



The Royal College of Pathologists

Pathology: the science behind the cure

RCPATH President's newsletter – July 2023



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President's Message

Embracing member engagement and reflecting on my 'Your College, Your profession' tour, September 2022 – January 2023

During the tour, which took place in 10 locations across the UK, I had the pleasure of meeting many of you in person. Our interactions were insightful and the discussions enlightening. It was a pleasure to hear your perspectives, challenges and aspirations.

You raised vitally important issues around workforce and retention, training and infrastructure. You also provided invaluable feedback on what you would like from us, including more support around exams and CPD as well as targeted communication relevant to your specialty, career stage and region.

I'm grateful for the time you took to share your thoughts and concerns, which are invaluable in shaping our understanding of the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

I am also pleased to announce the launch of our [new member engagement pages](#) which also [hosts a video](#) capturing some of your feedback. These pages will continue to serve as a platform to keep you updated on our actions following your feedback. This is where we will also share information about future member engagement activities, helping you to stay connected and engaged with the College.

Workforce Plan – commitment to the plan needed if its real promise is to be fulfilled

The long-awaited long-term [NHS workforce plan](#) was published at the end of June by NHS England and the Department of Health and Social Care. I was pleased to be [interviewed by Sky News](#) on the day of publication to give an initial College response to the plan.

NHS England's Chief Workforce Officer Navina Evans and Professor Sir Steve Powis, National Medical Director, have [sent a letter](#) to medical royal colleges thanking us for our feedback to the plan.

The plan focuses on 3 key areas – training, retention and reform and is supported and funded through an extra £2.4 billion over the next 5 years to open additional education and training places.

[We welcome the 3-pronged approach.](#) All of these elements are vital, as is a long-term commitment to the plan if the real promise of this announcement is to be fulfilled.

There is a great deal of detail in the plan and several new initiatives were announced. We are taking time to analyse the plan thoroughly and will respond further.

RCPATH Workforce Survey 2023

Thank you to all who participated in the 2023 College Workforce survey. Over the coming months, we will be analysing the data and sharing key findings with you.

This will be the first time we have brought together all these data sources. Your contribution is vital in helping us gain insights into the current state of the workforce, enabling us to advocate on your behalf with the aim to deliver a properly staffed pathology workforce.

We thank you for your time and effort in providing us with the information as without your support this work would not be possible. If you have any queries regarding the above, please contact workforce@rcpath.org.

Engagement with parliamentarians

[All Party Parliamentary Group for Diagnostics](#)

Chaired by Maggie Throup MP, [the APPG](#) facilitated two evidence gathering sessions on Community Diagnostic Centres. At the first session, attendees heard from Professor Mike Richards, Dr Rhydian Phillips, Dr Clive Vandervelde, myself and others about CDC locations, workforce capacity, digital infrastructure and progress on targets.

The second session brought together colleagues who have experience of setting up and running CDCs with a focus on regional case studies and the successes and challenges encountered. This session also looked at strategies for the future of the CDC programme, covering topics such as ensuring CDCs are in locations of need, patient experience and increasing equitable access and improving patient pathways.

There were some clear outcomes from the meeting; although this phase of the CDC programme is progressing well, workforce and digital infrastructure still remain two of the biggest challenges. As joint secretariat of the APPG with the Royal College of Radiologists, we will be publishing a report covering findings from both sessions in the autumn.

Stakeholder engagement

- Thank you to everyone at [County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust](#) for making my visit to their labs so useful, informative and enjoyable. There were many useful insights on how best to deliver high quality care.
- I joined a fantastic meeting for [Liverpool pathology 2023](#) organised by the Pathological Society and the British Division of the International Academy of Pathology. This multidisciplinary meeting brought together histopathologists, molecular pathologists, scientists, clinicians, laboratory technicians, trainees, PhD students and undergraduates to hear

about the latest advances in our rapidly changing specialty.

- We were delighted that the Mayor of Northampton, Cllr Hibbert, joined Care Northampton in celebrating [National Pathology Week](#) to highlight the role pathology plays in fertility treatments.

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A PDF version of this e-newsletter is available at
[RCPATH newsletters](#)

Working for members

Important update: Cancer reporting tick box proforma removed from datasets

In a significant decision, the College will be removing the cancer reporting tick box proforma from all newly published datasets. The move comes after careful consideration and feedback from the Working Group on Cancer Services. Instead, the list reporting format will be the sole method for reporting cancer data. This change is driven by limited usage and safety concerns associated with tick box proformas, as well as the need to comply with the electronic data delivery requirement of the Acute Trust contract. Pathologists' widespread shift to electronic reporting systems and positive feedback on the list reporting proforma further support this decision.

