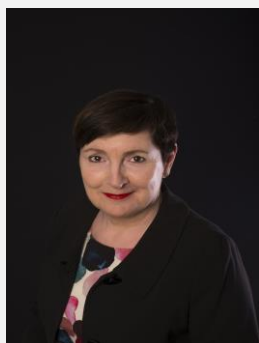




The Royal College of Pathologists  
Pathology: the science behind the cure



## President's e-newsletter – July 2020

### President's Messages of the Month

#### **Congratulations to the new President Elect for the College**

I am delighted to announce that Dr Mike Osborn has been appointed President Elect of the College.

I have worked with Mike closely and I know that he will do a great job. He'll represent the College across all our 17 specialties and will do this excellently. Mike has been leading on the College's post-mortem portal for COVID-19, as well as writing many very helpful guidance documents under extreme time pressure during this period. Mike is already an active member at the College and currently chairs both the Cellular Pathology SAC and Death Investigations Committee. He will be a great advocate for our specialties!

At Trustee Board we also approved the re-appointment of Dr Lance Sandle to serve a second term as Registrar from November 2020. One of the College's two lay trustees, Robert Smith, whose term of office was due to end in November, has also agreed to serve a second term. Both of these appointments will be for a further three years and end in November 2023. I thank them for their continuing invaluable service.

#### **Engaging with Governments**

We have offered advice to a range of governing bodies, regulators and patient groups throughout the COVID-19 epidemic. Not all our advice has been taken up immediately, but has definitely helped influence some progress. We have met with senior colleagues regularly, including Prof Chris Witty, Prof Steve Powis and Presidents of other Colleges, and the regional council chairs have been in regular contact with the developed administrations also. Our guidance is being used globally, and we thank you all for your contributions to this.

### Online exams!

Trustee Board has approved a significant development in our College exams, that of an online examination platform. The learning and exams department have been working so hard to make this a reality for many exams this autumn, bringing forward a planned development at huge pace. The ability to offer our examinations at remote locations will be a great advance.

### Get involved in your College

There are a number of roles on both the Trustee Board and College Council that will become vacant in November as terms of office are ending for all three Vice Presidents, the Chair of Scotland Regional Council and eight elected roles on College Council (*see Represent your specialty*). These roles offer an excellent opportunity for you to shape the work of your College. We would particularly welcome nominations from eligible Fellows from across our specialties and from all backgrounds since representation at senior levels in the College does not reflect the wealth of diversity of our members. Do consider standing! More details are available [on the website](#).

### RCPATH Foundation Fellowships

The College is delighted to announce that is making up to 25 new Foundation Fellowships available annually. The Foundation Fellowship scheme is open to foundation doctors who secure a post in which they will rotate through a pathology specialty – this includes histopathology, haematology, medical microbiology and infectious diseases or any other specialty represented by the College. We have already had our first applications and the closing date is 31 August 2020; successful candidates will be informed at the end of September. More information can be found on the [College website](#).

### NHS birthday celebrations

The NHS celebrated its 72nd anniversary on 5 July. I am proud to be part of an organisation with such an amazing body of staff. I look forward to working for the NHS for many years to come, probably followed by using the services!

### Round up

- I have been extremely pleased by the response to [COVID-19 testing: a national strategy](#), which looks to the future for viral and antibody testing. I was delighted with the reaction to the strategy and the excellent support from the organisations we work with in the Pathology Alliance as well as so many others. It was fantastic to talk about the strategy at a [Pathology Alliance webinar](#) and to receive brilliant feedback from parliamentarians. I have also outlined the issues covered by the strategy in the [media](#).
- We warmly welcomed the recommendation from the Royal College of Physicians in their briefing [Priorities for future COVID-19 wave planning](#) that the UK government and the devolved governments should implement [the College strategy](#), ensuring that all necessary resources are made available to provide timely, accurate and reliable testing.
- I was delighted to have the opportunity to speak at the All-Party Parliamentary Health Group webinar on building future resilience in the NHS. I briefed parliamentarians on testing for COVID-19 and the tremendous efforts of

pathologists during the ongoing pandemic. I also called for increased digital pathology and highlighted the importance of CPD and learning.

