



The Royal College of Pathologists

Pathology: the science behind the cure

RCPATH President's newsletter – February 2025



President's Message

[Our Workforce Census is now live](#)

If there is one thing you do this week, then please find the email (from email@boxsurveys.net, which might be in Junk) sent to all members linking to our new workforce census. It is vital that we gather as much useful workforce data as possible so that we can strengthen our case across workforce, investment and technology need in the future.

The data collected from our UK members will be the foundation for understanding current and future workforce and workload trends – critical insights that will shape how we train, retain and reform pathology services. It is also vital information for influencing Government and policy makers to recognise and invest in services. All invited UK members will have received a personalised census link in their inbox from our research partner, Research by Design.

If you haven't completed the census, we urge you to do so. We need responses from every invited participant so please check your inbox (including your junk inbox) and complete your census today.

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The first few months of the year have been typically busy across the College. We have also seen significant government output and decision making both in the UK but also across the world that will affect healthcare.

The new United States President and his administration, in particular, are having a huge impact on worldwide politics and decision making. This includes healthcare policy, immigration, environmental sustainability, domestic and defence spending, foreign policy and international aid. In particular, withdrawal from the World Health Organisation, reduction of foreign aid and changes to how the US Food and Drug Administration and US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are run will have significant effect on pandemic monitoring, vaccination programmes in struggling economies and availability of healthcare data – for example the sudden removal of LGBT health, infectious disease and vaccination data from the CDC online resources this month, following an executive order from President Trump, has provoked much condemnation.

NHS 10-Year Health Plan

We await the publication of the 10 Year Health Plan for the NHS in England – probably May 2025. While we are not expecting explicit mention of pathology to any significant degree, we know that almost everything that is mentioned will rely hugely on pathology services to succeed. We will base our argument around the need for an expanded workforce, capital and revenue spend, increases across automation, IT, digital and AI. There will need to be a fresh approach to diagnostic stewardship that brings all stakeholders together to define and control appropriate testing. Much of this can be anticipated and predicted, so we are making a start now to prepare our output.

National Cancer Plan

The Department for Health and Social Care has called for evidence to [shape the national cancer plan for England](#). Central to cancer diagnosis, treatment and monitoring, this is an

important opportunity to highlight what pathology services urgently need to address the backlog, treat rising number of cases and meet targets for early diagnosis.

The College will submit a co-ordinated response, collating input and feedback from key RCPATH Specialty Advisory Committees and encourages individual members to send their own submissions using the [online portal](#).

RCPATH Achievement Awards 2025

To celebrate high standards in pathology practice, education, training and research to deliver the best patient care, we have launched our 2025 RCPATH Achievement Awards.

Our awards are your opportunity to recognise the work of a pathology team.

There are two categories:

- **Pathology services – Team Awards**
Four awards will be given to teams who have achieved above and beyond what would be expected in their usual course of their work.
- **Sustainability – Team Award**
The awards panel are looking for innovative solutions for pathology services that have saved carbon (or carbon equivalents) with a quantification, that would be beneficial to be shared with the wider pathology community.

[For more information and details about how to nominate visit RCPATH Achievement Awards](#). The closing date for nominations is midnight Monday 31 March.

Visit to Royal College of Physicians of Ireland

We have many valued members and fellows based in the Republic of Ireland. I was delighted to visit Dublin to meet members and speak at the Faculty of Pathology Symposium at the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland. The Faculty is Ireland's national professional

and training body for pathologists, and all pathologist trainees in the Republic of Ireland have to pass the FRCPath exam in their specialty in order to complete training.

Pathology conference

I also spoke at the [Convensis NHS Pathology Conference](#) in Manchester. Topics covered included workforce, finance, networks and technology.

Stakeholder engagement

- Dr Noha El Sakka, College Vice President, spoke at the [Westminster Health Forum](#) policy conference 'Next steps for tackling antimicrobial resistance'. Noha gave an overview of the College position on AMR and [our response to the Government's 5 year action plan to tackle rising levels of AMR](#).
- We have [made a submission to Phase 2 of the Government's Spending Review](#), which will deliver the government's Plan for Change. In our feedback on government spending priorities, we ask for investment in the pathology workforce, IT, and estates. There needs to be significant and sustained investment in modernising the pathology infrastructure, from digital pathology, AI and IT to the laboratory buildings.