Members are encouraged to share their thoughts and feedback via email to clinicaleffectiveness@rcpath.org by 10 August 2023 to ensure alignment with their needs.

Old LEPT ePortfolio items

Are you a College member who used the old LEPT system when you were training? The old LEPT system will cease to exist on 15 December 2023 and the content will be irretrievably deleted. If your specialty is listed below and you used the old LEPT system to record items as part of your pathology training, then you can now download your whole ePortfolio to your own device for safekeeping:

Chemical pathology, diagnostic neuropathology, forensic histopathology, histopathology, medical microbiology, oral maxillofacial pathology training, paediatric and perinatal pathology and medical virology.

Existing trainees who are continuing training using the new LEPT system do not need to download their training items from the old LEPT system. This is because their training items have migrated across to the new LEPT system, from which training items can be downloaded anytime.

For further information and to request access to the old LEPT system, please contact the LEPT team at leptdownload@rcpath.org

The Pathology Portal

The Pathology Portal now hosts over 3,700 resources including cases, videos, podcasts, quizzes for assessing learning and other relevant materials. The user base of the Pathology Portal has reached 1,500 users and continues to grow.

If you have not already joined, more information about the Pathology Portal is available on the [College website](#).

The Pathology Portal's resources have been launched an incredible 40,000 times; it is great to see that the content is being utilised and contributing to the continuous professional development of pathologists worldwide.

The Pathology Portal welcomes 3 new professionals who have joined the Pathology Portal's Editorial Board. Dr Ramsay-Stubbs will support us in creating microbiology content and Dr Lavisha Punjabi will be helping to develop resources around thoracic pathology and cytology. Dr Katherine Syred is donating an extensive slide collection in thoracic, soft tissue and skin pathology.

The Pathology Portal will also be hosting an amyloidosis course produced by Myeloma UK.

If you have any questions, suggestions, or believe you have content suitable for the platform, please contact pathologyportal@rcpath.org.

RCPATH Achievement Award Winners 2023

The RCPATH Achievement Award winners exemplify excellence in pathology practice, education and training. This year, 5 teams were presented with an [RCPATH Achievement Award](#). We were delighted to showcase this year's winning teams from across the UK and overseas. Covering a range of pathology specialties, they demonstrate teamwork at its best, ultimately improving the care and treatment of patients.

RCPATH/Specialist Society Medical Elective small grant scheme

Applications for this year's RCPATH/Specialist Society Medical Elective small grant scheme is now open!

The RCPATH/Specialist Society Medical Elective small grant is a new scheme launched to mark the College's Diamond Jubilee in 2022.

The scheme is joint funded by RCPATH and partner societies from different disciplines. It offers small grants of up to £1,000 to help support undergraduate medical and veterinary students who wish to undertake electives in pathology disciplines.

Electives may be clinical or research-based and may be undertaken in any part of the world. A minimum of £500 must be used for student travel and subsistence with the remaining amount being spent flexibly for project-related costs such as consumables, or for student costs, as appropriate for the project.

The closing date is Thursday 31 August 2023. Successful candidates will be informed in September/October 2023. More information can be found on the [College website](#).

Percy Oliver Memorial Award

The College's Transfusion Medicine Specialty Advisory Committee (SAC) is inviting nominations for this year's Percy Oliver Memorial Award.

The Memorial Award is given to an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to the field of blood transfusion. This year's category is TM Nursing.

Nominations and accompanying citations should be submitted to the SAC for consideration by 5pm Monday 31 July 2023 via Louise Mair at the Royal College of Pathologists (louise.mair@rcpath.org).

Please use the citation to describe your nominee's background, achievements, and contributions to the field of blood transfusion, in no more than 750 words; furthermore, please demonstrate the impact that they have made to the field.

Do you work in a small or specialist laboratory service?

The College is seeking contact with members who may be looking for, or who might be willing to offer, peer to peer support to colleagues working in similar fields. This might include those new to leadership roles in these services or those experienced in such roles. It might include those encountering new challenges in those roles or those who have experience of change. We hope to bring members with these unique experiences together to offer confidential peer to peer support and advice. Please contact richard.smith@rcpath.org if you would like to be involved.

CPD submission deadline

Your CPD submission deadline for 2022/2023 is 30 September 2023. Please submit your return [here](#).

If you have any queries, please contact the Member Engagement and Support Team on 020 7451 6720 or by email at: cpd@rcpath.org.

Get involved at the College

[3 Vice-President and RCPATH Scotland Regional Chair roles](#)

Nominations for the election of the College Vice Presidents, Registrar and Scotland Regional Chair are now open.

