



The Royal College of **Pathologists**

Pathology: the science behind the cure

RCPATH President's newsletter – September 2026



Transformation...

Summer holidays over and attention once again turns to pathology transformation – very much front and centre across the UK.

England

The College hosted an all-day meeting on behalf of NHSE earlier this month, with an NHSE refocus on their 6-point histopathology transformation plan, aimed at driving integration, interoperability and increased productivity. Histopathology 10-day turnaround time for cancer specimens is the main goal but the current performance indicates that the 98% target is way off for the vast majority of services (which are currently averaging 50–60%).

Improving LIMS functionality and interoperability, expanding automation, rolling out more digital pathology and AI, reducing unnecessary demand, and extending roles of scientists will be important, but increased integration of services will also need to mature. Meanwhile, the most important tool in the box, workforce expansion, remains obscure.

Wales

I recently spent a few productive days in Cardiff, attending the RCPATH Wales Regional Council and symposium, held at the Wales Genomic Health Centre, part of the All Wales Medical

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Genomics Service (AWMGS). Pathology transformation remains a major challenge for the Welsh NHS. However, digital roll-out and a single joint LIMS would appear to be well ahead of the rest of the UK. I was also delighted to learn that Dr Emma Short has been appointed as the Wales Regional Council Chair for 3 years beginning at the AGM.



Dr Croal on the RCPATH Wales visit, attended by Dr Vickie Heath, Chief Healthcare Science Officer.

Northern Ireland

I will be going to Belfast for a few days in October, where I plan to meet the Chief Medical Officer, Michael McBride, attend the Regional Council and the symposium, and meet with trainees.

Meanwhile, the 'Blueprint' programme continues. The Pathology Blueprint Programme will explore options for moving the management of laboratory services from each Trust into a single regional pathology management structure, along with the entirety of the Northern Ireland Blood Transfusion Service, and the functions of the NI Pathology Network.

Scotland

I recently chaired the Path360 Scotland meeting in Glasgow, which covered many important aspects facing the diagnostic services across Scotland. This comes at a time when the Scottish Government has just announced that the 11 mainland Health Boards will reduce to just 2, an East and West Board. However, there would

appear to be no timescale, plan, detail or funding set out to support this change.



Dr Croal with Professor Catherine Ross, the Chief Scientific Officer for Scotland.

Concerns over workforce

The College continues to lobby hard for significant expansion of the pathology workforce, given the predicted widening gap between capacity and demand. While the [RCPath Workforce Strategy](#) has successfully pulled relevant data and published spotlight reports, workforce planning would appear to be neglected.

The long-term workforce plan 2 remains unpublished, but is not forecast to improve things for pathology. The Medical Education and Training Review is also unlikely to radically shake things up.

Finally, the Government promised up to 4,500 new training posts. It would seem that these are to be funded from existing NHS Trust money and mostly there to convert existing LED/SAS doctor posts – so no additional funding and no increase in headcount. Pathology is unlikely to be chosen as the destination for these posts by NHS Trusts.

The College voice is strong here and we are being listened to, but it is so important that we continue this, working with other professional groups, academia and industry to make our points.

Engaging our stakeholders

Following on from the launch of [Making Every Test Count](#), our joint white paper with Roche Diagnostics, we met Dr Rhydian Phillips, Director of Diagnostics & Transport at NHS England.

We discussed the many similarities between the report's main points, and the areas of work NHS England are prioritising in their pathology transformation programme. Suchita Joshi, Head of Pathology at NHSE, will also be attending.

I met Professor Frankie Swords, NHS England Medical Director, to raise issues surrounding the pathology workforce, specifically the crisis affecting the paediatric and perinatal pathology workforce. Professor Swords highlighted the [promised training posts](#) due to start from February 2027.

[The Thirlwall Inquiry Report](#)

The College has noted the publication of this report, set up to investigate the circumstances and consequences associated with events leading to the conviction of Lucy Letby for murder and attempted murder. The report included many recommendations for pathology – the handling of insulin requests, implications for medical examiners, the setting up of a panel of experts to support such events and a recommendation to increase the number of paediatric pathologists in training. The College will be looking at these recommendations and will be responding as necessary.

