

## RCPATH President's newsletter – August 2024



### President's Message

The new UK Government is approaching its first 50 days in office. The Health Minister Wes Streeting only has responsibility for healthcare across England, but much of what is decided by the Westminster Government has ramifications if not direct consequences for the rest of the UK.

So far, there is a lot of listening, which is good. Part of this is the Darzi Independent Review of the state of the NHS in England. I attended the first meeting of the Expert Reference Group (ERG) this month and was able to voice concerns around pathology services. [In addition, the College was also able to directly submit written evidence to the review](#) – which we did, covering workforce, workload, failing services as well as what is working well. Other members of the Pathology Alliance were also encouraged to do so.

Similarly, significant efforts are being made to bring together Royal Colleges and NHSE workforce planning in much needed collaborative discussions. It is clear that building the diagnostic workforce required to meet future demand will take time but we need to ensure our voices are heard.

The major milestones ahead are the Darzi Review Report (Sept 2024), the Spending review (Oct 2024), the update for the Long Term Workforce Plan (2025) and the NHSE 10 year Plan (2025). It remains vital that pathology is

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part of all of these processes and the College will ensure that happens. College members also need to assist by bringing reports, anecdotes, data on workforce/workload, and examples of what good looks like. Keeping College data up to date and contributing to workforce surveys are now so important.

### **RCPATH Celtic Nations Summit**

The College is committed to strengthening relationships across all 3 devolved nations and advocating for safe, supportive and resourced workplaces.

The College's regional council members for [Northern Ireland](#), [Scotland](#) and [Wales](#) represent their respective nations and provide professional leadership. They contribute to the maintenance and development of pathology services and the quality of care that patients receive.

Later this month the College will be hosting its first Celtic Nations Summit bringing together the Chief Scientific advisors for the 3 devolved nations, regional council members and other key College representatives.

Workforce and training, IT, digital and AI and strategies for key specialties, are all on the agenda. The focus of the summit will be to learn and share and ensure RCPATH can support pathology services and healthcare in general across the whole of the UK.

In addition, I will be travelling to Cardiff, Belfast, Glasgow and Edinburgh to attend a variety of symposia and key meetings in the next few months – I hope to meet some of you there.

### **[The state of medical education and practice in the UK. Workplace experiences 2024](#)**

The General Medical Council's latest report into doctors' workplace experiences highlights that deteriorating levels of satisfaction and burnout across all groups and specialities are leading doctors to 'take matters into their own hands' to improve their wellbeing and reduce potential risk to patient care.

Pathology fares better than other specialties with 65% of those sampled reporting as being satisfied with their working experience and 65% stating they felt part of a supportive team. This is good for recruitment and retention but there is much more we need to do. We know that pathology workloads are rising which will add pressure to existing staff, impacting well-being and patient care outcomes.

The report adds that employers and healthcare bodies need to do more to support doctors now, while longer term solutions are developed by workforce planners to improve conditions.

### **Parliamentary and stakeholder engagement**

Following the restoration of a devolved government in Northern Ireland, [Mike Nesbitt, Health Minister visited pathology services](#) at the [Royal Victoria Hospital](#), Belfast Health & Social Care Trust to see the vital work of our members first hand. The minister also met with Dr Gareth McKeeman Chair of RCPATH Northern Ireland Regional Council. Gareth had also recently attended a joint meeting with the minister, with other medical royal colleges. There were useful discussions on areas such as workforce planning and healthcare inequalities.

As part of our plans for establishing relationships with the new health team in the UK government, I have written to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, Wes Streeting MP, and the other ministers at [DHSC](#) to highlight the areas they need to tackle, now that they are in office.

Work has started on re-establishing our [All-Party Parliamentary Group for Diagnostics](#) – this is an important forum to highlight the value of diagnostics, promote the diagnostic workforce, and improve diagnostic services. It has added importance given the number of new MPs and the need to make our case.

### **The Pathology Portal**

August marks two years since the launch of the award-winning Pathology Portal, an invaluable resource for pathology professionals worldwide.

Over the past two years, the Portal has amassed over 5,500 high-quality resources, including lectures, podcasts, detailed cases, and interactive learning materials covering a wide range of specialties and unique topics.

