



The Royal College of Pathologists

Pathology: the science behind the cure

RCPATH President's newsletter – July 2024



President's Message

New Government

It's fair to say that the new government have hit the ground running, with much enthusiasm and a refreshing and honest dialogue emerging with the medical profession and the public that we have not seen for many years. The challenges are clearly the same with waiting lists, estate backlogs, archaic IT systems and most importantly staff shortages.

We have already established a fruitful relationship with the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, Wes Streeting, which we will build on. His remit covers the NHS and social care in England only, so it is vital that we continue ongoing dialogue with the existing devolved healthcare teams.

Once a fuller picture emerges, we will establish relationships with the wider health team and their shadows, and with health representatives from other parties. We will be writing to them to arrange meetings and offer laboratory visits.

There are over 300 successful candidates who have become MPs for the first time, and it's likely that few of this new intake of MPs will be aware how vital pathology is to prevention, diagnosis, and treatment. We'll work hard to raise the profile of pathologists and pathology – crucial when decisions are being made about workforce, investment and health policy priorities.

In the autumn, we will re-establish our [All-Party Parliamentary Group for Diagnostics](#). We will also review the membership of Select Committees and other All-Party Parliamentary Groups to continue our programme of engagement.

 [Facebook](#)

 [Twitter](#)

 [Website](#)

 [Instagram](#)

We have already done work to promote our [key election priorities](#) to MPs, outlining some of the key challenges you face in delivering the best patient care.

The Lord Darzi Independent Investigation into the Performance of the National Health Service in England Review

A short life review of the NHS in England has been commissioned by government and Lord Darzi will lead on this. It is due to report in September, so only a very light touch overview is expected. I am delighted that both I and RCPATH immediate past president, Prof Mike Osborn, have been selected to join the Expert Reference Group (ERG) for the review. Clearly the review will be about collecting and presenting data about how the NHS is currently working (or not). It is vital we are able to highlight the challenges we face across pathology services and that significant investment in buildings, equipment, automation, IT and most importantly the training of pathologists and scientists is urgently required. You, as members of this College need to contribute and help formulate our response – your profession depends on it.

Threats to pathology service continuity and the need for contingency planning.

Pathology services are vital for healthcare. Typically this is best exemplified when things go wrong that impact service delivery, and the true importance of pathology is revealed. Increasing threats from IT failures/security breaches, supply chain failure, regulatory induced withdrawal of products and sadly service collapse as a result of workforce shortages are becoming more frequent.

It is important that we anticipate and have ready to go contingencies in place to mitigate such impact and ensure that if we cannot do what is best for patients, then we do the best we can.

This is why our focus on workforce/workload strategy includes a pillar for contingency planning given the short to medium term capacity is unlikely to be there. Sadly as we have seen many Paediatric & Perinatal services collapse in recent months, despite mutual aid processes in place, the need for emergency protocols to salvage remnants of service as best we can are now being enacted, while at the same time ensuring we are open and transparent with parents and families. This is so important and will be an unwelcome but familiar part of our services for the foreseeable future and it is our responsibility to deliver on this while ensuring

that visibility and longer term solutions are in place. ***This College will stand up for pathology and for patients in this regard.***

The Covid Inquiry - Module 1 Report – The resilience and preparedness of the United Kingdom

This first report from the [Covid Inquiry](#) was published recently and was very damning regarding not just the lack of preparedness that existed across the UK leading up to the pandemic but the way in which Government in particular had ignored the clear warnings and recommendations from even their own audits and reviews. The next pandemic is described as *when* not *if*, and while much experience has been gathered from the Covid-19 era, it's clear that the readiness, capacity and resilience of the NHS may now be even less than before.

Diagnostic testing and infection prevention and control played a huge part and it is important that we continue to highlight the need for potent contingency planning that enables our services to both cope and scale up at pace when required.

Celebrating excellence RCPath Achievement Awards 2024

It was a real privilege and pleasure to be able to present six pathology teams with an RCPath Achievement Award at the College's annual dinner in June.

