



The Royal College of Pathologists
Pathology: the science behind the cure

Your College

Your Membership



Welcome from the President

When you become a member of the Royal College of Pathologists (RCPATH), you join a community of healthcare professionals dedicated to advancing the pathology profession.

As a medical royal college, our mission is to work with you, our members, to uphold the highest professional standards across pathology services.

Pathology is a vital component of healthcare systems around the world, although it can escape public attention. Therefore, we must work together to demand and create better healthcare strategies, better working conditions, and better patient care. The College acts as the nucleus for where this work takes shape.

The work of the College needs to be aligned with what is important to members and what will best serve the needs of patients. Every member is an important and valued part of our community. We are here to listen, engage with and advocate for you.

That said, we also need your participation. The delivery of our key services relies on an active membership who believe in the value of our work. The College simply could not deliver these vital services without your help and expertise. With such a huge range of College activities to support, you're sure to find something that suits you.

I encourage you to make the most of your membership benefits, to get involved in our work and play an active role in shaping our community and our profession.

Dr Bernie Croal
College President

Who we are



The Royal College of Pathologists is a professional membership body, made up of over 13,000 members working across 17 pathology specialties and relevant affiliate areas.

Since its establishment in 1962, the College has played a crucial role in advancing the field of pathology through education, advocacy and the promotion of high standards in pathology practice.

We are the home for pathologists at every stage of their career – from inspiring the next generation of undergraduates to join the profession, to guiding Postgraduate Doctors in Training (PGDITs) through their examinations, to supporting consultants and other medical professionals throughout their career.

Continued support from our membership enables us to pursue our collective vision to **develop and support excellence in pathology for healthcare**, both in the UK and internationally.

I am very appreciative of the College for helping to develop and maintain high standards of education and training ... The College is very important for professional networking and as a reference for guidelines and standards.

I think the most important aspect is that RCPATH advocates for the profession and its members, by helping in shaping government policies and ensuring that the needs of pathologists are addressed."

Dr Joe Westaby, College fellow



What we do



Our mission

- Advance the **science and practice** of pathology
- Further **public education** in the field of pathology
- Promote **study, research and innovation** in pathology and disseminate results



Our organisational values

- **Teamwork:** we achieve excellence by working together and valuing the diversity of all people we work with
- **Service:** we support members to deliver the best patient care
- **Ambition:** we aspire to provide the best quality services and lead innovation for pathology

We strive to be the authoritative and trusted partner for pathology by bringing together medical professionals and leading experts, providing a forum for connection, collaboration and innovation.

Our members are at the core of everything that we do. We aim to build a strong community, with every member feeling proud to belong.'



As part of our mission, we:

- lead excellence in pathology practice, producing professional guidance that sets the standard of care across the profession
- deliver the highest standards of pathology education and training to consistently improve patient care and safety
- support you in your continuing professional development (CPD) by providing guidance, advice and a bespoke CPD portfolio
- advocate for the pathology workforce, lobbying for policies and funding that benefit our members and advance the profession
- collaborate with a wide range of stakeholders, both in the UK and internationally, on projects that improve the quality of pathology training and service provision
- work with our members to run programmes that inspire the next generation to study science and join the profession
- strive to be a well-resourced, sustainable and inclusive organisation, and to ensure equity, diversity and inclusion in all that we do
- champion environmental sustainability through our carbon reduction plan and net zero commitment
- are focused on delivering digital transformation to improve College efficiency and better support our membership.

Who our members are

The Royal College of Pathologists is a community made up of professionals united by an interest in contributing to, and advancing, the field of pathology.

Most of our members are pathologists or clinical scientists working in hospitals, laboratories, universities and industry across the UK and internationally. Our membership also includes research academics, medical examiners and medical examiner officers.

Our members span 17 pathology specialties. Each specialty has its own dedicated Specialty Advisory Committee (SAC), led by members, for members. If you need expertise or want to raise a concern within your specialty, your SAC can help.



As Chair I have tried to ensure that the Joint Medical Microbiology & Medical Virology SAC has a programme of initiatives that benefit members ... We have been asking our trainee members what educational material they would like to see, and are developing webinars that will benefit trainees, consultants, overseas members and allied health professionals to ensure we can help meet educational needs.”

Dr Natasha Ratnaraja, Joint Medical Microbiology and Medical Virology SAC Chair

The value of membership



We deliver key services that develop and support excellence in pathology worldwide. As a member, your support is vital to sustain and develop these services.

