



The Royal College of Pathologists

Pathology: the science behind the cure

RCPATH President's newsletter – May 2025



President's Message

Half-Way

As a President or honorary officer, we are only in post for a defined period of time. Whilst we are here, we aim to not just keep things moving along but look to improve, react, anticipate and predict the future challenges facing pathology and the College. When we are gone, the College is of course dependent on a rolling succession of other members stepping up and taking on these roles. This of course is getting more difficult, with both the desire and the permission to volunteer to do College work becoming more challenging. There are numerous reasons for this, with increasingly busy day jobs and limited job plan time being particularly obstructive. However, awareness of opportunity and a collective need for the profession to step up has diminished.

The collective of UK 4 nation Chief Medical Officers have constructed another letter for healthcare providers to highlight the importance of allowing employees to do external work, such as Royal College work. We as a College can also provide letters of support. The College, healthcare and patients need us all to contribute as much as we can.

So, as I approach the halfway point in my own 3 year Presidential journey, there has been a

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significant change in both healthcare and the College in the past 18 months. The former has seen a new government take over nationally, with an abundance of plans, reviews and decisions taking effect. We have however yet to see any meaningful change in health outcomes, with waiting lists and referral pathways remaining gridlocked.

Across the College, we have been engaged as much as we can with government, launched a new workforce strategy, developed new corporate relationships, restructured our committees and continue to move towards financial viability for the future. The next 18 months will continue to develop these themes but with clear focus on developing our own Pathology Plan, a plan that demonstrates the value of pathology to government healthcare proposals, outlines the necessary investment required and the workforce and technology needed to deliver it. This will be difficult and will need the College, its membership and other pathology colleagues to work together to create a potent critical mass that gets the message across.

Internally, the College will be rolling out its new IT and data platform that will bring many new efficiencies, services and data collection possibilities. In addition, reviewing our curricula and exams will also begin for our 17 disciplines.

As ever, the importance of the College going forward cannot be understated – College staff, officers, directors, leads, examiners, volunteers, trainees – we are all the College – become and stay a member and consider contributing in any way you can.....

Shaping the national cancer plan for England Stakeholder engagement

We have submitted an organisational response to the government's [national cancer plan call for evidence](#) which incorporated input from the College's Speciality Advisory Committees. We have also encouraged members to respond individually to this important consultation. [Our response](#) recommended focusing on prevention, early diagnosis, and reducing cancer waiting

times through investments in pathology, digital technology, and workforce expansion.

To reinforce our evidence to the national cancer plan, Professor Adrian Bateman, Chair of the RCPATH Cellular Pathology Specialty Advisory Committee, attended a roundtable with the Department for Health and Social Care, NHS England and other medical colleges. Discussion focused on two specific elements of the plan: access and early diagnosis and treatment and clinical pathways (looking specifically at service design and clinical decision-making). This was a good opportunity to feed in the issues affecting pathology services to the plan while it is in production.

The national cancer plan is due to be published later this year, after the government's 10 year plan, which we are expecting in June. We will of course publish our response to the 10 year plan as soon as it is available and will promote this with government and key organisations.

Parliamentary engagement

- We joined the [APPG on prostate cancer's](#) meeting in parliament to discuss issues around of prostate cancer diagnosis and treatment. The meeting examined how advances in diagnostics and clinical approaches are addressing longstanding concerns about the benefits and risks of overdiagnosis and overtreatment.
- We also attended the [APPG on Baby Loss](#) meeting on inequalities in baby loss which took place at the start of Black Baby Loss Awareness week in May.

Stakeholder engagement

I was invited to speak at the [Westminster Health Forum](#) conference on *Priorities for cancer prevention and next steps for national screening, diagnostics and early detection*.

I took the opportunity to focus on the steps needed to support and enhance pathology in the upcoming national cancer plan, and the need for wider NHS reform to improve patient outcomes

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

Member survey 2024

In October 2024 the College launched the Member Survey 2024, inviting members to provide feedback on the College, our services, and overall membership experience. Thank you to all those who completed the survey; your responses provided valuable insight into your needs and how we can better serve you.

