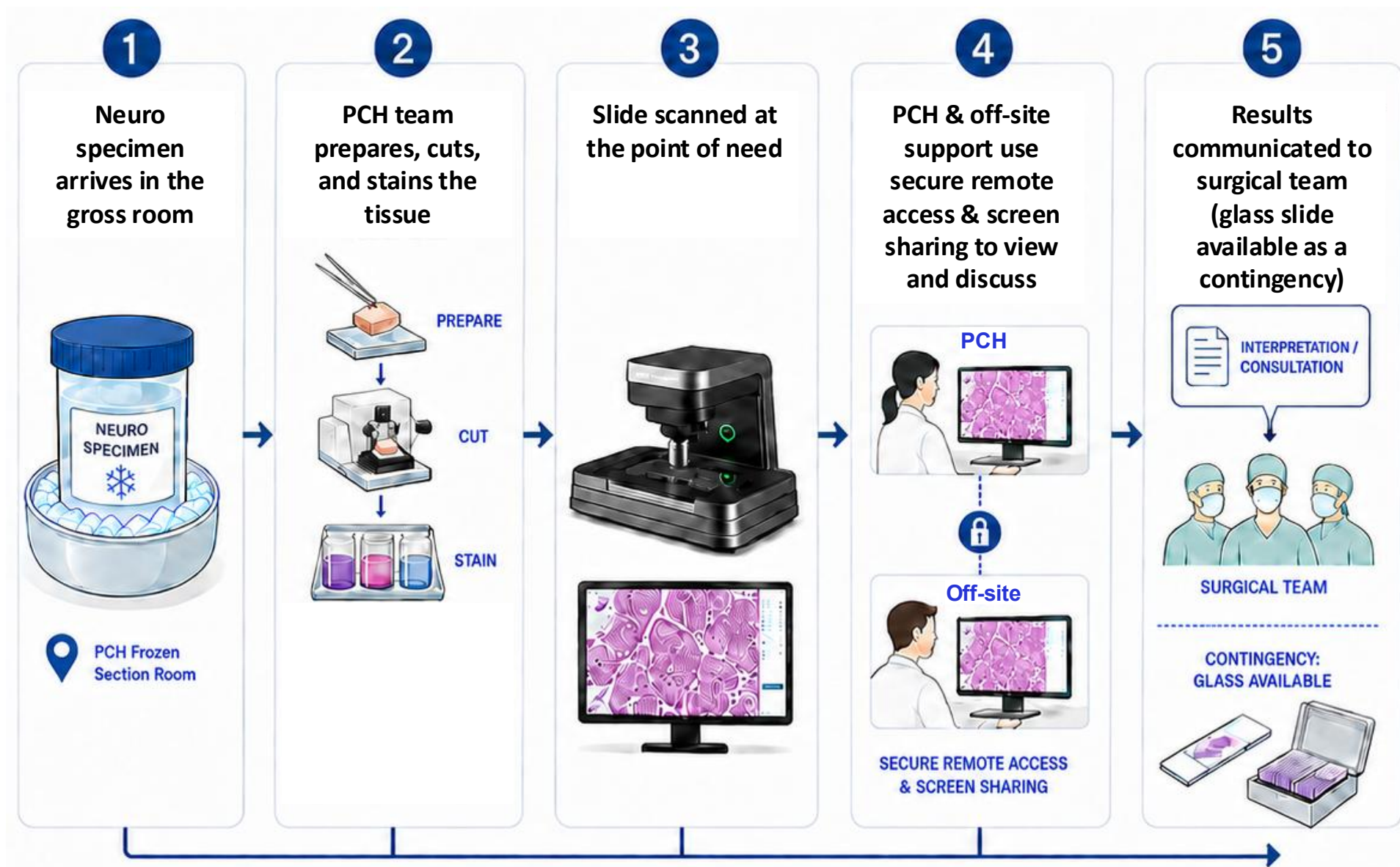


Validation turns a workflow into a clinical process



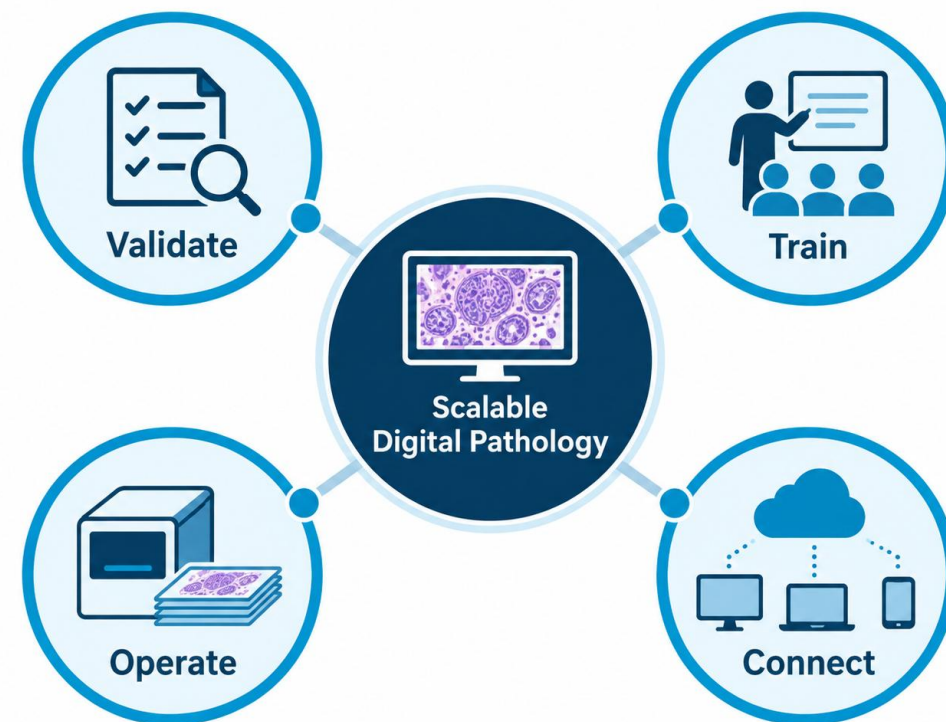
- Representative cases selected for the intended use
- Slides de-identified and tracked
- Glass and digital reviews compared after wash-out
- Discrepancies adjudicated before final approval
- Records maintained for ongoing QA

This will bring neuropathology expertise to the frozen room



This use case is building capabilities PCH will need at scale

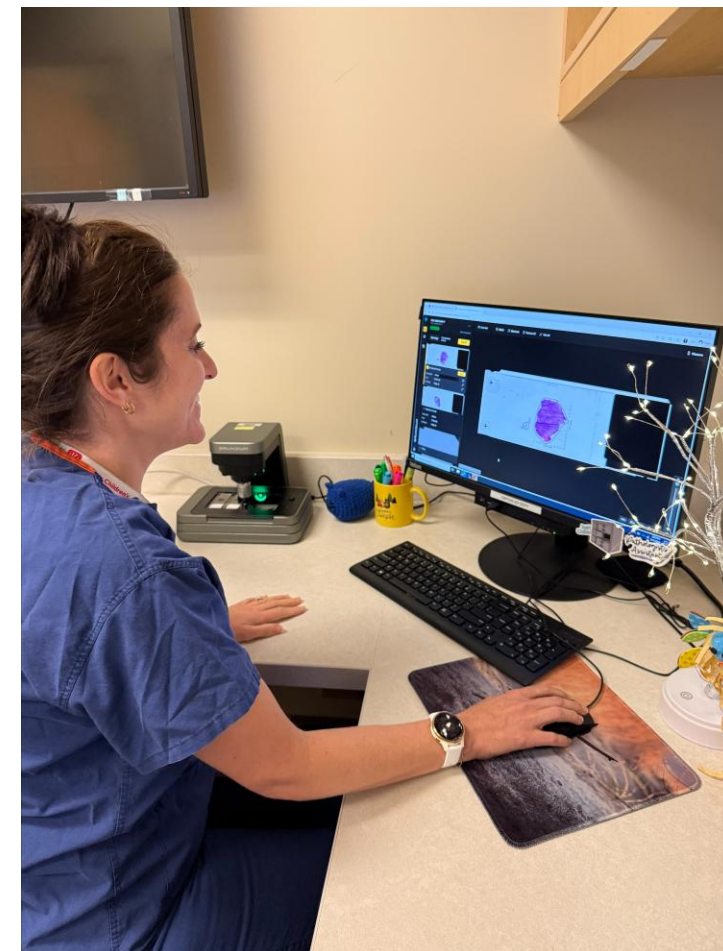
- **Validate:** Intended-use cases, image quality, glass-digital concordance, documentation, and approval
- **Train:** PAs, pathologists, super users, competency, and confidence
- **Operate:** Labeling, scanning handoffs, QC, turnaround time, rescans, and downtime contingencies
- **Connect:** Network performance, remote access, screen sharing, cybersecurity, and technical support



Practical advice from the PCH experience

1. Solve a problem that matters to patient care.
2. Design the workflow with the people doing the work.
3. Validate it, practice it and document what you learn.