Political conferences

Professor Sarah Coupland, President Elect, will be attending the [Labour party conference](#) for 2 days.

She will join the Royal College of General Practitioners and the Royal College of Physicians at a panel event. The event will explore one of the biggest questions facing the NHS: with the shift of care from hospitals to communities, who will deliver the care patients need, and how can we ensure neighbourhood health fulfils its promise to deliver high-quality care closer to home?

[Booking now open for our International Pathology Day 2026 virtual conference](#)

I will be chairing our International Pathology Day event, which will feature expert presentations exploring the theme of pathology in an era of personalised medicine.

The programme will open with a conversation between Professor Ahmad Abou Tayoun, Chair of the [WHO Technical Advisory Group on Genomics](#), and Professor Sarah Coupland, RCPATH President-Elect.

RCPATH Committee Chairs

I had a productive meeting with some of the committee chairs last week, where we were able to discuss College strategy and the support the College can give to the committees. The College is hugely thankful to these Fellows for stepping into these roles, and we await appointments to some vacant roles in the near future.

[Biomarkers and precision medicine meeting](#)

This in-person meeting, hosted in collaboration with corporate partner MSD, had an esteemed line-up of speakers including Professor Manuel Salto-Tellez, Professor Peter Johnson, National Clinical Director for Cancer, NHSE and Professor Louise Jones. The meeting discussed important areas of biomarker research and implementation, including the barriers to adoption.

New Fellows Ceremony

I was once again delighted to attend what was my 25th New Fellows Ceremony (12th as President), where College officers met with many of our new Fellows and their families. It is always uplifting to know that new generations of pathologists and scientists continue to come through to strengthen the future of pathology. Many congratulations also to our new Honorary Fellows, Joanna Andrew (past President of the IBMS) and Jeanette Dickson (past Chair of the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges and Past President of the RCR).



Honorary Fellow Professor Jeanette Dickson.



Honorary Fellow Joanna Andrew.

Some sad news

I was personally saddened recently to learn of 2 pathologists involved in a serious road accident in Italy. Dr Danielle Freedman, an esteemed chemical pathologist and past Vice-President of the College, remains seriously injured in hospital; however, her partner, Dr Fraser Mutch, a much-respected histopathologist, sadly did not survive. The College passes its deepest condolences to their families and hopes that Danielle can make a good recovery.

Dr Bernie Croal

President, The Royal College of Pathologists

X: [@RCPPath](https://twitter.com/RCPPath)

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A PDF version of this newsletter is available at

[RCPATH newsletters](#)

Working for members

Have your say in the Member Survey 2026 – launching 7 October

Building on our member survey from 2 years ago, I'm pleased to announce that we will be launching the Member Survey 2026 on 7 October. This is your opportunity to give

your feedback on the College, where we're doing well, and where we could do more to support you.

All College members will be invited to take part. Please look out for an email with your survey link when the survey opens on 7 October. It should take just 5–10 minutes to complete, but your response will be invaluable in helping us to shape member services and support in line with member needs. Make sure your voice is heard.

College input into the future regulation of AI in healthcare

As AI becomes increasingly used in pathology diagnostics and laboratory medicine, getting the regulatory framework right is critically important. To inform this work, the College made a response to the National Commission into the Regulation of AI in Healthcare in February 2026.

The report from that work was published on 10 September, recommending a continuous, lifecycle-based system of AI regulation. The report further recognised that workforce capability, AI literacy, and organisational readiness are all essential to ensuring AI is implemented safely and effectively. These are issues that the College has consistently highlighted as critical to the successful use of AI in pathology. You can read more here: [New blueprint for regulation of artificial intelligence \(AI\) in healthcare published](#)

National Pathology Week 2026 – 2 to 8 November

The theme for [National Pathology Week \(NPW\) 2026](#) is 'Welcome to the lab' and we hope this inspires members and their teams to get involved in NPW this November. Visit our [NPW webpage](#) to download logos and other digital assets, and to find out more about how to take part.