We worked with our survey partners, Research by Design, to analyse the survey results and produce recommendations to address member feedback. In light of this, we have developed 6 key College commitments that will support us in delivering the change demanded by our membership. [Please go to our website to find the full survey report and 6 key commitments.](#)

Percy Oliver Memorial Award

The College's Transfusion Medicine Specialty Advisory Committee (SAC) is inviting nominations for this year's Percy Oliver Memorial Award.

The Memorial Award is given to an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to the field of blood transfusion. This year's award will be given to a person in the Scientific or Technical category.

Nominations and accompanying citations should be submitted by 5pm Friday 30 May 2025 [via this link](#).

Please use the citation to describe your nominee's background, achievements, and contributions to the field of blood transfusion, in no more than 500 words; furthermore, please demonstrate the impact that they have made to the field.

Apply to be a Portfolio Pathway Assessor

If you are interested in becoming involved with the College, becoming a Portfolio Pathway assessor is a good way to do so. The Portfolio Pathway assessors determine whether or not each Portfolio Pathway applicant meets the knowledge, skills and experience required to practise as a specialist in the UK for their specialty. Assessors will either recommend applicants for entry to the Specialist Register or outline what more needs to be done to meet the standard. Training and ongoing support will be provided, and assessors can self-accredit for CPD points for each Portfolio Pathway evaluation they undertake.

A role description and further information is available on the [College website](#). If you would like to apply, please send an email outlining how you meet the person specification, along with an abbreviated CV, to training@rcpath.org

[Pathology for undergraduates and foundation doctors – Genomics](#)

6pm, Wednesday 28 May 2025

Join Dr Matt Clarke to hear about the advances in genomic testing and how this is helping improve the accuracy of diagnoses in pathology. Dr Clarke will talk about his experience of using molecular testing in the diagnosis of brain tumours. The webinar will be chaired by Professor Angharad Davies and is aimed at undergraduates and foundation doctors. This event is being run jointly by The Royal College of Pathologists, the University of Manchester Pathology Society and the Pathology Subcommittee of UCL Medical Society. Find out more and book your place [here](#).

The Pathology Portal

The Pathology Portal has continued to grow, in April the Pathology Portal was present at both the BSH conference and the IFFS conference, showcasing the availability of resources across specialties from haematology to reproductive science. With more than 300,000 launches and 6,500 resources spanning case studies, lectures, recap videos and podcasts, the Pathology Portal also saw record engagement during the exam period.

We are currently looking for support in areas like infection and haematology to support building and reviewing resources, if you would like to talk about getting involved please get in touch with the team at pathologyportal@rcpath.org.

For more information and to sign up, visit the [College website](#)!

Get involved in the College

[Apply to be the new Clinical Lead for Guideline Adjudication](#)

The College is seeking a Clinical Lead for Guideline Adjudication to help shape the future of pathology guidelines. This remote three-year role offers the chance to work closely with expert teams, ensure guidelines meet national and international standards and contribute to improving patient care. For more details on how to apply, [visit the full job description on our website](#).

New publications

The [April Bulletin](#) presents a special theme on education and training in pathology. This issue launches our new [Trainee Section Editor](#), Dr Ryan Clark, who will lead a section dedicated to representing our trainees. The issue includes articles on flexibility and reasonable adjustments for trainees, reflections on autopsy training and an exploration of the challenges faced by pathology trainees. You can also read about how innovative digital resources can benefit trainees.

[National Medical Examiner's Good Practice Series: Sepsis](#). This paper concentrates on how the medical examiner system can improve reporting of deaths caused by sepsis or deaths where it was a contributing factor, through ensuring the completeness and accuracy of death certificates.

[National Medical Examiner's Good Practice Series: Organ and tissue donation](#). This paper has been updated following the Death Certification Reforms.

[G175 Guidelines on autopsy practice: Deaths in patients with epilepsy including sudden deaths](#)

Regional news

[College responds to Ministerial Advisory Group Report on Performance and Productivity in the NHS in Wales](#)

The independent report makes it clear that pathology services in Wales are under acute and growing pressure. It also recognises the vital role of pathology and diagnostics in addressing healthcare pressures. The report recommends that pathology, in addition to endoscopy, is designated as a priority fragile service that require urgent national and regional solutions, which the Welsh Government has accepted. The College is ready to work with NHS Wales, the Welsh Government and other partners to ensure pathology is equipped to meet future challenges.