- We were pleased to highlight World Blood Donor Day on 14 June. Each year about 2.5 million units of donated blood are transfused in the UK, but new donors are always needed. We also celebrated Biomedical Science Day 2020. Thank you to all our biomedical science colleagues for their great work!
- We're delighted to hear that our partners Science4U have been presented with the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service for the Schools Science Conference. The College has been partnering with Science4U for nearly a decade to create interactive pathology-themed workshops for their annual Schools Science Conferences. Our members have kindly volunteered their time and expertise to explain the science behind pathology and to highlight the exciting career opportunities in pathology.
- I have spoken in the media about concerns in a surge of demand for pathology services as a result of COVID-19. We expect a backlog of as many as a million pathology tests. We will continue to support colleagues, raise your concerns and advocate on workforce issues across all our disciplines.

**Professor Jo Martin**

**President, The Royal College of Pathologists**

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## **WORKING FOR MEMBERS**

### **COVID-19 – COLLEGE ACTIVITY**

College staff are working remotely during the COVID-19 outbreak in line with current advice. Our aim is to try and ensure that as many of the College's activities carry on as usual. You can get in touch with your usual staff contact via email or phone. You can also find out more on our website.

### **COVID-19: wellbeing for trainees**

The College and the Trainee Advisory Committee is keen to ensure that trainees are well supported and have access to wellbeing services during these challenging times.

Coaching and support sessions are now available to UK pathology trainees, including life sciences Higher Specialist Scientific trainees, free of charge. The programme was initially available to deployed or recently deployed trainees on a first-come, first-serve basis. However, additional capacity has become available, and the programme is now open to all trainees.

Sarah Gornall is an extremely experienced coach who is very keen to support pathology trainees who may find coaching helpful at the current time. The plan for the sessions (and the number of sessions undertaken, up to ten by the end of the year) are decided by the trainees themselves. Visit: [coaching programme](#) for more information.

### **The FRCPath exam candidate survey**

Following the decision to defer the Spring 2020 FRCPath exams owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, the College's Exams team have been working to make alternative arrangements to deliver 50 FRCPath exams across 17 pathology specialties and facilitate the large number of candidates that are keen to sit their exams while still maintaining our high standards. To help inform future exam arrangements, a survey was sent to all FRCPath candidates. The [feedback](#) received is helping to inform decisions regarding any alternative arrangements; any decision made will be with the best interests of candidates, examiners and centre organisers in mind. You can find more information on the College [website](#). We thank all candidates for completing the survey and will be updating everyone as soon as a way forward has been agreed.

### **Deadline for CPD returns extended to 30 September 2020**

The College recognises and appreciates the tremendous effort made by our members during this difficult period.

To provide a bit of a breathing space and alleviate the pressure of submitting within the normal deadline, we have extended the 2019/2020 CPD deadline to **30 September 2020**. If you need more time to submit or have any queries, please contact the CPD team: [cpd@rcpath.org](mailto:cpd@rcpath.org)

## **COLLEGE NEWS**

### **Survey on diagnostic cytology practice in the UK**

Please help us better to understand the use and reporting of diagnostic cytological specimens in the UK.

A survey has been sent to lead cytologists and we have requested one return per lab service. When completing the survey, please ensure that all those who report cytology outside of the cervical screening programme are included as part of the cytology service. Many questions have tick boxes, but some will need more information and data collection. This relates to the calendar year 2019. We do ask for some individual and departmental information so that we do not double count or unintentionally misunderstand the data we receive.