MRCP (UK) Exam

Last week, significant errors in one of the 2023 MRCP Part 2 examination sessions was reported by The Federation of the Royal Colleges of Physicians of the UK, the joint examination body of the three UK physician colleges. It has been confirmed that an independent external review will be taking place. This college will continue to support and learn from other colleges to ensure that collectively we continue to strive for the highest standards in the delivery of our examinations. Our immediate focus will be to support any pathology trainees affected.

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

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

Working for members

Learning Environment for Pathology Trainees (LEPT) system

The LEPT team will be delivering remote refresher sessions during February and March. These sessions are for Chemical Pathology and Cellular Pathology specialties.

The purpose of these refresher sessions is to offer guidance, help and support for all users of the LEPT system involved in preparing for the annual review of competence progression (ARCP) meetings, organised by deaneries/LETBs.

For dates and times of the remote LEPT refresher sessions, please log into the LEPT system and refer to the information on the Alert section on the homepage

CPD returns deadline

We offer CPD statements through our CPD returns process to help members assemble supporting information for [revalidation](#).

Although our CPD year ends at the end of March, you have until 30 September to submit your CPD return. Please submit your return [here](#) when you are ready.

Should you have any enquiries or need further assistance, feel free to reach out to the Member Engagement and Support Team at 020 7451 6720 or cpd@rcpath.org.

Essay competitions for undergraduates and foundation doctors

We've opened our annual [Essay Prizes](#), the Hugh Platt Foundation Essay Prize and the Paola Domizio Undergraduate Essay Prize, for 2025. These competitions offer undergraduates, and foundation doctors in the UK the chance to take an in-depth look at a particular aspect of pathology through a written piece. This year's essay questions centre around innovation in pathology.

The winner of each competition will be awarded £250. They will also have their essay published on our website and in the College magazine, *The Bulletin*, and will be presented with a certificate at an RCPATH event. Please encourage undergraduates and foundation doctors you know to enter. The closing date for the Paola Domizio Undergraduate Essay Prize is 7 April and the closing date for the Hugh Platt Foundation Essay Prize is 12 May. Find out more including terms and conditions and how to enter on [our website](#).

Winners of the Percy Lane Oliver Memorial Award 2024

The College is delighted to announce that the winners of the Percy Lane Oliver Memorial Award 2024 (Medical Category) are [Dr Fiona Regan, Dr Shubha Allard and Dr Helen New](#) for their outstanding contribution to blood transfusion medicine.

The standard of applications was extremely high this year, and after much deliberation the panel awarded the prize to three recipients. All three were presented with their award at the RCPATH and SHOT Symposium held on 21 November 2024.

The Pathology Portal

The Pathology Portal continues to grow as a resource for pathologists, offering over 6,000 educational materials spanning multiple specialties and providing case studies, lectures, recap videos, podcasts, and quizzes. Designed to support pathologists at all career stages, the portal has seen incredible engagement, with over 250,000 launches by more than 5,000 users!

The Pathology Portal is currently looking for post-graduate doctors in training (PGDiT) in haematology to get involved with adding content, if you are interested in joining the team, please get in touch and we would be happy to discuss what's involved.

If you haven't explored the Pathology Portal yet, visit the [College website](#) to join today.

We welcome your suggestions, questions, and content contributions at pathologyportal@rcpath.org.

Get involved in the College

Vacant Chair role – New Consultants Committee

The College is committed to setting and maintaining professional standards and promoting excellence in the teaching and practice of pathology, for the benefit of patients. Those holding office in the College contribute to this important work by providing professional leadership and contributing at a national level to the maintenance and development of pathology services and the quality of patient care. Make a difference and help shape College activities and policies by representing the interests and views of College Fellows who are new consultants through the work of this newly-established committee. Information on the role and how to apply can be found [here](#). Deadline for applications is Friday, 14 March 2025.

New publications

Celtic Nations Summit 2025 report

In August 2024, the College hosted its first Celtic Summit with representatives from Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to discuss the challenges and opportunities facing pathology services in each nation.