As well as our core aims that serve the profession as a whole, we provide a range of services and benefits to support our members individually. These are outlined in the following pages.

As a valued part of our College community, we are dedicated to delivering an exemplary member service where you feel heard, supported and proud of your membership.

The bigger and more active our membership, the stronger the College can act on behalf of the profession. Together, we can develop and support excellence in pathology.



As a fellow of the College, I deeply value the sense of community and professional belonging that the College adopts. One of the most enjoyable aspects of being a member is the opportunity to engage with a diverse network of professionals who are equally passionate about advancing the field of pathology.”

Professional status

Membership of the College is a respected indicator of specialist status, demonstrating your commitment to delivering the highest professional standards in pathology.

The journey from undergraduate to consultant is as demanding as it is rewarding, and passing the FRCPath examination is a fantastic achievement.

We recognise this accomplishment through the provision of post-nominals upon passing each examination level, as well as for specific groups such as medical examiners and medical examiner officers, and those achieving Fellowship by Published Works.



Becoming a fellow makes me feel more confident in myself. It also gives the users of the service more confidence in our work."

Dr Victoria Busby, fellow in genetics



DID YOU KNOW?

We assess approximately 2,300 candidates each year across all our exams.

Continuing professional development

Given the rapid advancements in many aspects of research, digital transformation and service provision, it is essential that pathologists are supported in their continuing professional development throughout their career.

The College is dedicated to providing resources that help you stay current in your field. This includes the Pathology Portal and a range of events and webinars.

We also deliver an exemplary CPD service to support our members, including hosting a bespoke CPD portfolio to track your CPD activities. This helps you to identify areas for development and simplify the appraisal and revalidation process.



We spend our much-valued funds on the most important aspects of College work – serving the College, members, healthcare and, ultimately, patients.”

Dr Bernie Croal, College President



Training and examinations

It is one of our key aims to ensure that our curricula, assessments and examinations promote the highest standards of pathology, in order to meet the future requirements of the profession.

Successful completion of our curricula requirements is the basis on which our members demonstrate their readiness to enter consultant practice. Our medical postgraduate curricula are accompanied by a training ePortfolio, the LEPT system, to help trainees evidence their progress

in training. Doctors who apply for specialist registration via the Portfolio Pathway are assessed by College members against the same curriculum standards, and may also access the LEPT system to gather evidence.

With dedicated support from our members, we develop and deliver the FRCPath, Diploma and Certificate examinations across 17 pathology specialties. We are committed to making our examinations accessible and aim to remove

barriers by providing reasonable adjustments for eligible candidates. We strive for excellence in this area by continuously developing the examinations and examiner recruitment process. This service could not be delivered without the support of our fantastic volunteer examiners.



Professional guidance and support

Using a rigorous consultation process, we develop and publish a range of professional guidance that sets the standard of care across the profession.

This includes clinical guidelines and best practice recommendations, covering areas such as cancer datasets and tissue pathways, autopsy guidelines and laboratory service standards.

We cater to both cross-specialty and specialty-specific needs, ensuring that all 17 pathology specialties receive comprehensive guidance.

We are an active participant in NICE consultations related to pathology, helping to shape national guidelines for treatments and care in the NHS in England and Wales.

We strive to ensure patient safety, facilitating several National Quality Assurance Advisory Panels (NQAAPs) across a range of pathology specialties.



DID YOU KNOW?

We have published over 140 guidelines across all specialties and categories.

Our patient safety and quality strategy further demonstrates our commitment to high standards of care and patient welfare. This strategy allows us to address unique safety concerns and challenges affecting pathology and proactively identify potential risks.

We further maintain standards in pathology by reviewing and approving consultant and SAS-level job descriptions, both medical and scientific. We provide an assessor to attend advisory appointment committees (AACs), to ensure employing bodies are able to appoint the right candidate for the post.



Safety is essential and multidimensional in 21st century patient care. Supporting clinicians in patient-centred decision-making is a role the College is proud to have.

The College publishes state-of-the-art guidelines to enable pathologists to make excellent contributions to care. Researching and writing these guidelines develop expertise and shows how College fellows can create impact for ourselves, the College and patients.”



Professor Peter Johnston, Vice President for Workforce and Corporate Engagement



Editing the Bulletin puts me in the privileged position of liaising with many esteemed pathologists from across the entire breadth of our specialties, and this is an enormous pleasure. I get to read all their contributions and learn a lot about all sorts of advances and ideas.”