If you're running an event or activity, please [register it on our website](#) so we can add it to our events calendar. You can order free promotional materials for any in-person NPW events you're running [here](#).

We're working with the Pathology Alliance on a series of webinars about careers in different pathology specialties. These are running throughout November and are aimed at sixth formers, undergraduates, and foundation doctors. Details including booking links will be added to the [NPW page](#) soon.

Trainees' Research Medal Awards 2026: Call for submissions

We are pleased to announce the launch of the Trainees' Research Medal Awards 2026, recognising outstanding research by pathologists and scientists in training. This prestigious award is open to all trainees, scientists, oral pathologists, and veterinary pathologists employed in a suitable specialty training or appropriate research/academic posts during the year the research was published or accepted in a peer-reviewed journal.

To apply, submit your application along with your research paper by 9 October 2026. Full submission details, eligibility criteria, and the application form are available on the [College website](#).

Educational Update 2026 meeting

09:45–12:00, Friday 6 November

This annual meeting will be held remotely on Friday 6 November 2026 at 9:45am to 12:00pm. This year's theme is focused on Artificial Intelligence (AI). The keynote speaker is Dr Mark Ragoo MBA PGDip Health Informatics FRCM FHEA. This event is principally for trainers and assessors in chemical pathology, cellular pathology, medical microbiology and medical virology specialties. Trainers from the JRCPTB specialties are also welcome to attend. The programme and how to book your place is [available here](#).

CPD Returns Reminder

The College's 2025/26 CPD year has come to an end. Submitting your CPD return is an important part of maintaining your [revalidation](#) record, so please remember to complete and [submit your CPD return here when you're ready](#).

Should you have any questions or need support with the process, our Member Engagement and Support Team will be pleased to assist:
020 7451 6720. cpd@rcpath.org

RCPATH/Specialist Society Medical Elective Small Grant Scheme

Applications for the 2026 RCPATH/Specialist Society Medical Elective Small Grant Scheme are now open!

Introduced as part of the Royal College of Pathologists' Diamond Jubilee celebrations in 2022, the RCPATH/Specialist Society Medical Elective Small Grant Scheme supports undergraduate medical and veterinary students undertaking pathology-related elective projects.

Delivered in partnership with specialist societies across a range of pathology disciplines, the scheme offers grants of up to £1,000 to help students pursue clinical or research-based electives anywhere in the world.

For further details and application guidance, please visit the [College](#) website.

- Application deadline: Monday 5 October 2026
- Notification of successful applicants: November 2026

The Pathology Portal

After celebrating its 4-year anniversary last month, September is a busy time for the Pathology Portal with demonstrations at new trainee welcome days and lots of users also coming on board or returning to explore over 8,000 resources prior to the exam period.

There have also been several successful teaching sessions run utilising the Pathology Portal both in the UK and internationally, with more to come and continued involvement with multiple specialties EQA's

If you've used the Pathology Portal, we would be grateful if you could take a moment to share your feedback [here](#).

If you have any questions or interested in seeing how the Pathology Portal can be utilised to deliver teaching, please get in touch with the team at pathologyportal@rcpath.org and the team will be happy to provide a demonstration.

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

International News

Book your place at the International Pathology Day 2026 virtual conference

Join us for this year's International Pathology Day virtual conference. Chaired by RCPATH President Dr Bernie Croal, the event features a special guest conversation with Professor Ahmad Abou Tayoun, Chair of the [WHO Technical Advisory Group on Genomics](#) and Professor Sarah Coupland, RCPATH President-Elect.

For the first time there will also be a live debate chaired by Professor Yousuf Karim, RCPATH Country Advisor for Qatar. The debate, titled 'Personalised medicine is a luxury available only to the global minority', Following the debate, audience members will be invited to cast their vote for the team they believe presented the most compelling case. Find out more and secure your place at [our website](#).