Following the summit, the College has [published a report](#) outlining current pathology provision across the 3 devolved nations and the various ways the College interacts with and supports these services.

Guidelines

The following College guidelines have recently been published:

- [G172 Guidelines on autopsy practice: Aviation-related fatalities](#)
- [Dataset for the histopathological reporting of carcinomas of the nasal cavity and paranasal sinuses](#)

College Courses

[Liver Pathology Bitesize Webinars - An approach to the medical liver biopsy](#)

12.30pm, Wednesday 5 March 2025

CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)

This session will cover how to approach the medical liver biopsy to help identify the key features required to help formulate a differential diagnosis. It will also include evaluation of the liver special stains and how these can aid in supporting a diagnosis.

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

[Autopsy webinar series – Deaths in water](#)

1pm, Wednesday 19 March 2025

CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)

This talk will address how to use the 'surgical sieve' approach when performing a post-mortem examination on a body recovered from water. Topics such as how the body came to be in the water, what occurred in the water and how one can establish pathological features of drowning will be covered. This event will take place via zoom at 1:00pm and last approximately 1 hour.

[Getting the best results from endoscopic gastrointestinal biopsies in dogs and cats – a pathologist's perspective](#)**4pm, Monday 24 March 2025****CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)**

Chronic canine and feline gastrointestinal disease is a frequent clinical problem in general practice with management challenging for both pet owners and veterinarians alike. This webinar will discuss when, and in which cases, it is appropriate to consider endoscopic biopsy samples. Advice on how best to submit samples to the histopathology laboratory will be discussed, including handling of samples and what clinical information is useful for the pathologist. Processing of samples and how to minimize artefacts will be briefly covered as well as the approach to histopathological examination and interpretation, considering WSAVA guidelines for scoring and various recent advances, highlighted by case examples. Recognizing the limitations of endoscopic biopsies and when surgical biopsies may be more appropriate and when ancillary tests such as immunohistochemistry and/or PARR may be useful will also be discussed.

This event will take place at 4:00pm and last approximately 1 hour.

[Autopsy webinar series – Cardiac pathology for the non-specialist](#)**1pm, Wednesday 9 April 2025****CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)**

Cardiac pathology remains some of the most common pathology encountered at autopsy. This webinar will cover common and uncommon cardiac pathology which the non-specialist pathologist can recognise, practical tips about examining the heart, and when and how to refer to a cardiac pathologist.

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

[Epipathology: pathology and epidemiology in conservation medicine](#)**1pm, Wednesday 30 April 2025****CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)**

Pathology is an ever-growing field within zoo and wildlife medicine as much of the knowledge of many species comes from performing postmortem examinations. However, in times of small case reports for certain species, epidemiology plays a key role in identifying patterns within those findings to compile information that helps us learn more about the species so that we may help the living. This event will take place via zoom at 1:00pm and last approximately 1 hour.

[Liver Pathology Bitesize Webinars - Biliary diseases](#)**12.30pm, Wednesday 7 May 2025****CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)**

This session will give an overview on biliary conditions affecting the liver including primary biliary cholangitis and primary sclerosing cholangitis, how to differentiate between the two, and

how additional histochemical and immunohistochemical stains can help support these diagnoses.

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

Medical Examiner Annual Conference – Virtual Event

The 2025 Medical Examiner Annual Conference will be held on Zoom on Wednesday May 14th. Speakers will cover a range of current topics relevant to the medical examiner service. This event may be of interest to MEs, MEOs, Registrars, Coroners and others working in death certification and registration.