Save the date for the following regional symposia

[RCPATH Scotland lunch & learn: Diagnostic Stewardship](#)

This is an online event only to be held via Zoom

Date & Time: Friday 30 May 2025, 12.30-13.30pm

This talk will cover the principles and applications of diagnostic stewardship for a variety of lab disciplines including real world examples of successfully implemented strategies in both hospital and primary care settings.

RCPATH Wales Symposium 2025

This is an in-person only event.

Date & Time: 26 September 2025, 12.30-5pm

Venue: to be confirmed (Cardiff)

This symposium is aimed at RCPATH fellows, members, trainees and others interested in the range of pathology specialties in Wales. Delegates will hear presentations about upcoming themes in the field of pathology and share some of the great developments happening in Wales. They will also hear from the President Dr Bernie Croal and hear about the College's work in Wales.

RCPATH Northern Ireland Symposium 2025 (3 CPD credits)

This is a free and in-person only event.

Date & Time: 22 October 2025, 9.30am-2pm

Venue: Postgraduate Medical Centre, Belfast City Hospital, 51 Lisburn Road, Belfast BT9 7AB

This symposium is aimed at RCPATH fellows, members, trainees, medical students and others interested in the range of pathology specialties in Northern Ireland. Delegates will hear presentations about upcoming themes in the field of pathology and share some of the great developments happening in Northern Ireland. They will also hear from the President Dr Bernie Croal and find out what the College does in Northern Ireland.

College Courses

[Establishing mode of action and human relevance of animal carcinogenic outcomes](#)

12.30pm, Tuesday 10 June 2025

CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)

The webinar will describe the use of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IPCS) guidelines in defining the mode of action (MOA) of chemically induced neoplasia in laboratory animal carcinogenesis studies. It will then go on to describe how the relevance of this MOA, to consequential human exposure, can be established. While introducing the broad steps to be taken in defining the MOA, the webinar will use specific chemical case examples of where the approach has proven to be valuable in the risk assessment process of confirming human safety of both drugs and agrochemicals. This event will take place at 12:30pm 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.

[RCPATH/BDIAP Foundation and Undergraduate Taster Event 2025 – Virtual](#)

7pm, Tuesday 8 July 2025

CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)

The joint RCPATH/BDIAP Foundation and Undergraduate Taster Event 2025, is an exciting opportunity for you to explore pathology and see what the career has to offer. This virtual programme will be delivered with a mixture of specialty-specific sound bite videos from a variety of consultants and trainees (sent to attendees a few days before the meeting), followed by a live virtual session, which will take place in the evening and last approximately 1.5 hours (via zoom). It is free to register.

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 the interview
- how to pursue academic and research opportunities in pathology.

[The future of AI in pathology – a guided tour](#)

1pm, Thursday 10 July 2025

CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)

The government are keen to see adoption of AI in the public sector accelerate at pace. There are many examples of excellent AI tools that can save lives, cut costs and improve diagnostic speed and accuracy but adoption in the NHS has been slow with justifiable concerns on integration, patient safety and cultural change. This Webinar will provide a guided tour of AI applications relevant to The Royal College of Pathologist members to help them judge where and when AI tools might support new, faster, better diagnostic pathways. Owen Johnson, director of AI Medical at the University of Leeds will provide a tour of AI research and innovation and this will be followed by a discussion on members' experiences and concerns chaired by Karen Mitchell.

This event will take place at 1:00pm 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.

[Autopsy webinar series - Two deceased in the same house](#)

Thursday, 18 September 2025

CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)

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

[Autopsy webinar series - Fractured neck of femur](#)

Wednesday, 15 October 2025

CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)

This event will take place at 1:00pm 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.

[Autopsy webinar series – Diabetes and the heart](#)

Wednesday, 19 November 2025

CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)

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

[Autopsy webinar series – Maternal death, Part 1](#)

Wednesday, 10 December 2025

CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)

Maternal deaths are rare (only 80-100pa across the UK) but their autopsies are not generally done well, due to unfamiliarity. These two lectures present the overarching context of maternal mortality in the UK, cover the major pathologies of Direct & Indirect maternal deaths, and inform on how to perform the autopsies optimally.

