



The Royal College of Pathologists

Pathology: the science behind the cure

RCPATH President's newsletter – May 2024



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President's Message

Infected Blood Inquiry Report

We were deeply troubled to read [the report from the Infected Blood Inquiry](#), published on Monday.

Sir Brian Langstaff and his team have published a detailed and thorough report outlining clearly and transparently the decisions and events which led to the worst treatment disaster in the history of the NHS.

As a College, our mission is to work with you, our members, to uphold the highest professional standards across pathology services. We will be considering the findings of the report very closely to identify areas where we can work towards further improvements in the care and treatment of patients. We will also continue to work to ensure people have confidence in the safety of blood transfusions and blood product treatments, and blood donors are willing to continue donating. [Full statement on the College website.](#)

College 5 Year Strategy

We have spent many months planning our new 5-year College strategy (2024-29). It is important that this strategy encompasses areas around future College viability – both financially and with regards to the importance of attracting and retaining members. In doing so, we have looked at objectives that are most important to members – future of our profession, workforce and well-being.

In addition, we also need to do much more for the future of our College by focusing and embracing trainees and new Consultants – giving them a much bigger role in College business and ensuring they feel valued. We need pathologists and scientists to want to join as members not simply to be rewarded with a Netflix-esque package of benefits, but because they want to both contribute and gain from the things that will be vitally important to their future profession and their professional well-being. The College needs to be seen as your/our College. We have a lot of work to do. financial challenges impact the College's ability to do all the things it wants to do.

Consistent below inflation increases in both membership and exam fees for many years is not sustainable – but neither is a substantial rise in such fees desirable. This is why we have been looking at other ways of raising income such as using our building as a conference/meeting venue or social function/filming location. This is now reaping substantial income for the College.

We are also beginning a new programme of engagement with the diagnostic industry – a partnership that will help support research, innovation, implementation and education – many activities that industry partners can financially support.

College Committees

There is a recognition how important the work of the committees is and which we are looking to strengthen and resource. We are reviewing the best ways to deliver effective specialty expertise.

Workforce, workload and well-being

Well-being remains as the main focus for College external activity. Expansion in all disciplines needs more doctors, more specialty training posts, and more substantive consultant posts across healthcare. Similar challenges exist for clinical scientists, and we will be working with other stakeholders to ensure optimal planning is in place.

General Election 2024 – 4 July

A general election has just been called for the 4 July – this will mean a new government, whatever the result, and the College needs to

work to align and lobby with them for best interests of pathology services and patient care. In the interim, normal political activity slows or stops, which will limit and delay parliamentary business – this includes of course the regular meetings with politicians and the All Party Parliamentary Group for Diagnostics – we will need to pick this up again in the second half of 2024. The College remains impartial but we will of course be issuing our own manifesto very soon.

His Majesty the King announced as new Royal Patron of the Royal College of Pathologists

I am delighted to announce that His Majesty The King is the new Royal Patron of the College.

His Majesty the King will follow The late Queen in this role. The late Queen was our Patron from 1970, when the College received its Royal Charter, until her sad death in 2022.

We very much look forward to working with him to highlight your expertise, which is vital to prevention, diagnosis and treatment.

[College welcomes UK's second 5-year national action plan on AMR 2024 – 2029](#)

We have welcomed the UK government's second 5-year national plan – [Confronting antimicrobial resistance 2024 – 2029](#). The College is pleased to see the focus on strengthening infection prevention and control, optimising the use of antimicrobials, and prioritising the development of new diagnostics, all of which were strongly advocated for during the consultation process with the government. However, these outcomes, including a reduction in AMR, can only be realised with a well-resourced medical microbiology and virology workforce.

Parliamentary Engagement

I have had some positive meetings in parliament recently, including a meeting with the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, Rt Hon Victoria Atkins MP which was organised by the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges.