Showcase Your Work in the International Pathology Day 2026 Poster Competition

Do you have an inspiring innovation, research study, or project to share? Whether you are working independently or as part of a team, the International Pathology Day 2026 Poster Competition offers the opportunity to showcase your work to a global audience. Sponsored by Epredia, this year's competition is themed 'Innovations in Pathology for Personalised Patient Care' and celebrates projects that demonstrate excellence, creativity, and impact in the field of pathology. With cash prizes available for the top two entries. To enter, please review the terms and conditions and download the International Pathology Day branded poster templates from [our event page](#).

College courses and events

[HSCT: the specialist role of the H&I laboratory](#) - This webinar is being sponsored by [VH Bio](#) and [Eurobio Scientific](#)

Monday, 28 September 2026

CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)

This event is aimed at College trainees or colleagues in Haematology or working in the stem cell transplantation environment, informing them of the role that the H&I labs play in this area. In addition, we will promote via our H&I networks for people training in H&I. **This event will take place at 1:00pm and last approximately 1 hour.**

RCPATH/BDIAP Foundation and Undergraduate Taster Event 2026 - Virtual

Tuesday, 29 September 2026

CPD credits: 2

The joint RCPATH/BDIAP Foundation and Undergraduate Taster Event 2026 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, 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. **This event will take place at 7:00pm.**

Autopsy Webinar Series: Practical & current aspects of HIV/AIDS

Wednesday, 14 October 2026

CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)

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

New Consultants Day 2026 - Virtual

Thursday, 15 October 2026

CPD credits: 6

The New Consultants' Day is an event to help and support those recently appointed to a consultant post, or who will soon be taking one up - appropriate for all pathology specialties and for both medically trained pathologists and clinical scientists.

You will hear from experienced consultants on a range of topics such as how to prepare a business case to secure resources, how to set up new services and how best to deal with complaints, and learn more about appraisal, revalidation and job planning (parallel session for medically trained pathologists) and the experiences of consultant clinical scientists (parallel session for clinical scientists), among other things. It is most suitable for those appointed to a consultant post within the last year, or who expect to be appointed to a consultant post within the next year.

Autopsy webinar series – Cervical spine injury

Wednesday, 18 November 2026

CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)

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

Autopsy webinar series: Update on the Medical Examiner Service - 2 years on

Wednesday, 9 December 2026

CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)

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

Liver Pathology Bitesize Webinars series

Following some excellent sessions on medical liver disease in 2025, and based on feedback received from delegates, the UK Liver Pathology Group in conjunction with the Royal College of Pathologists are pleased to announce the continuation of our virtual liver pathology bitesize series. Given the variability in exposure to liver pathology during training across the UK, some of the cases discussed will include FRCPath style cases but also cover entities which pathologists may come across regularly as part of their working practice. There are six webinars which take place during 2026, which this year will be focussing on lesional liver pathology, and will aim to return to medical liver disease in 2027.

Each 1-hour webinar session will be hosted by the UKLPG resident representatives and presented by an expert in the field of liver pathology. We plan to cover a different theme in each session, including case-based discussions in addition to hints and tips in how to approach the cases. There will also be the opportunity for delegates to pose questions to the speakers via the Q&A function. Where possible, we aim to provide attendees with the opportunity to view the digital slides before each session.

Liver Pathology Bitesize Webinars - Hepatic cysts

Wednesday, 4 November 2026

CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)

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

RCPATH Retired Fellows' Luncheon 2026

Thursday, 8 October 2026

The RCPATH would like to invite our retired Members, along with a guest, to the Retired Fellows' Luncheon on Thursday 8th October 2026 at 12.15pm for a drink's reception followed by a 1.00pm lunch. The lunch is to be held in the Terrace Room at the Royal College of Pathologists, 6 Aline Street, London E1 8QT.

This is an opportunity for retired fellows to meet old friends and perhaps make new acquaintances, and follows from the successful lunches held previously.

Should you wish to attend, tickets are priced at £65 per person, for drinks reception and lunch. Please note that places are limited.