This experience will make PCH a better-informed buyer as it evaluates enterprise-level digital pathology.



Digitizing slides makes labs “future-ready”

- DP is moving toward more connected, computational workflows
 - Industry consolidation is accelerating this move

CAP TODAY

INDUSTRY NEWS

May 21, 2026

Grundium acquires Visiopharm, adding AI software to its scanner portfolio

NEWS | DIGITAL PATHOLOGY | MAY 7, 2026

Roche to Acquire PathAI to Drive Digital Pathology Diagnostics

Aug 22, 2025 9:20 AM Eastern Daylight Time

Tempus Announces the Acquisition of Paige

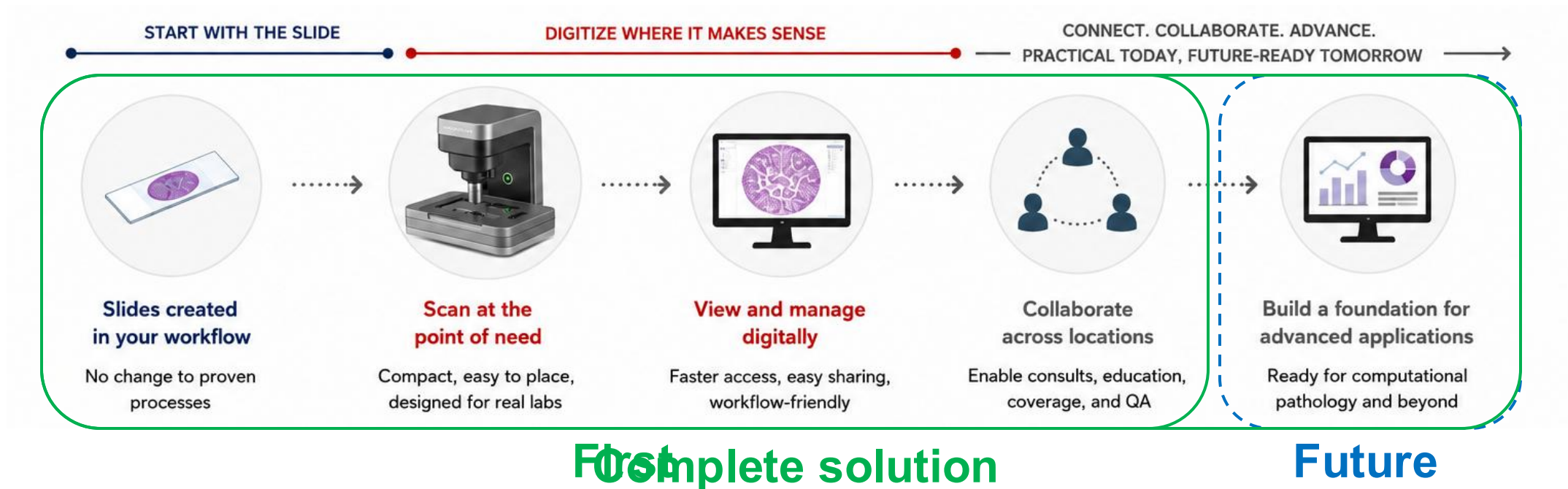
JPM26: AstraZeneca bids to accelerate oncology R&D with Modella AI acquisition

The company is embracing AI integration throughout drug development, aiming to improve efficiency and drive portfolio expansion.

Jam Bensilum | January 14, 2026

We cannot build computational pathology without digitization

- AI depends on reliable digital slide capture
- Practical adoption today creates readiness for advanced applications tomorrow



A practical path to digital pathology adoption

- Start with a real workflow problem
- Keep the first use case focused
- Support users with training and super-user leadership
- Build confidence through routine use
- Expand thoughtfully toward broader digital and computational pathology capabilities

***Digital pathology is becoming more connected and leading to computational pathology and AI but...
the first step is still practical digitization.***

Digital Pathology Without the Drama

Q & A