I also met the APPG for Diagnostics Chair, Maggie Throup MP, representatives from NHS England including Prof Sir Mike Richards,

Rhydian Phillips, Director of System Improvement and Alexandra Pinches. We discussed the areas raised in the APPG for Diagnostics report [CDCs Unveiled: Challenges & Triumphs – An Inquiry into Community Diagnostic Centres](#) such as workforce concerns and the need for better data collection.

I met Neil Gray, MSP, who is the Cabinet Secretary for NHS Recovery, Health and Social Care in Scotland, along with Dr Kath Halliday, President of the Royal College of Radiologists, to discuss the College report [Embracing AI To Support The NHS – A Joint Report With The Royal College Of Radiologists](#). I also had a similar meeting with the Welsh Government's Deputy Chief Scientific Advisor, Delia Ripley, and colleagues, discussing workforce concerns and the opportunities for digital, AI and genomics.

[Dr Suzy Lishman appointed Chair of the National Confidential Enquiry into Patient Outcome and Death \(NCEPOD\)](#)

I would like to take the opportunity to congratulate RCPATH past president, Dr Suzy Lishman CBE who has been announced as the new Chair Elect for the National Confidential Enquiry into Patient Outcome and Death (NCEPOD).

She will be the first pathologist to hold the position of Chair of NCEPOD in its 35-year history.

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

RCPATH Foundation Fellowships

The College makes available 25 Foundation Fellowships annually. The scheme is open to Foundation doctors who secure a Foundation post in which they will rotate through a pathology speciality between August 2024 and 31 July 2025.

Foundation Fellows receive opportunities to get involved in a range of College activities, meetings, and events. The closing date is Monday 8 July 2024. More information on the [College website](#).

Opportunities to mentor medical students with the Social Mobility Foundation

The [Social Mobility Foundation](#) are offering an opportunity to be involved as a mentor on their Transitions Through Medical School (TTMS) programme. TTMS supports students from low socioeconomic background moving from first to second year of medical school. By being a mentor, you can offer vital skills in terms of supporting students to build and grow their networks and explore development opportunities and specialties they may want to pursue moving forward. RCPATH members have been involved in this scheme in the past and found it very rewarding. If you are interested in being a mentor please [express your interest here](#) and you will hear directly from SMF in due course.

Is your Annual Review of Competence Progression' (ARCP) panel review meeting looming?

A gentle reminder to trainees. If you have a looming ARCP panel review meeting, remember to ensure that your ePortfolio items have been completed well in advance in readiness for the review meeting. This includes the indicative number of supervised learning events and your MSF assessment, if appropriate. If you need ePortfolio assistance, please contact assessment@rcpath.org.

CPD deadline reminder

We are pleased to be able to provide you with the [CPD portfolio service](#) at 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.

Key points about our CPD process:

- CPD year: The College's CPD year runs from 1st April to 31st 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 5,300 resources. These resources encompass diverse cases, informative videos, podcasts, quizzes, and more, catering to the professional development needs of pathologists at various stages of development.

The resources have now been accessed over 150,000 times with the Pathology Portal team continuing to reach out to new contributors for content and to address gaps, the Pathology Portal has now been used to host slides and content for a variety of webinars, training sessions and EQA's, offering the ability to retain resources which would otherwise be lost.

With a growing user base now exceeding 3,400 members, for those who have not yet joined the Pathology Portal, [visit the College website](#) to explore the platform and discover the wealth of resources available.

We value your ongoing support and invite you to share your feedback, questions, suggestions, or content with us at pathologyportal@rcpath.org.

International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) haematolymphoid tumours publication

The IARC published the fifth edition of the [WHO Classification of Haematolymphoid Tumours](#) online.

Get involved in the College

Co-opted trustee roles

The College is seeking to recruit 2 co-opted trustees to the trustee board to complement the skills, knowledge and background of existing trustees. College fellows are eligible to apply. As the College is constituted as a UK registered charity these roles are only open to those who are based in the UK. We are actively seeking to bring more diversity of perspectives to our board. We would particularly welcome Fellows with experience of the pathology private sector, publishing, and transfusion medicine. Selection will be made by application and panel interview. The role description, person specification and details of how to apply are on the [College's website](#).