We will analyse the data and share it in an anonymised format with the relevant cytology professional bodies to facilitate discussions about current and future cytology service provision, as well as to help shape cytology training. A report will

also be issued when the data is collated and analysed. Please visit [diagnostic cytology practice](#). The deadline is **1 September 2020**. Questions to: [Fiona.addiscott@rcpath.org](mailto:Fiona.addiscott@rcpath.org)

### **Cellular pathology audit evaluators wanted**

We are looking for cellular pathology audit evaluators to assess whether the criteria and standards for audits submitted to our audit certification scheme are met appropriately. For more information and how to apply, please go to **[Get Involved at the College](#)**.

### **Patient Safety Champions wanted to join College's new Patient Safety Group**

The College is seeking volunteer members to become part of our new Patient Safety Group. We are looking for members with experience in patient safety either clinical or non-clinical settings to help identify activities to improve patient safety and support patient safety engagement. The volunteers may also contribute to work on COVID-19 issues associated to patient safety and improvements.

To join this group, please send a short statement of expression interest to [clinicaleffectiveness@rcpath.org](mailto:clinicaleffectiveness@rcpath.org)

### **Diary date – Please save the date for the yearly Educational Update event to be held virtually**

**Friday 4 December 2020, 10am–12pm**

**CPD credits: TBC**

This training event is principally for trainers and assessors in chemical pathology, cellular pathology, medical microbiology and virology specialties. Trainers from JRCPTB specialties are also welcome to attend. The event will consist of a series of short talks on current and future developments affecting the College, some of which will be presented by high profile national speakers. There will also be a Q&A session. Additional information to follow soon.

### **Learning Environment for Pathology Trainees (LEPT) system**

The LEPT system will be down for maintenance and important updates on Thursday 16 July between 9am and 1pm. No access will be available. One main new addition will be the inclusion of the oral and maxillofacial pathology specialty.

### **Represent your specialty – Committee chair roles**

Chairing a College or intercollegiate committee is an excellent way to raise the profile of your specialty as well helping to shape College activities and policy.

A number of chair roles have become available in the following committees:

- Immunology Specialty Advisory Committee
- Intercollegiate Committee on Haematology
- Joint Committee on Immunology and Allergy
- Joint Medical Microbiology and Medical Virology Specialty Advisory Committee
- Pathology Informatics Committee
- Research Committee
- Toxicology Specialty Advisory Committee
- Transfusion Medicine Specialty Advisory Committee

### **Why should I apply?**

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.

### **How to apply**

Visit the [volunteering opportunities page](#) on the College website and submit your application to [elections@rcpath.org](mailto:elections@rcpath.org) by **5.00pm on Friday 25 September 2020**.

### **Dr Heidi Doughty wins Percy Lane Oliver Memorial Award 2020**

The College is delighted to announce that the winner of the Percy Lane Oliver Memorial Award 2020 is Dr Heidi Doughty for her outstanding contribution to the fields of military and medical transfusion.

The standard of applications was extremely high this year and after much deliberation, the panel awarded the prize to Dr Doughty. Her greatest impact has been her work on the practical aspects of emergency transfusion and emergency planning, translating lessons learnt from the military to wider healthcare. Visit [Percy Lane Oliver Memorial Award](#).

### **College Research Medals now open**

The College's Research Committee is pleased to announce the launch of the Research Medal Awards 2020.

This award is open to trainees who are first author or first joint author on a single original research paper.

Medals are assessed for:

- potential benefits to the public and patients
- impact on the field
- contribution of the individual to the paper.

The deadline to receive applications is **5pm on Monday 31 August**.

Full details of the submission process and eligibility criteria are available on the [College website](#):

### **Indextra – digital subscription medical library app – Free until end of July**

The College has partnered with [indextra](#) to give members instant access to 900+ medical book titles. Compatible with all devices, both online and offline, initial subscription is now free until the end of July. For those taking up subscriptions, we have worked with Indextra to match this with a free subscription for pathologists in low-income countries.