This event will take place at 1:00pm 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 – In-person](#)

Thursday, 5 June 2025

CPD credits: 6

[Medical Examiner training – Virtual](#)

Wednesday, 24 September 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

Invitation to participate in a survey on the pathologist's roles in research data generation

What is this for? Dr. Charlotte Jennings, a histopathology resident and researcher at the University of Leeds, is encouraging participation in a brief research survey as part of her ongoing research project. The survey is about understanding the role of pathologists in research and their involvement in supporting data generation, with a focus on digital pathology and AI-based research. Your insights and experience would be invaluable in helping to better understand the contributions pathologists make to research and understanding the challenges and opportunities in this area.

- **Time Commitment:** Less than 10 minutes
- **Anonymous:** All responses will be kept confidential.
- **Eligibility:** Practising pathologists
- **To participate, please visit:** [Survey Link](#)

UKHSA AMR & HCAI surveillance output evaluation

UKHSA's antimicrobial resistance (AMR) & Healthcare-associated infection (HCAI) division, together with the Evaluation & Epidemiological Science division are working on an assessment to improve UKHSA-provided surveillance outputs related to the AMR national action plan 2024-2029. These include surveillance statistics and monitoring data on various bacterial and fungal infections, antimicrobial use, pathogen resistance rates and antimicrobial stewardship.

Pease fill out this survey, even if you do not currently use any AMR or HCIA surveillance data.

Please also share the survey with colleagues in your team, division, organisation, network or beyond who work on AMR, HCAI, IPC, antibiotic prescribing or use, or any related areas, who you think can provide valuable input for this evaluation.

[Link to the survey](#)

Please fill out this survey by 30 June 2025.

For more information or if you have any queries please email to amr_outputs_survey@ukhsa.gov.uk.

[Lyzeum Ltd](#)

[Lyzeum Ltd](#), a University of Cambridge spin-out company, is developing innovative AI solutions for the diagnosis of duodenal biopsies. The team very recently published a multi-centre study in [The New England Journal of Medicine AI](#) demonstrating that their machine learning software achieves pathologist-level accuracy in diagnosing coeliac disease.

The team is currently developing a pathologist-assistant tool capable of accurately diagnosing both normal and coeliac disease cases in the duodenum. This software will provide interpretable diagnostic features, such as cell counts, and we aim to obtain UKCA marking by 2026.

They are interested in understanding the views of all stakeholders and invite completion of a [brief questionnaire](#).

Other external events of interest

21-23 May 2025

[Applied Bioinformatics and Public Health Microbiology](#)

22 May 2025

[Can Fc neonatal receptor inhibitors change fetal and neonatal alloimmune thrombocytopenia \(FNAIT\) clinical practice?](#)

29 May 2025

[Nottingham and Singapore Breast Pathology Masterclass](#)

04 June 2025

[The BAGP 21st Hybrid Annual Meeting - Masterclass with the Experts Meeting](#)

04 June 2025

[BAGP 21st Annual Meeting - Meet the Experts Hybrid Meeting for Trainees and Early Career Pathologists](#)

04-05 June 2025

[Clinical and Laboratory Haemostasis 2025](#)

05 June 2025

[British Society for Antimicrobial Chemotherapy \(BSAC\) Antimicrobial Susceptibility Testing \(AST\) – Hot Topic Webinar Series - Webinar 2](#)

05-06 June 2025

[The BAGP 21st Hybrid Annual Meeting in Collaboration with ISGyP](#)

05-06 June 2025

[Haematological Malignancy Diagnostic Service Course](#)

06 June 2025

[British Society for Antimicrobial Chemotherapy \(BSAC\) Outpatient parenteral antimicrobial therapy \(OPAT\) Regional Workshop - Birmingham](#)

06 June 2025

[UK and Ireland Myeloproliferative neoplasms \(MPN\) Educational Day](#)

10-11 June 2025

[LabMedUK25](#)

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](#)