International

Free 6-part Global Antimicrobial Resistance webinar series

We are delivering a free 6-part Global Antimicrobial Resistance webinar series that will explore different aspects of antimicrobial resistance and stewardship. Each webinar will start with a UK speaker providing an introduction to the topic and UK perspective, then there will be 2-4 international speakers providing the perspective from their respective countries. Below outlines the structure of the

programme, if you'd like to register for each webinar please follow the respective link and click 'Book Now'.

Programme:

- Wednesday 5 June - [Global perspectives on antimicrobial resistance.](#)
- Tuesday 11 June - [Antimicrobial stewardship in the community.](#)
- Wednesday 19 June - [Antimicrobial stewardship in secondary care.](#)
- Friday 28 June - [Engaging the public in antimicrobial stewardship.](#)
- Wednesday 3 July - [Developing prescribing guidelines.](#)
- Friday 12 July - [Evaluating an antimicrobial stewardship programme: What are the measures of success?](#)

A call for expressions of interest for international project – chemical pathology

We have an exciting opportunity for clinical scientists or doctors to deliver lectures for quarterly webinars, monthly case report sessions and to become involved in an international project to improve the quality of chemical pathology training and service provision in Ghana, Kenya and Nigeria. This has been made possible by successfully securing a grant under the [Tropical Health Education Trust Global Health Workforce Programme](#), funded by [The Department of Health and Social Care, UK](#). A small honorarium will be available for those who deliver activities. For more information and to express an interest in contributing please contact: international@rcpath.org.

New publications

New consultations

- [Dataset for penile and distal urethral cancer histopathology reports](#) (closes 29 May 2024).
- [Dataset for histopathological reporting of breast disease in surgical excision specimens of breast cancer](#) (closes 29 May 2024).

New publications

- [Dataset for histopathological reporting of peripheral neuroblastic tumours](#)
- [Blog – Digital pathology, AI and the NPIC: an interview with Dr Darren Treanor](#)
- [Blog – Spotlight on professional guidelines](#)

College Courses

[Gestational Trophoblastic Disease - Webinar 1](#)

1pm, Monday 13 May 2024

CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)

This webinar series is coordinated by Prof Marta Cohen, the second webinar of this series is scheduled for 20th May and is also bookable via the conference calendar.

The genetics behind GTD - Geoffrey Maher

This presentation will describe the genetic constitution of molar pregnancies and how genetic and other related tests can inform the diagnosis of abnormal products of conception. It will outline how genetic testing, namely short tandem repeating (STR) genotyping, is informative for the diagnosis and management of gestational trophoblastic neoplasia.

Molar pregnancy - Sophie Stenton

This talk will cover the key morphological features required for diagnosis of molar gestations. Common pitfalls and mimics such as villous dysmorphism and placental mesenchymal dysplasia shall also be discussed. This event will take place at 13:00pm (GMT) and last approximately 1 hour.

Risk assessment in pT1 colorectal cancer – Webinar

1pm, Thursday 16 May 2024

CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)

Colorectal cancer (CRC) is a common malignancy worldwide. The clinical outcome in CRC is closely related to the disease stage. Identification of CRC at an early stage i.e., pT1, is associated with a very good prognosis in many cases. However, approximately 10% of patients with these pT1 CRC will develop regional lymph node metastases (LNM) and are best treated by surgical resection of the affected bowel segment. The most widely used methods for determining LNM risk in pT1 CRC will be presented, together with a discussion of emerging and potential risk factors.

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

Gestational Trophoblastic Disease - Webinar 2

1pm, Monday 20 May 2024

CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)

This webinar series is coordinated by Prof Marta Cohen.

Difficult cases and differential diagnosis - Katie McDonald

This session will cover the practical aspects of diagnosis of the previously mentioned entities. It will include how to tackle common differential diagnoses as well as highlighting a few interesting and difficult cases.