Confirmed speakers include:

- William Vineall, Director of NHS Quality, Safety and Investigations
- Jonny Tinsley, Head of Health Data, Office for National Statistics
- Emma Whitting, HM Senior Coroner for Bedfordshire and Luton
- Representative of HASAG, the asbestos support charity
- More coming soon

Topics include:

- An update on the statutory system from the Department of Health and Social Care
- An update from NHS England
- Assisted dying - potential implications for MEs
- Asbestos-related deaths
- When are MEs interested persons?
- How accurate does the cause of death have to be?
- More coming soon

Autopsy webinar series – Sepsis

1pm, Wednesday 21 May 2025

CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)

Sepsis is an inflammatory response, generally triggered by microbes, in which a cascade of molecules has a wide range of effects. The metabolic responses to these compounds have an important physiological role, but can lead to overwhelming clinical changes and death, especially in the already vulnerable or frail individual. The underlying source of sepsis may be obvious, but in up to 40% of cases, it is not. In such cases, detailed understanding of the clinical history is very important. There are recognised microscopic changes, but these vary in degree, and can be very difficult to identify in the decomposing body, even in the early stages. This event will take place via zoom at 1:00pm and last approximately 1 hour.

Autopsy webinar series – Neuropathology for the non-specialist

1pm, Wednesday 11 June 2025

CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)

This webinar will cover macroscopic and microscopic neuropathology which a general autopsy pathologist can diagnose, when to refer to a neuropathologist, and practical tips about what to refer. This event will take place at 1:00pm and last approximately 1 hour.

Liver Pathology Bitesize Webinars - Steatotic liver disease

12.30pm, Wednesday 9 July 2025

CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)

This session will cover steatotic liver diseases covering the new nomenclature including metabolic dysfunction-associated steatotic liver disease (MASLD), Alcohol related liver disease (ArLD), and how to differentiate between steatotic liver disease and steatohepatitis. **This event will take place via zoom at 12:30pm and last approximately 1 hour.**

[Liver Pathology Bitesize Webinars - Hepatitic liver disease](#)

12.30pm, Wednesday 3 September 2025

CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)

This session will provide an overview as to acute and chronic hepatitic pathologies along with clues to help differentiate between different aetiological causes including autoimmune hepatitis, viral hepatitis and drugs.

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

[Liver Pathology Bitesize Webinars - Liver, the weird and the wonderful](#)

12.30pm, Wednesday 5 November 2025

CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)

This session will cover the slightly more unusual elements of medical liver disease which we sometimes come across including genetic/inherited liver diseases and more.

This event will take place via zoom at 12:30pm 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.

[Medical Examiner training – Virtual](#)

Thursday, 16 January 2025

CPD credits: 6

[Medical Examiner training – Virtual](#)

Tuesday, 25 March 2025

CPD credits: 6

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 – Virtual](#)

Wednesday, 25 June 2025

CPD credits: 6

News from other organisations

[BMA Foundation Grants available in 2025](#)

If you would like to receive alerts about the BMA Foundation grants or find out more information about the grants available, please email researchgrants@bma.org.uk

Online applications will close on 16 March 20

[Healthcare ethics and artificial intelligence: a UK doctor survey](#)

The survey has been published in BMJ Open. The research was made possible by organisations including the College, by distributing the survey.

Other external events of interest

10-11 February 2025

[London Endocrine Pathology Update](#)

11 February 2025

[Patient Centric Sampling Conference](#)

11 February 2025

[Post International Society of Thrombosis and Haemostasis \(ISTH\) & American Society of Haematology \(ASH\) Headlines](#)

20 February 2025

[From lab to clinic: Vaccine induced thrombosis and thrombocytopenia syndrome](#)

26 February 2025

[Basic Cervical Histopathology Virtual Course](#)

26 February 2025

[UCLH: Challenges in Myeloproliferative neoplasm \(MPN\)](#)

02-07 March 2025

[Genomics and Clinical Virology course](#)

03 March 2025

[British Division of the International Academy of Pathology \(BDIAP\) Molecular Pathology Study Day](#)

03-05 March 2025

[23rd Annual The British Thoracic Oncology Group \(BTOG\) Conference 2025](#)

04 March 2025

[British Division of the International Academy of Pathology \(BDIAP\) Approach to Cut-up Study Day](#)

07 March 2025

[UK Chronic lymphocytic leukemia \(CLL\) Forum Annual Scientific Day](#)

07 March 2025

[Everyday Dilemmas in Gynaecological Pathology](#)

07 March 2025

[Digital Pathology reporting workshop](#)

13 March 2025

[UK North Myeloma Forum](#)

14-15 March 2025

[Mycology - Fungal Update 2025](#)

18 March 2025

[What's New in Haematological Malignancies](#)

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