Professor Angharad Davies, Bulletin editor



Exclusive publications

You can stay up to date on the latest developments in pathology through our quarterly professional membership magazine, the Bulletin. We engage our diverse readership by provoking relevant discussions across regions and specialties.

Members also receive our monthly President's Newsletter, and have access to a range of discounted publications and journals.

Awards, grants and prizes

We recognise the outstanding work of our members and support the pathology workforce through various awards and bursaries. This includes our annual RCPATH Achievement Awards.

Foundation doctors can apply for our annual Foundation Fellowships to support their rotation through a pathology specialty.

We run competitions to encourage undergraduates and foundation doctors to explore pathology, such as the Foundation Essay Prize and RCPATH Science Communication Prize.

We also run a Medical Electives small grant scheme to support undergraduate students who wish to undertake electives in pathology disciplines.

Our Art of Pathology competition is open to all, encouraging everyone to actively engage in pathology.

Furthermore, we collate information for our members on external funding opportunities relevant to pathologists.



Events

We deliver an extensive programme of events and webinars to support you at every stage of your career. In collaboration with our Specialty Advisory Committees (SACs), we curate specialty-focused webinars for our members and Postgraduate Doctors in Training (PGDITs). These provide expert insights from world-renowned speakers on fascinating and relevant topics.

To inspire the next generation of pathologists, we deliver specialty-specific careers talks to undergraduates and junior doctors. We also host the annual [Pathology Summer School](#) where medical students can learn more about pathology as a career.

From our New Fellows Ceremony to the New Consultants' Day, we run events to support our members as they progress in their career. We are the lead royal college for medical examiners and medical examiner officers, hosting training and an annual conference.

We partner with specialty experts and industry representatives to run events that encourage collaboration between industry and the profession.

Our [corporate membership scheme](#) provides industry leaders with a unique opportunity to connect and collaborate with pathologists.



In the UK, we work with the Pathology Alliance to support the delivery of [National Pathology Week](#), an annual celebration of pathology. The College supports members to run public engagement activities that highlight pathology's essential role in healthcare. We also deliver events aimed at undergraduates and foundation doctors.

In addition to College-led events, members receive discounted access to [various external events and webinars](#) and can hire the College's venue spaces at reduced rates.



I went to the New Consultants' Day, which I found very useful. I think it's a really good initiative ... We received advice from people who had done that transition recently. They let us know about the sort of things that we might not even be aware about: management, business cases, financial planning and what you'll be expected to do."

Dr Philip Macklin, consultant histopathologist



Research and innovation

Part of our mission is to promote study, research and innovation within the field of pathology. The College's Research Committee provides advice and guidance to the College, trainers and trainees, and academic pathologists about academic research. A key activity is to review and approve applications for Fellowship by Published Works.

As part of their role in raising the profile of research, the Research Committee administers the Research Fellowship Start-up Grants and the Trainee Research Medals for undergraduate and postgraduate students. We also promote other research funding opportunities for trainees and fellows.



Pathologists are at the forefront of modern healthcare research. It is vital that the College supports our members as they devise new treatments and bring about medical advancements that greatly benefit patients."

Dr Bernie Croal, College President



Digital pathology

The College supports the use of digital pathology in diagnosis, research, education and training. Since the appointment of a Digital Pathology Lead and formation of the Digital Pathology Committee in 2017, we have produced guidance, best practice recommendations and a Digital Pathology Strategy. Our work has included advocating for investment for digital pathology and pathology labs at NHS and government level, coordinating with Public Health England on the use of digital pathology in screening, and running annual training events in digital pathology.

We have written a position statement considering AI and its potential to transform healthcare, while maintaining the importance of professional leadership in AI development.

Furthermore, we have advised members individually on subjects such as remote working and how to use digital pathology to better support them in their role.



“

The Pathology Portal is a fantastic new educational resource for trainees, practising pathologists, scientists and those in pathology-linked roles.”

Professor Jo Martin,
Pathology Portal project lead

Pathology Portal

We have worked closely with key partners to deliver the award-winning Pathology Portal – a unique, innovative and adaptive learning platform. The Portal digitally hosts whole-slide images and a wide range of other resources, including teaching sessions and quizzes.

Advocating for pathology

As a membership organisation, our central priority is advocating for the needs of our members and the wider profession. By uniting pathologists and those linked to pathology, we act as a collective voice that has the power to inform, influence and instigate change.