Choriocarcinoma - Baljeet Kaur

This event will take place at 13:00pm and last approximately 1 hour.

Autopsy webinar series - When to refer to a forensic pathologist

1pm, Wednesday 22 May 2024

CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)

This webinar looks at the medicolegal investigation that takes place surrounding a sudden death and the police actions from the initial point of contact. In England and Wales half a million deaths occur a year and 80,000 post-mortems are requested. But at what point should you step back if you think it's suspicious? This lecture outlines the distinction between a 'non-forensic' and a 'forensic' post-mortem and discusses the grey area in between. It aims to highlight key areas that general autopsy pathologists should be aware of in the history, external and internal examination. The presentation will include case studies of referrals to forensic pathology and a discussion about key documentation on this topic which is available on the Royal College of Pathologists website.

This event will take place at 13:00pm and last approximately 1 hour.

Autopsy webinar series – Drug related deaths

1pm, Wednesday 19 June 2024

CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)

Scotland has the highest rate of drug related deaths in all of Europe and 2.7 times higher than the UK average. This webinar will draw on that experience and share insights on post mortem examination

and toxicology interpretation in drug related deaths, including the challenges of poly-drug use and an ageing drug user population with the interplay of chronic disease.
This event will take place at 13:00pm and last approximately 1 hour.

[Hereditary Angioedema; pathophysiology, drug targets and update on management - Webinar](#)
1pm, Monday 1 July 2024

CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)

Hereditary angioedema is a rare disease that results in cutaneous and mucosal swellings. The swellings can happen in association with physiological and psychological stress or with no obvious precipitating factors. They can be debilitating and even life-threatening.

In this talk a practical approach to diagnosis of different types of swellings and the pathways that lead to angioedema, will be discussed. The targets that have been used for development of treatment for hereditary angioedema will be identified when discussing the pathophysiological pathways. Finally, management of hereditary angioedema including the latest treatments will be presented.

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

[Death Certification Reforms Legislation Update](#)

Tuesday, 11 June 2024

CPD credits: 4

This ONLINE event will run from 9.30am to 1.30pm and will take place via zoom. The programme will be circulated nearer the time.

The Death Certification Reforms Legislation – update on implications for the Medical Examiner system online information-sharing event is aimed at anyone working in or with the medical examiner system in England and Wales and will cover the introduction of the statutory medical examiner system and the new death certification process from 9 September 2024.

Topics to be covered include:

- The new Medical Certificates of Cause of Death
- Changes to cremation forms and the role of the Crematorium Medical Referee
- Implications for Medical Examiner offices
- Changes to death registration
- Changes to the role of the Coroner
- The collection and use of mortality statistics

The event is open to anyone working in the sector. Registration is free of charge. The event will be recorded, and the recording made freely available after the event.

[Medical Examiner training – Virtual](#)

Thursday, 26 September 2024

CPD credits: 6

[Medical Examiner training – Virtual](#)

Wednesday, 4 December 2024

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 session – Virtual Training](#)

[Thursday, 17 October 2024](#)

CPD credits: 6

News from other organisations

[NICE committee vacancies for health, social care and other professionals and practitioners | NICE](#)

The committee is looking for:

- infectious disease consultants
- consultant in medical microbiology (preferably with research knowledge of the human gut microbiome)
- experts in the clinical pharmacology of antimicrobials
- experts in infectious disease public health epidemiology
- GP with experience treating infectious disease and antimicrobial resistance

[The Pathologist Power list – nominations now open](#)

The Pathologist magazine Power List 2024 is open for nominations.

The categories are:

- Destined for Excellence
- In the Wings
- Heroes of Pathology
- Champions for Change
- Idols of Innovation.

Nominations close May 31 2024.

Other external events of interest

[15 May 2024](#)

[National Breast Pathology Update Course](#)

15 May 2024

[Group B Strep in Pregnancy & Babies Conference](#)

15 May 2024

[Acute Lymphocytic Leukaemia Patient Pathway - UCLH CAR T Masterclass](#)

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](#)