All eligible Fellows have been sent information directly by [Civica](#), who is managing the process on behalf of the College.

The Vice Presidents, Registrar and Scotland Regional Chair are Trustees of the Royal College of Pathologists, working closely with the Chair of the Trustee Board.

[Trustees](#) will use their skills and experience to make sure the College runs efficiently and delivers its strategic objectives. Please consider putting yourself forward for these vitally important roles.

Veterinary Pathology Specialty Advisory Committee

Professor Roberto La Ragione has kindly extended his term as Chair to the Veterinary Pathology Specialty Advisory Committee until November 2023 to allow us time to appoint a new Chair to the Veterinary Pathology Specialty Advisory Committee.

The recruitment has now commenced and the advert and nomination form is now live on the College [website](#). We would be grateful if you could please share and tweet the [link](#) across your networks and encourage colleagues to apply to Chair this lovely committee.

The deadline for applications is Monday 31 July at 5pm. Please note that existing members of the committee are welcome to apply for the role.

Testimonial from Professor Roberto La Ragione, Chair of the Veterinary Pathology Specialty Advisory Committee:

I have chaired the Veterinary Pathology Specialty Advisory Committee (SAC) for almost 7 years and thoroughly enjoyed the role. As an SAC Chair, you can make a real difference to the profession, through supporting trainees and qualified pathologists and microbiologists. The role also provides a unique opportunity to interface with the profession and represent veterinary pathology within the College and with other organisations, such as Defra, RCVS and BVA. If you would like to discuss the role further, please contact me via email – r.laragione@surrey.ac.uk.

Apply to be a CESR Assessor

If you are interested in becoming involved with the College, becoming a Certificate of Eligibility for Specialist Registration (CESR) assessor is a good way to do so. The role of a CESR assessor is to determine whether or not each CESR applicant meets the standard for their specialty and either recommend applicants for entry to the Specialist Register or outline what more needs to be done to meet the standard. Training and ongoing support will be provided and CESR assessors can self-accredit for CPD points for each CESR evaluation they undertake.

A role description and further information are available on the [College website](#). If you would like to apply, please send an email outlining how you meet the person specification, along with an abbreviated CV, to training@rcpath.org

Public Engagement

[National Pathology Week 2023 – Highlighting the role of pathology in patient care](#)

[National Pathology Week \(NPW\)](#) 2023 ran from 19 to 25 June. Our theme, 'Pathologists and Patients', inspired a huge range of events for public audiences around the UK. From a pop-up screening booth for inherited blood disorders at St David's shopping centre in Cardiff, to an afternoon tea celebrating 100 years of clinical biochemistry at Birmingham Children's Hospital, our members and their teams celebrated the work they do in diagnosing, preventing and treating disease in style! The College-led events included quizzes for undergraduates and an exhibition of some of the 2022 Art of Pathology Competition entries at the RCPATH Annual Dinner.

[RCPATH Science Communication Essay Prize – closes 17 July 2023](#)

This competition is kindly sponsored by Sonic Healthcare UK and is open to pathology trainees, Foundation doctors and undergraduates who have shown excellence in their science communication activities throughout the year. Each winner in the trainee and undergraduate category (which includes UK undergraduates and Foundation doctors) will receive £500 and be invited to accept their prize at the College's New Fellow's Ceremony.

[Art of Pathology Competition – closes 31 August 2023](#)

This competition is kindly sponsored by Sonic Healthcare UK and is open to UK and international entrants. There are 3 categories for entries: under 11s, 11–17 and adults (over 18). This year's theme is 'Pathologists and Patients'. Participants were invited to interpret this theme in their own unique and creative way, while exploring different aspects of pathology. Winners of each age category can win up to £1,000!

[Listen to the latest Pathologists in Profile Podcast episodes](#)

In our June episodes, we speak with Consultant Forensic Pathologist, Dr Matt Cieka. In part 1, find out about Matt's life and career. Matt's work combines forensic home office autopsy work with coroner's post-mortems. In part two, Matt talks us through a case study and demonstrates how he determines the cause of death.

New publications

Guidelines

The following guidelines have been recently published:

- [G179 Guidelines on autopsy practice: Deaths following known or suspected hanging](#)
- [G171 Guidelines on autopsy practice: The decomposing cadaver.](#)

The following guidelines are currently in consultation; [we welcome your feedback](#):

- Dataset for the histopathological reporting of thyroid cancer
- Tissue pathways for oral and head and neck pathology
- Guidelines on autopsy practice: Sudden unexpected deaths in infancy and childhood.

