



Professor Tim Stephenson

Electronic Workforce Database – Phase two launched on 1 March 2010

We need the most accurate data possible on the pathology workforce in order to influence and negotiate proper workforce planning for pathology and to free us from cyclical excesses and shortages of trainees. As phase two of the Electronic Workforce Database launches, Tim Stephenson explains that this will involve the verification of data collected from individuals during phase one, as well as the identification of lapsed and projected posts. Pathology Clinical Directors and Heads of Department please assist.

Phase one of the Electronic Workforce Database was launched for individuals to check their own data (www.rcpath.org). Even if individuals cannot initially manage to complete all fields, their input of even part of the data, to be completed later, is valuable.

In addition, we need to collect information on posts (vacant and filled) and post-holders from all Pathology Clinical Directors and Heads of Department. Phase two, launched on 1 March 2010, is therefore aimed at employers who can verify the data collected from individuals and provide really important information on projected posts and any in abeyance.

The database designers have worked hard to make the database more user friendly. In addition, two specialty-specific modules are being developed to collect additional workforce data for Cytology and Microbiology/Virology.

To avoid double-counting of staff and to collect demographic information, the data required include some personal information for each member of the pathology workforce, i.e. name, date of birth and GMC/GDC/HPC numbers as relevant. However, confidentiality is assured as the final reports from the pathology workforce census will be anonymised. Please include all consultant level posts in your department. Trainees' data are not collected as they register with the Training & Educational Standards Department.

In addition to the strategic information, a number of useful reports will be made available to Pathology Heads of Departments and Clinical

Directors within participating organisations.

I realise that this is an additional burden on an already busy schedule. I apologise for that, but hope you share our view that getting this right will bring significant workforce planning advantages for pathology, ultimately to the direct benefit of individuals and their directorate/department.

In return, Clinical Directors will gain the ability to download their own directorate's workforce data, which can be used to answer queries from others. They will also have the reassurance that, by declaring their established posts to be linked at the College to the data on individual post-holders, they will have contributed towards the very best workforce planning initiative, which should help to protect the service from the workforce supply/demand misalignments from which it has suffered in recent years.

Alongside the tool, there is a guide on how to input the data. The database designers are running a help desk Monday–Friday 9 am–5 pm during the data collection period. With the launch of this tool for Clinical Directors and Heads of Departments, a letter has been sent with password details and the link to the employers' section of the database.

If you require any further information about this process, please contact Fiona Addiscott (workforceplanning@rcpath.org, tel. 020 7451 6726).

Professor Tim Stephenson
Director of Workforce Planning

Please visit the Workforce database at www.canceruk.net/rcpworkforce.htm to update your records. You will need your existing College website username and password. If you need a username and password, please press 'Register' on the College homepage. (NB Changes of address should still also be notified to membership@rcpath.org). For assistance, contact the Database Helpdesk on 0870 840 8033 (open 9am – 5pm Monday to Friday).