In the UK, we are dedicated to establishing strong policy positions and acting on key priorities for pathology across all 4 nations. To achieve this, we develop and maintain strong relationships with UK parliamentarians, government bodies, public audiences and industry partners. We advocate for policies and funding that bring true and lasting benefits to the pathology workforce and wider profession.

We respond to key changes in pathology, including workforce, cancer diagnostics and the impact of technological advancements.

We collate key insights and workforce data via our member census and surveys, to ensure our workforce planning is backed by robust evidence. Working with stakeholders and decision-makers, we can use this data to advocate for a well-resourced and sustainable pathology workforce.

We have also published a workforce strategy aimed at helping to address the workforce crisis impacting our members across pathology services. With your support and participation, we have the power to shape the present and future of the profession.



A global community

We are proud to be a global professional body, with almost a quarter of our members based outside the UK.

Our Pathology is Global international strategy for 2023–2026 sets out our vision for promoting and advancing excellence in pathology internationally. This strategy serves as the College’s long-term commitment to raising international standards in pathology, engaging overseas members more effectively, and sharing the College’s knowledge, expertise, services and ideas as widely as possible.

Collaborating with international partners around the world is crucial in helping us to deliver our strategic vision. These collaborations take the form of Memoranda of Understanding (MoU), as well as volunteer support through our international regional advisors and country advisors.

Through these partnerships, we deliver international projects and produce virtual resources to support the professional development of pathologists and scientists worldwide.

Mohammed Bin Rashid University, Memorandum of Understanding Signing Ceremony 2024.



DID YOU KNOW?

In collaboration with international and UK partners, we develop virtual resources that support the professional development of pathologists and scientists globally.

We also support appropriately qualified international medical graduates (IMGs) through our sponsorship schemes. Open to trainees around the world, our schemes provide assistance to those who wish to obtain training experience in the UK.

We celebrate and showcase the global importance of pathology through the delivery of our annual International Pathology Day (IPD) event. Each year the IPD conference is centred around a relevant theme. Previous topics include digital pathology and AI, the impact of climate change on disease, and antimicrobial resistance.



As with all College activities, our member volunteers are vital in helping us to deliver our international work. If you would like to support us in this, there are many ways you can get involved. Please get in touch with our [International team](#) for more information.

“

I thoroughly enjoy working with the College's International team who are an inclusive, friendly and hardworking group. I particularly enjoy having the global perspective to my work and I have met many new colleagues across the MENA region – who I would now also call friends.”

Dr Stephanie Thomas, RCPATH Oman Country Advisor





Regional representation

Within the UK, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales are represented by their own Council. Members in England are represented by 4 regionally elected College Council representatives.

This structure allows us to address diverse perspectives within the pathology workforce.

We also facilitate regional surgeries to listen to and support our members wherever they are located.

Wherever you are based, we are always keen to hear about your experience working as a pathologist and how we can best support you.

Get involved with the College

We could not function without the dedication of hundreds of members who take up volunteer roles. All these members are actively contributing to our mission to advance the science and practice of pathology, and to deliver the best patient care possible.

We would like as many members as possible to get actively involved in our work. There are plenty of opportunities to volunteer across a broad range of areas. As well as helping to shape the future of pathology, undertaking College activities will also support you in your continuing professional development.



The College is the members, and it's only if we members engage that we can achieve things. The more of us that get involved, the stronger we will be. I'd encourage every member who has a view on how we should work or what the future of pathology should be to get involved."

Dr Darren Treanor, RCPATH Digital Pathology lead



DID YOU KNOW?

Across a diverse range of activities, around 10% of members are involved in the College's work at any one time.

Supporting our members



We are committed to supporting your professional development at every stage of your career, and promoting diversity and inclusion in everything that we do.

We strive to provide you with high-quality member services and want to ensure that you have the best experience as possible as a member of the College.

If you have any questions or feedback regarding your membership experience, we would love to hear from you. Our dedicated Member Engagement and Support team are always open to feedback on how we can improve our products and services.

You can contact the Member Engagement and Support team via:

Email: mycollege@rcpath.org

Telephone: 020 7451 6720 / 6764 / 6793

Any questions?

If you have a query about a specific College activity, our dedicated teams are on hand to support you.

Please find the correct team to get in touch with via our [Contact us](#) page.



The Royal College of Pathologists

Pathology: the science behind the cure

January 2025