Medical Examiners Officer (Virtual training)

Wednesday, 30 September 2026

CPD credits: 6

Regional news

College helps shape priorities for the Senedd Health Committee over the next four years

Following the recent elections to the Senedd Cymru (Welsh Parliament), new Committees have been formed to scrutinise the Welsh Government's work. The new Health & Social Care Committee have asked for views on what they should prioritise over the next 4 years.

We sent a [response](#), developed with the collaboration of the College's Wales Regional Council. We highlighted several key issues that we believe the Committee should focus on. These include pathology workforce shortages (particularly in rural and smaller hospitals), the state of the physical pathology NHS estate in Wales, the need to invest in digital pathology and interoperable patient systems, the benefits of regionally integrating services and the importance of pathology to expanding community care and health prevention initiatives.

RCPATH Pathology Competition for Schools in Wales

To celebrate National Pathology Week 2026, the Wales Regional Council are excited to be running a competition aged school-age children in Wales

Primary school children will be asked to create a picture. For secondary schools, we are inviting students to write an essay.

[For a full list of criteria please visit the website](#). The winner for each category will receive a £50 book token.

To take part students are advised to send their entries to jessica.zago@rcpath.org. Please note that entries can be submitted in English or in Welsh. The deadline is Sunday 18 October 2026, and the winners will be announced on Monday 2 November 2026 during National Pathology Week.

and the Royal College of Pathologists and all the volunteers on the LTO Board including lay members, editorial team and content reviewers.

RCPATH Northern Ireland Symposium 2026

This is a free and in-person only event.

Date: Tuesday 20 October 2025

Venue: Postgraduate Lecture Theatre, Belfast City Hospital, 51 Lisburn Road, Belfast BT9 7AB

Time: 09:30 – 14:00 (including lunch, networking opportunities and followed by Trainee Forum with the College President)

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 hear from the President Dr Bernie Croal and find out what the College does in Northern Ireland.

Poster competition: [Enter a poster into this year's RCPATH Northern Ireland Symposium Poster Competition](#)

New publications

- The latest [Chris Tiplady blog](#) was published, which focuses on night sweats and the challenges pathologists face in diagnosing the cause.
- [G150 Guidelines for non-operative diagnostic procedures and reporting in breast cancer screening](#) authored by members of the Non-operative Diagnosis Working Group of the UK National Coordinating Committee for Breast Pathology.
- [Audit of core biopsy diagnosis of breast lesions](#)
- [G078 Tissue pathways for endocrine pathology](#) authored by Dr Mufaddal T Moonim, Dr David Poller, Dr Paul Matthews and Dr Sonali Natu

- [An audit of turnaround times for reporting of endocrine pathology specimens](#)

News from external organisations

Food Standards Agency 2026/27 recruitment campaign

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) is recruiting new members to join its Scientific Advisory Committees (SACs) and Science Council as part of the 2026/27 recruitment campaign.

Applications are encouraged from individuals of all backgrounds and from a broad range of scientific and professional disciplines. The FSA is committed to building diverse committees that draw on a wide range of expertise, perspectives and experience.

The FSA's SACs and Science Council provide independent scientific advice that helps inform evidence-based decision making on food safety and standards. Their work plays an important role in protecting public health and consumer interests.

Recruitment is taking place across the following committees:

- [Advisory Committee on the Microbiological Safety of Food](#)
- [Committee on Toxicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment](#)

AI supervisors and projects - NHS Fellowship in Clinical AI Cohort 6

Proposals are invited for Cohort 6 of the NHS Fellowship in Clinical AI.

We are seeking projects focused on the deployment and evaluation of AI within clinical workflows, hosted by multidisciplinary NHS teams.

Successful teams will host AI Fellows for 2 days per week from August 2027 to August 2028.

- Deadline: 1 November 2026
- Project template, [Further information and FAQ:](#)
- Submit proposals to: gstt.aifellowship@nhs.net

IFCC C-MDO Survey on Molecular Diagnostics Based on Circulating Biomarkers in Oncology

The IFCC Committee on Molecular Diagnostics (C-MDO) is conducting this survey to assess the current implementation of molecular diagnostics based on circulating biomarkers (e.g., cell-free nucleic acids, circulating tumor cells, and extracellular vesicles) in diagnostic laboratories worldwide. The results of the survey will help identify current practices, unmet needs, and opportunities for harmonization and standardization, and will support future IFCC C-MDO recommendations and educational activities. One response per laboratory is preferred.