Four awards were given to teams who have achieved above and beyond what would be expected in their usual course of their work, exemplifying excellence in pathology practice for the benefit of patients.

This year we also introduced a new award category for Sustainability. This was won by two exceptional teams. Read more about the winning [teams on the College website](#).

Dr Bernie Croal
President, The Royal College of Pathologists
X: [@RCPath](#)

In this issue:

- [PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE](#)
- [WORKING FOR MEMBERS](#)
- [GET INVOLVED AT THE COLLEGE](#)
- [INTERNATIONAL](#)
- [NEW PUBLICATIONS](#)
- [COLLEGE CONFERENCES AND EVENTS](#)
- [OTHER EVENTS OF INTEREST](#)

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

Working for members

The College's 5-year strategy 2024–2029

The College's new five-year strategy was developed with our members and pathology services at its core. It highlights the College's values, aims and our collective mission to shape the future of pathology. Visit: [RCPATH 5-year strategy](#).

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

The RCPATH/Specialist Society Medical Elective Small Grant Scheme was introduced as a new initiative to commemorate the College's Diamond Jubilee in 2022. This scheme is a collaborative effort between RCPATH and partner societies representing various disciplines. It aims to provide financial assistance of up to £1,000 to undergraduate medical and veterinary students who are interested in pursuing electives in pathology disciplines.

These electives can be either clinical or research-based and can be undertaken anywhere in the world. More information can be found on the [College](#) website. The deadline for submission is Monday 30 September 2024. Successful applicants will be notified in October 2024.

Race in Medicine Seminar

The Royal College of Pathologists Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Network, and the [Pathological Society](#), is pleased to be able to invite you to join us for a half-day seminar to discuss [race in medicine](#).

Delegates will have the opportunity to hear Professor Andrea Deyrup and Professor Joseph Graves Jr talk about their research into racialisation of disease in medicine in the US (and beyond). This is the first time they have presented their cutting-edge research in the UK, and we are excited to help them share their findings.

After their talks, delegates will have an opportunity to discuss the learning we can take away for UK pathology practice and how this might influence clinical practice, teaching, research, and EDI

initiatives at a national and local level. Please contact reshma.patel@rcpath.org for more information. For more information about the College's EDI work [visit the website](#).

International Collaboration on Cancer Reporting Dataset Consultation

The ICCR invites you to review the draft of Prostate datasets. Access the documents and consultation at [ICCR Datasets Under Consultation](#) and submit your comments by Friday, 23 August 2024.

[RCPath Science Communication Prize – enter by 29 July](#)

Our [Science Communication Prize](#) is an award given to a pathology trainee, Foundation doctor or undergraduate who has shown excellence in their science communication activities throughout the year. Two prizes of £500 will be awarded, one for each of the following categories.

- Trainee category - UK pathology trainees
- Undergraduate category - UK undergraduates and Foundation doctors.

This annual prize is kindly sponsored by [Sonic Healthcare UK](#). Submit your application by 29 July 2024. Find out more [here](#).

[Art of Pathology Competition – open to all](#)

The College's annual [Art of Pathology competition](#) is an opportunity for people of all ages to submit paintings, drawings, sculptures, digital art, collages or any other media on a specific theme. This year's theme is 'The Science Behind the Cure'. Participants are invited to interpret this theme in their own unique and creative way, while exploring different aspects of pathology.

There are 3 categories for entries: under 11s, 11–17 and adults (over 18s). The Art of Pathology competition is kindly sponsored by [Sonic Healthcare UK](#) and closes on 30 August 2024. Find out more about the competition and get inspired by previous winners [here](#).

[Volunteering Opportunities – The Access Project](#)

RCPath members and Fellows are invited to consider volunteering as a tutor for [The Access Project](#).

The Access Project supports pupils from under-resourced backgrounds to access top universities. We are looking for undergraduates, postgraduates, staff, and alumni who would be able to tutor a young person aged 14-16, online, one hour a week in term-time Autumn 2024- Summer 2025 to support them with their academic studies. No prior teaching or tutoring experience necessary, we provide a full comprehensive training and induction to help you build the confidence to be the best volunteer you can be. We'll match you with a student who is looking for support in your subject. Find out more and [sign up here](#).