[Good Practice Series](#)

The 11th in the Good Practice series explains how medical examiners can approach dementia.

College conferences and symposia

[2023 RCPATH/IBMS North of England Symposium: Pathology and People](#)

Wednesday 18 October 2023

4 CPD Credits

Join us for the discounted price of £59.50 to attend.

The first learning event jointly hosted by RCPATH/IBMS aimed at those working in pathology across the North of England. This event will bring together professionals from all backgrounds and specialties to share learning relevant across our fields. Opportunities to meet and chat to colleagues working in pathology across the North of England

Sessions include:

- Opening plenary: The Future of Pathology – Debra Padgett, President of IBMS and Professor Mike Osborn, President of RCPATH
- Sustainability in Healthcare: James Dixon, Head of Sustainability at Newcastle Hospitals

The workshops cover:

- Wellbeing
- Leadership
- Innovation: Point of care testing strategy
- Sustainability
- Diversity and inclusion
- Training
- Quality
- Pathology networks
- Poster presentations – see call for digital abstracts
- Commercial partners and presentations

Medical examiner training

The College is the [lead medical royal college for medical examiners](#) and provides training for any doctor wishing to work as a medical examiner. Participants will need to complete 26 mandatory e-learning modules and attend an entire face-to-face training day to receive a certificate of completion. The day includes short presentations, small group discussions of case scenarios and the opportunity to share experience. Medical examiner training is open only to medically qualified individuals who work in England and Wales.

New medical examiners who successfully complete the training and the e-learning modules will be invited to join the College as members.

[Medical Examiner Training - Virtual \(rcpath.org\)](#)

Wednesday 6 December 2023

6 CPD credits

Medical examiner officer training

The College also leads on the training of [medical examiner officers](#) (MEOs).

MEOs work closely with medical examiners and undertake tasks such as coordinating the completion of death certificates and referrals to the coroner, and speaking to clinicians and bereaved families.

MEOs may come from a wide range of backgrounds. For example, nurses, healthcare scientists or bereavement officers although this list is not exhaustive. More information, including a [model job description, is on the College website.](#)

The face-to-face training day is the second part of MEO training. Everyone attending the course must have completed the 26 mandatory core e-learning modules before the date of the course to get the most out of the training day. The e-learning modules [can be accessed here.](#) (Registration with e-Learning for Healthcare is required.)

[Medical examiner officer training session – Virtual Training](#)

Friday 15 September

6 CPD credits

[Medical examiner officer training session – Virtual Training](#)

Wednesday 15 November

6 CPD credits

News from external organisations

[National Institute for Health and Care Research \(NIHR\) develops new e-learning programme](#)

NIHR has invested almost £1 million to create a new programme of e-learning content for health and care professionals with an interest in research.

The online modules are free to use. They are ideal for health professionals interested in a research career, even if they have little or no research experience so far.

For participants, the online approach will bring:

- free-to-use modules designed to fit their exact learning and training needs
- anytime online, tablet or mobile access. This means learning can fit around day-to-day workloads and other responsibilities.
- open access, with no application or membership of a college needed
- no stipulated end date, so users can complete the modules at their own pace.

The modules will be launched in phases by each college over the next 12 months. They will be available through the [NIHR Learn](#) platform.

Other external events of interest

[25–27 August 2023](#)

[The Diagnexia Histopathology Symposium 2023](#)

[09–10 September 2023](#)

[4th ILROG Educational Conference: Radiotherapy in Modern Management of Haematological Malignancies](#)

[11–15 September 2023](#)

[Clinical Interpretation and Implementation of Microbiological Sequencing Techniques course](#)

[20 September 2023](#)

[Immunomodulation Update Day](#)

[22 September 2023](#)

[UK CLL Forum Clinical Sciences Day](#)

[25 September – 16 October 2023](#)

[Virtual Lymphoma Management 2023](#)

[02–03 October 2023](#)

[British Association of Urological Pathologists Advanced Bladder Pathology Course](#)

[03 October 2023](#)

[Media training for IPC specialists](#)

[06 October 2023](#)

[Wessex & Gloucestershire Gastrointestinal Pathology Course](#)

[03 November 2023](#)

[Birmingham Breast Pathology Update Course 2023](#)

[08–09 November 2023](#)

[Infection 360](#)

[20–24 November 2023](#)

[Clinical Interpretation and Implementation of Microbiological Sequencing Techniques](#)

[24 November 2023](#)

[IPS IV Forum](#)

[04–07 December 2023](#)

[British Society for Immunology Congress 2023](#)

RCPATH CPD accredited online resources can be found at the following [link](#)