

BIOSKETCH

Elizabeth R. Unger, PhD, MD

Elizabeth Unger is Acting Chief, Chronic Viral Diseases Branch (CVDB) at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. She received an undergraduate degree in chemistry at Lebanon Valley College, Annville, PA, and entered the graduate division of biologic sciences at the University of Chicago where she earned her PhD and MD. She entered a pathology residency also at the University of Chicago. She completed her residency and fellowship at Pennsylvania State University Hershey Medical Center where her focus on molecular diagnostics began with development of a practical method of colorimetric in situ hybridization. She began a career in academic surgical pathology at Emory University, where in collaboration with Margaret Piper, PhD, she co-authored "DNA Probes: A primer for pathologists", an ASCP text that was the first to bring molecular methods to the diagnostic community. She was a founding member of the Association of Molecular Pathology. Her work with in situ hybridization led to her interest in tissue localization of HPV to understand HPV oncogenesis. This led to her collaboration with members of CVDB (then Viral Exanthems and Herpesvirus Branch) and her acceptance of a position at CDC in 1997 to pursue molecular pathology of HPV as well as Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS).

At CDC, Dr. Unger brought a clinical perspective to biospecimen collection, processing and testing in support of ongoing epidemiologic studies. She was a key member of the laboratory team initiating microarray technology to study gene expression in peripheral blood mononuclear cells. She currently leads research and public health studies encompassing molecular pathology of both HPV and CFS programs in CVDB. She is co-author of 136 peer-reviewed publications and 24 book chapters, is on the editorial board of the Journal of Molecular Diagnostics, Diagnostic Molecular Pathology and the Journal of Histochemistry and Cytochemistry, and has held leadership positions in the American Society for Investigative Pathology and the Histochemical Society.