Di-Blood-UK: Survey on Bloodstream Infections

NITCAR invites microbiologists to participate in a survey on blood culture diagnostic practices in UK labs. The goal is to identify potential improvements in diagnostic protocols.

For full details and the survey link, visit: [NITCAR website](#).

Deadline: Wednesday, 31 July 2024.

Upcoming CPD Submission Deadline – Action Required

We are delighted to remind you of the [CPD portfolio service](#) offered by the College. This service enables you to record and monitor your CPD activities, and also allows you to download an annual CPD statement - a valuable resource for your appraisals.

Important Aspects of the CPD Cycle

CPD year: The College's CPD year runs from 1 April to 31 March of the following year.

Recording activities: We encourage members to [record CPD activities](#) promptly as they undertake them.

CPD returns: Please complete [your CPD return](#) for the 2023/2024 CPD year within six months following the CPD year end, by 30 September.

Need Assistance?

For any queries or assistance, please contact our member engagement and support team at cpd@rcpath.org.

The Pathology Portal

The Pathology Portal offers an extensive collection of over 5,500 resources across various specialties. These include long and short cases, informative lectures, recap videos, podcasts, and quizzes, all designed to support pathologists at every stage of their career. The platform has been accessed over 175,000 times by almost 4,000 users from diverse backgrounds.

The editorial teams across a range of specialties have been doing great work, with new resources being added daily. We invite those who haven't joined the Pathology Portal to explore the platform's wealth of resources.

We invite those who have not yet joined the Pathology Portal to explore the platform and its extensive resources. For more information on how to join, please visit [Pathology Portal](#).

We appreciate your ongoing support and encourage you to share your feedback, questions, suggestions, or content by contacting us at pathologyportal@rcpath.org.

Get involved in the College

The College is currently advertising the following posts:

[Medical Microbiology Recruitment Lead](#), closing date: 2 August.

A medical microbiologist is sought to lead recruitment on behalf of the specialty. Working with specialty leads in medical virology and infectious diseases, the medical microbiology recruitment lead will help plan, co-ordinate and review key aspects of the recruitment process in order to help appoint successful candidates to the infection training programmes.

Joint Medical Microbiology and Medical Virology Specialty Advisory Committee

The recruitment for a specialty member of the Joint Medical Microbiology and Medical Virology SAC has begun 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 be on this fantastic committee. The deadline for applications is Friday, 26 July at 5pm.

Sustainability Lead for Pathology Practice

This role offers the opportunity to get involved with an emerging initiative. Applications are invited from Fellows of the College.

The College has agreed that Daniel Ross, Chief Executive, is the Sustainability Lead for College operations, whilst the appointee will play a crucial role in advancing sustainability initiatives across the wider pathology community.

Clinical Director of International Activities

This role offers the opportunity to get involved with several exciting international projects. Applications are invited from Fellows of the College. The appointee will work closely with the Director of Learning and the International team, and be responsible to the Vice President for Learning, providing the College's strategic direction on all international matters.

RCPATH Consulting Deputy Clinical Lead

This role offers the opportunity to get involved with providing a range of consultancy services. Applications are invited from those who have been Fellows of the College for seven years or more. The appointee will work with, and deputise for, the RCPATH Consulting Clinical Lead on agreed areas of work.

More information, including job descriptions, application forms and closing dates, available from the [College website](#). Please contact Fiona Addiscott, Business Administration Officer, with any queries businessadministration@rcpath.org

Regional news

Please hold the date for the following regional symposia:

RCPATH Northern Ireland Symposium 2024

This is an in-person only event.

Date & Time: 19 September 2024, 9.30am-2pm

Venue: Postgraduate Medical Centre, Belfast City Hospital, 51 Lisburn Road, Belfast BT9 7AB

RCPATH Wales Symposium 2024

This is an in-person only event.