[The survey should take approximately 10 minutes to complete.](#)

Other events of interest

21-25 September 2026

[Gynaepathology virtual weeklong course](#)

22 September 2026

[Post International Society of Thrombosis and Haemostasis \(ISTH\) & American Society of Haematology \(ASH\) Headlines 2026](#)

24 September 2026

[Nottingham and Singapore Breast Pathology Masterclass - Part II](#)

24 September 2026

7th Experts in Haematology Faculty Meeting - For more information, please contact: biopharma.uk@grifols.com.

24-26 September 2026

[XLV Symposium of the International Society of Dermatopathology](#)

24-25 September 2026

[7th Cardiac Marker Dialogues meeting](#)

25 September 2026

[The Wessex and Gloucestershire Gastrointestinal Pathology Virtual Course](#)

29 September 2026

[9th South West Stem Cell Transplant Day](#)

30 September 2026

[Current Thinking in Haematological Malignancies - Nottingham](#)

30 September 2026

[Federation of Infection Societies \(FIS\) Webinar: Supporting the Infection Workforce: Wellbeing, Resilience and Retention](#)

30 September 2026

[Enabling Patient-Centred Sampling: Total Laboratory Automation](#)

06 October 2026

[British Society for Antimicrobial Chemotherapy's \(BSAC\) Antimicrobial Susceptibility Testing \(AST\) Hot Topic Webinar Series 2026](#)

07 October 2026

[Infection Prevention and Control \(IPC\) Partners - Surface disinfection state of the art \(Insight Webinar\)](#)

07-10 October 2026

21st Annual Sickle Cell & Thalassaemia Conference

08 October 2026

UK Complete Chronic Lymphocytic Leukemia (CLL) Forum Clinical Sciences Day

09 October 2026

National Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia (ALL) Update Day

09-10 October 2026

Irish Society of Surgical Pathologists (ISSP) 2026

13 October 2026

St Mark's Gastrointestinal Histopathology Workshop

14 October 2026

Annual Breast Screening Pathology Meeting

14 October 2026

Current Thinking in Haematological Malignancies (Manchester)

16 October 2026

UK European Blood and Marrow Transplantation (EBMT) Nurses and AHP Group

21 October 2026

Current Thinking in Haematological Malignancies (Glasgow)

29 October 2026

2nd Immunodeficiency faculty meeting: Immune Failure - Cases from the Edge of Diagnosis - For more information, please contact: biopharma.uk@grifols.com.

04 November 2026

Behaviour change and Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) (Insight Webinar)

05 November 2026

Healthcare Infection Society (HIS) Outbreaks Training Course

06 November 2026

Birmingham Breast Pathology Update Course 2026

06 November 2026

UK Lymphoma Research Group

09-11 November 2026

Leeds Lymphoma Course

11 November 2026

UK Myeloma Society Autumn Day

17 November 2026

UK Forum on Haemoglobin Disorders (UKFHD) 62nd Academic Meeting

20 November 2026

[BAUP Annual Meeting with Uro pathology EQA Circulation](#)

20 November 2026

[Myeloproliferative Neoplasms Advances Day 2026](#)

20 November 2026

[British Lymphoma Pathology Group \(BLPG\) Autumn Meeting 2026](#)

30 November – 03 December 2026

[The British Society for Immunology \(BSI\) Congress 2026](#)

07-09 December 2026

[International Congress of Antimicrobial Chemotherapy \(ICC\)](#)

09 December 2026

[Dry surface biofilms: implication for Infection Prevention and Control \(IPC\) \(Insight Webinar\)](#)

09-10 December 2026

[13th Digital Pathology & AI Congress: Europe](#)

08 March 2027

[Pathology Study Day](#)

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](#)