For more information and how to subscribe, visit [RCPATH indextra](#)

## **PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT**

### **Help us spread the word about our competitions**

We recently closed the Paola Domizio Undergraduate Essay Competition and are excited to reveal that we received 126 entries this year! This is a record number and demonstrates a fantastic level of engagement among undergraduates. We are

currently running three other competitions and would be grateful for your help in promoting them, either by word of mouth or through social media.

- **Art of Pathology Competition – closes 7 August**

This year's art competition theme is *Pathology: at the heart of healthcare*. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted just how vital pathology is and the competition provides a creative avenue to explore this for both children and adults, within the UK and abroad. Visit [Art of Pathology](#)

- **Hugh Platt Foundation Essay Competition – closes 28 August**

Foundation doctors are invited to write an essay drawing on their experience of a patient encounter to illustrate the impact a pathology result can have on a patient and their family. Find out more and read last year's winning essay at [Hugh Platt essay competition](#).

- **The Furness Prize for Science Communication – closes 23 October**

This year's competition is now open. Do you know an undergraduate student or trainee who has demonstrated exceptional science communication throughout the year? If you do, please encourage them to apply for this prize at [Furness Prize](#). The winner will receive £200 and be invited to receive their certificate at the New Fellows Ceremony in February 2021.

## **NEW PUBLICATIONS**

- [Tissue pathways for non-neoplastic ophthalmic pathology specimens](#)

### **New veterinary pathology best practice recommendations published**

- [Best practice recommendations: Storage and retention of animal tissues and records](#)
- [Best practice recommendations: For veterinary surgeons seeking pathology expertise](#)

### **New Cause of death list**

The College has published an [updated Cause of death list](#), which replaces the 2016 document of the same name issued to registrars by the GRO. The document offers guidance for those completing death certificates and those registering deaths. It details some of the conditions that may be included on the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (MCCD).

## **COLLEGE CONFERENCES AND SYMPOSIA**

### **COVID-19 – College Conferences Update**

- Please see the [COVID-19 webinars](#) for details of the free virtual learning sessions.

### **COVID-19 – College Conferences Update**

All RCPATH scheduled conferences and events have been postponed until the end of July 2020 owing to COVID-19. We will continue to review the situation and its impact on our events, as there is the possibility that other postponements will be announced. However, we are looking at virtual meetings and video-based learning options. Details will be shared if there are changes to any events.

### **RCPATH/BDIAP Foundation and Undergraduate Taster Event – pathology through a COVID lens**

**7pm, 21 July 2020**

**Calling all medical undergraduates and foundation doctors!**

The joint RCPATH/BDIAP Foundation and Undergraduate Taster Event *Pathology through a COVID lens* is an exciting opportunity for foundation doctors and medical undergraduates to explore pathology and see what the career has to offer!

Free to register, this virtual programme will be delivered through a mixture of specialty-specific sound bite videos from a variety of consultants and trainees, followed by a live virtual session held on Tuesday 21 July at 7pm via Zoom. Attendees will have the opportunity to explore:

- what pathology actually is and why it is important
- what the training involves
- the variety of opportunities that are available for trainees to pursue, e.g. teaching, molecular and digital pathology
- advice about the application process and how to be successful at interview
- how to pursue academic and research opportunities in pathology.

Consultants and trainees will also showcase their specialty and how important it has been in the fight against COVID-19 in the following videos:

- Histopathology through a COVID lens: findings at post mortem
- Microbiology/Infection training through a COVID lens – information about the virus and different forms of testing
- Haematology through a COVID lens – thrombotic complications and the role of blood transfusion services in producing convalescent plasma for trials
- Chemical pathology through a COVID lens – biochemical changes associated with the infection
- Immunology through a COVID lens – understanding the immune response to the virus and antibody testing.