Date & Time: 25 October 2024, 1pm-5pm

Venue: to be confirmed

International

Global Antimicrobial Resistance Webinar Series

Our 6-part Global Antimicrobial Resistance Webinar series has completed. The speakers provided country perspectives from Australia, Canada, Cuba, Hong Kong, India, Kenya, Nigeria, Qatar, Sri Lanka, the United Arab Emirates and the UK. We had hundreds of attendees join from around the world. We would like to thank our Clinical Director for Publishing and Engagement, Professor Angharad Davies for creating and moderating these webinars, the speakers for their thoroughly engaging presentations and all those who attended over the course of the series. If you would like to watch the webinar recordings, you can find them on our [website here](#).

Join Professor Sally Davis, UK Special Envoy for AMR at this year's International Pathology Day. – 6 November - Save the date!

We are delighted to welcome Professor Dame Sally Davies, the UK's Special Envoy on Antimicrobial Resistance, as the keynote at speaker our virtual IPD conference - 'The Rise of Global Antimicrobial Resistance'. Additional speakers will be announced in the coming weeks.

Inspired by our recent 6-part free '[Global Antimicrobial Resistance Webinar Series](#),' our signature roundtable discussion will focus on global perspectives on AMR. We are also pleased to bring back the poster competition. Check our main [event page](#) for updates on speaker announcements, details about the poster competition, and access to free virtual IPD resources as they become available. To register to attend visit our [booking page](#)

Call for Expressions of Interest: contribute to the development of modules for a 12-week POCT course

We are pleased to announce an opportunity for clinical scientists and doctors to contribute to the development and delivery of content, including a presentation, 10 multiple choice questions (MCQs), supplementary resources and provision of email support for one of two modules in a 12-week online Point-of-Care Testing (POCT) course. This course is being piloted by the Aga Khan University in Kenya. The modules to be developed are:

- POCT Connectivity and IT
- POCT Communications

This initiative is part of a broader project aimed at enhancing the quality of chemical pathology training and service provision in Ghana, Kenya, and Nigeria. This project is funded by the Tropical Health Education Trust Global Health Workforce Programme, supported by the UK Department of Health and Social Care. Timelines are short presentations and the recording of them must be completed by the beginning of September. If you are interested, please contact international@rcpath.org

New publications

The Bulletin

The [July Bulletin](#) investigates pathology at the cutting edge, exploring the pioneering advances in the diagnosis and treatment of disease. The issue features articles on mRNA cancer vaccines, bacteriophages, T-cell lymphoma treatments and CRISPR-Cas9 gene therapies.

Guideline consultations

The following College guidelines are in consultation:

- [Best practice recommendations: Histocompatibility and immunogenetics services](#) (deadline 29 July)
- [G135 Tissue pathways for non-neoplastic thoracic pathology](#) (deadline 31 July)
- [Dataset for histopathological reporting of tumours of the central nervous system in adults, including the pituitary gland](#) (deadline 5 August)
- [Best practice recommendations: Code of practice and performance standards for forensic pathology in England, Wales and Northern Ireland](#) (deadline 8 August).

Blogs

[Dr Chris Tiplady's new blog](#), 'Time management – Everything is urgent, so nothing is', explores the pressure of time prioritisation.

College Courses

[Learning lessons from coroners' reports – Preventable Deaths Tracker](#)

1pm, Tuesday 30 July 2024

CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)

One in five deaths are avoidable, yet there is no system in place to investigate these deaths. The Preventable Deaths Tracker is a vigilance platform that provides the first database of all published coroner reports in England and Wales. In this talk, Dr Richards will share insights about the development of the Tracker and the future research as the new 2024 King's Prize Fellow.

This event will take place via zoom at 1:00pm and last approximately 1 hour.

[Autopsy webinar series – Autopsy renal pathology](#)

1pm, Wednesday 18 September 2024

CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)

This webinar will discuss common renal pathology encountered in routine autopsy practice, and the value of renal histology in understanding causes of death.

This event will take place via zoom at 1:00pm and last approximately 1 hour.

[How drug-related deaths analysis can inform coronial investigations](#)

1pm, Wednesday 25 September 2024

CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)

In this webinar, Dr Copeland will demonstrate how the NPSUM data can be used to inform coronial investigations of drug-related deaths, including the value of considering individual decedent demographics (e.g., age, gender, ethnicity, body mass index) when interpreting toxicology results, and the identification of novel drug-drug interactions which can impact drug toxicity profiles.

This event will take place via zoom at 12:30pm and last approximately 1 hour.

[Diagnostic Neurobiomarkers – webinar](#)

1pm, Thursday 10 October 2024

CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)

In this webinar Dr Hart will discuss the role of various biomarkers to aid the diagnosis of neurological disease and will describe recent advances in the fields of neurodegeneration and neuroinflammation.

This event will take place via zoom at 1:00pm and last approximately 1 hour.

[Autopsy webinar series – Sickle cell disease](#)

1pm, Wednesday 16 October 2024

CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)

This event will take place via zoom at 1:00pm and last approximately 1 hour.

[Autopsy webinar series - Post Mortem CT](#)

1pm, Wednesday 20 November 2024

CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)

During this session we will discuss how the CTPM service in Leicester operates, the triaging of cases for CTPM (plain or angiography), the importance of our consultant radiologist colleagues in reporting the images and how this guides us with either providing a cause of death or by refining our subsequent investigations in determining the cause of death e.g. limited or targeted invasive post mortem examination +/- histology, microbiology/virology.

This event will take place at 1:00pm and last approximately 1 hour.

[Autopsy webinar series – The Human Tissue Authority](#)

27 November 2024

CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)

This event will take place via zoom at 1:00pm and last approximately 1 hour.

[From snails to sperm whales: PMs across 10 orders of magnitude](#)

1pm, Thursday 28 November 2024

CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)

Dr Simon Spiro is the veterinary pathologist for the Zoological Society of London, where he is responsible for the diagnostic pathology of the society's 23,000 animals of 800 species. He is also the pathologist for the Cetacean Strandings Investigation Programme (CSIP) which investigates dead whales, dolphins, sharks, turtles, and seals in English and Welsh waters. In this talk he will cover the

what, where, how and why of wildlife pathology, covering everything from the practicalities of performing post mortem examinations on everything from tiny invertebrates up to massive whales, to the science and conservation work that results. This talk will cover topics such as cholesterol mediated diseases in meerkats, bacterial diseases in bats and orthopaedic disease in whales, all told with the aid of pictures, video and digital microscopy.

This event will take place via zoom at 1:00pm and last approximately 1 hour.

[Autopsy webinar series - Resuscitation and pre-hospital care-related injuries](#)

1pm, Wednesday 11 December 2024

CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)

This event will take place via zoom at 1:00pm and last approximately 1 hour.

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 mandatory 26 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.

Please contact the college events team for further information on training dates on meetings@rcpath.org.

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.)

Please contact the college events team for further information on training dates on meetings@rcpath.org.

Other external events of interest

21-23 August 2024

[The Diagnexia Histopathology Symposium 2024](#)

01-05 September 2024

[International Biennial Pseudomonas Conference](#)

09-10 September 2024

[Lymphoma Management 2024](#)

13 September 2024

[UK and Ireland myeloproliferative neoplasms educational day for allied health professionals, nurses and pharmacists](#)

24 September 2024

[7th South West Stem Cell Transplant Day](#)

26-27 September 2024

[Cardiac Biomarkers in Real Time: Experiences and opportunities](#)

27 September 2024

[Chimeric antigen receptor T-cell therapy \(CAR T\) Therapy for Autoimmune Disease](#)

30 September -01 October

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

04 October 2024

[National Acute lymphoblastic leukaemia \(ALL\) Update Day](#)

04-05 October 2024

[Irish Society of Surgical Pathology Annual Scientific Meeting](#)

09 October 2024

[South West Haemostasis and Thrombosis Meeting](#)

Our full programme of CPD events can be found on the members' [website](#).

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