**RCPATH Veterinary Pathology School for Residents – Virtual programme**  
**5 September 2020**

The College's veterinary pathology residency programmes comprise three main disciplines: anatomic, clinical and microbiology, with training most commonly undertaken in a university or commercial setting over a three- to four-year period. Despite training formats varying considerably depending on the particular training centre, all residents are encouraged to follow the respective RCPATH curricula.

To help residents make the most of their training opportunities and to build the RCPATH veterinary pathology community, the RCPATH is hosting a one-day school for residents. The main aim of the programme is to provide general revision updates on a number of important topic areas covered in the respective curriculums, together with providing guidance on the RCPATH exam structure and how best to prepare for the Part 1 and Part 2 examinations. The event will consist of a series of short lectures delivered by experts, covering anatomic, clinical and microbiology topic areas with several break-out sessions.

This event is aimed at veterinary pathology (anatomic and clinical) and microbiology residents at any stage of their training. The emphasis of the programme is on the



FRCPath programme, but those studying for ACVP and ECVF exams may also find this programme of interest.

### **Virology Study Day – Virtual Learning**

**Friday 18 September 2020**

**To be held at the Royal College of Pathologists, 6 Alie Street, London E1 8QT**  
**CPD credits: TBC**

This interactive consultant-led study day is an exciting opportunity for trainees and consultants to gain the knowledge and skills needed for specialist medical virology practice and assessment. Please contact the team at [meetings@rcpath.org](mailto:meetings@rcpath.org) for further details. Bookings now open.

### **Advances in transfusion medicine – Virtual Learning**

**Thursday 26 November 2020**

**CPD credits: 5**

**Save the date**

There are exciting ongoing developments in transfusion medicine and science with high-quality research supporting evidence-based practice. This one-day virtual meeting brings together experts from various clinical disciplines with leaders in transfusion science to provide an update on key developments. The meeting will be of interest to all those involved in transfusion medicine.

We invite young investigators (medical trainees, scientists and transfusion practitioners) to submit abstracts. The best abstracts accepted for either oral or poster presentation at the symposium. For any queries, please contact [meetings@rcpath.org](mailto:meetings@rcpath.org).

### **Soft tissue tumours from infants to young adults: the age matters**

**Thursday 28 and Friday 29 January 2021**

**To be held at the Crowne Plaza Royal Victoria Sheffield, Victoria Station Road, Sheffield S4 7YE**

**CPD credits: 10**

This event will be a case-based approach to the current major clinicopathologic issues in soft tissue tumours in different paediatric ages. The event is targeted at paediatric pathologists, histopathologists and trainees. This event was originally scheduled for March 2020.

We will also be hosting a dinner at the Crown Plaza on the first evening of the event. This will be a great opportunity to network with colleagues and presenters attending the two-day event. Bookings can be made at the time of booking the conference. Please contact [meetings@rcpath.org](mailto:meetings@rcpath.org) if you have any questions.

### **The Beautiful Brain**

**Thursday 15 and Friday 16 April 2021**

**To be held at the Royal College of Pathologists, 6 Alie Street, London E1 8QT**  
**CPD credits: 13**

This special course focuses on the instrumental role of neuropathological study in the analysis of human brain disorders, examining prenatal onset, management, cause identification, genetic advice, and research on human neurodevelopment and new therapies. This course is recommended to health professionals involved in prenatal/fetal medicine, perinatal and paediatric pathologists, neuropathologists, neuroradiologists, neurologists, gynaecologist-obstetricians, geneticists and neuroscientists.

### **Update on placenta: physiology and new concepts**

**Thursday 17 and Friday 18 June 2021**

**To be held at the Royal College of Pathologists, 6 Alie Street, London E1 8QT**  
**CPD credits: 9**

Placental pathology is a unique area of perinatal pathology. Its understanding requires knowledge of normal development, physiology and histopathology as well as fetal and maternal medicine. Request of placental examination has grown exponentially in recent years, but this has not been matched with histopathologists trained in reporting them. This course will provide an update on placental physiology, current classification and new insights into the knowledge of placental conditions.

The course is designed for paediatric/perinatal and general histopathology trainees at any stage of their training as well as consultants. The course will also be of benefit to obstetricians, both consultants and in training.

### **Medical examiners: training**

The College is the lead medical royal college for medical examiners, providing the essential training that will equip you with the knowledge and skills you will need for this important role. Any doctor wishing to work as a medical examiner will need to complete mandatory e-learning modules and attend a face-to-face training day. The day will include short presentations, small group discussions of case scenarios and the opportunity to share experience.

A certificate will be awarded to provide evidence of completion of the face-to-face component of the medical examiner training. This training complements the e-learning which you must complete before attending this training. The College is inviting new medical examiners to join as members. This is dependent on completion of this training and evidence of satisfactory completion of the e-learning modules. Please note, it will be necessary to stay for the entire day to receive a certificate of completion of this training. You must have completed all 26 core e-learning modules before attending the face-to-face training.

Booking has been paused for medical examiner face-to-face training until after the next training day on 30 July. Following that event, which will be the first held remotely, we will have a better idea about the maximum capacity for the September and November training days and will release more places. If that is not sufficient to meet demand, we will add a further training day in October. If you have any questions, please contact the Events team directly at [meetings@rcpath.org](mailto:meetings@rcpath.org). However, please be aware that we will not be able to provide further detail until the start of August.

### **Medical examiner officer training**

The College is also leading on the training of medical examiner officers (MEOs). The training days are open to anyone who has been appointed or is considering applying to work as a MEO.

MEOs work closely with medical examiners and will undertake tasks such as coordinating the completion of death certificates and referrals to the coroner and speaking to clinicians and bereaved families. There is more information about the role of the MEO, including a [model job description on the College website](#).

MEOs may come from a wide range of backgrounds. It is anticipated that many will be nurses, healthcare scientists or bereavement officers by background, although this list is not exhaustive.

The face-to-face training day is the second part of basic MEO training. Everyone attending the course must have completed the 26 mandatory core e-learning modules before the date of the course. It is vital that you have completed this preparatory work to enable you to get the most out of the training day. The e-learning can be accessed [here](#). (Registration with e-Learning for Healthcare is required.)

Further dates to be announced.

For further information, please contact the RCPATH Conference department at [meetings@rcpath.org](mailto:meetings@rcpath.org) or on 020 7451 6700.

## **NEWS FROM EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS**

### **UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) funding**

UKRI has announced it will deploy £180 million of funding for organisations to sustain UKRI grant-funded research and fellowships affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. This is part of a wider package [announced by the government](#) to support the continuation of research and innovation activities. There is more information on the UKRI website: [Guidance for the research and innovation communities](#).

### **Assessing the impact of stammering (stuttering) in the NHS workforce**

If you are an NHS staff member who stammers, then please take the time to complete this confidential [short survey](#).

This is the first study to assess the impact of stammering on job performance, job satisfaction and quality of life at work among NHS staff who stammer.

The project aims to explore the impact of stammering among NHS staff who stammer with the possibility of setting up a national NHS stammering network for staff and managers to access for support and information.

## **EXTERNAL EVENTS OF INTEREST**

### **5–9 September 2020 (2 hours/week up to 80+ hours)**

Online diagnostic dermatopathology course. For more information, please email Dr Hend Mahfouz: [hendmahfouz21@gmail.com](mailto:hendmahfouz21@gmail.com)

### **28–30 September 2020**

[Molecular Diagnostic Training School](#)

### **8–9 October 2020**

[Central Sterilising Club 60th Annual Scientific Meeting](#)

### **9–12 November 2020**

Power of Process Champion. For more information, please contact: <mailto:andre@joinpop.org>

### **27 November 2020**

[UK Clinical Vaccine Network Conference 2020](#)

### **30 November – 4 December 2020**

Power of Process Master. For more information, please contact: <mailto:andre@joinpop.org>

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