The Portal has become a fantastic free resource for the pathology community at every career stage, hosting high-quality content, fostering engagement and supporting continuous learning and improving professional practice. For more information including how to sign up, visit: [Pathology Portal – 2 years of supporting pathology education](#).

### **Direct to Consumer Testing (DTCT)**

DTCT continues to bring controversy with the potential benefits being weighed against appropriateness, quality and complete end to end pathways that include interpretation and advice to patients. The College has in the past year written to Government expressing concerns in this expanding area. As the UK representative on the European Federation of Laboratory Medicine (EFLM) Task Force for DTCT, we have just published an Internationally collaborative opinion [paper](#) on this subject, which may be of interest to many College members.

Dr Bernie Croal  
President, The Royal College of Pathologists  
X: [@RCPath](#)

### **In this issue:**

- PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE
- WORKING FOR MEMBERS
- GET INVOLVED AT THE COLLEGE
- INTERNATIONAL
- NEW PUBLICATIONS
- COLLEGE CONFERENCES AND EVENTS
- OTHER EVENTS OF INTEREST

A PDF version of this newsletter is available at  
[RCPATH newsletters](#)

## Working for members

### **Educational Update 2024 meeting**

This annual meeting will be held online on Friday 8 November 2024 at 9:45am to 12:00pm. This year's theme is focussed on reasonable adjustments for training and examinations. The keynote speaker is Professor Kim Piper, Professor of Oral and Maxillofacial at Kings College London.

There will also be an update on the [award-winning Pathology Portal](#).

This free meeting is relevant to all those involved in the delivery of pathology training – including trainers, assessors, and senior trainees preparing to become consultants.

The programme and how to book your free place is on the [College website](#).

### **Upcoming CPD Submission Deadline – Action Required**

We are pleased to be able to highlight the CPD portfolio service offered by 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.

#### Important Aspects of the CPD Cycle

1. CPD year: The College's CPD year runs from 1 April to 31 March of the following year.
2. Recording activities: We encourage members to record CPD activities promptly as they undertake them.
3. 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, please contact our member engagement and support team at [cpd@rcpath.org](mailto:cpd@rcpath.org)

### **Applications for this year's RCPATH/Specialist Society Medical Elective small grant scheme are now open!**

The RCPATH/Specialist Society Medical Elective Small Grant Scheme was introduced as a new initiative to commemorate the College's Diamond Jubilee in 2022. This scheme is a collaborative effort between RCPATH and partner societies representing various disciplines. It aims to provide financial assistance of up to £1,000 to undergraduate medical and veterinary students who are interested in pursuing electives in pathology disciplines.

These electives can be either clinical or research-based and can be undertaken anywhere in the world. More information can be found on the [College](#) website. The deadline for

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submission is Monday 30 September 2024. Successful applicants will be notified in October 2024.

### **Race in Medicine Seminar**

The Royal College of Pathologists Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Network, and the [Pathological Society](#), is pleased to be able to invite you to join us for a half-day seminar to discuss [race in medicine](#).

Delegates will have the opportunity to hear Professor Andrea Deyrup and Professor Joseph Graves Jr talk about their research into racialisation of disease in medicine in the US (and beyond).

This is the first time they have presented their cutting-edge research in the UK, and we are excited to help them share their findings.

After their talks, delegates will have an opportunity to discuss the learning we can take away for UK pathology practice and how this might influence clinical practice, teaching, research, and EDI initiatives at a national and local level. Please contact [reshma.patel@rcpath.org](mailto:reshma.patel@rcpath.org) for more information. For more information about the College's EDI work [visit the website](#).

### **[Art of Pathology Competition – open to all](#)**

The College's annual [Art of Pathology competition](#) is an opportunity for people of all ages to submit paintings, drawings, sculptures, digital art, collages or any other media on a specific theme. This year's theme is 'The Science Behind the Cure'. Participants are invited to interpret this theme in their own unique and creative way, while exploring different aspects of pathology.

There are 3 categories for entries: under 11s, 11–17 and adults (over 18s). The Art of Pathology competition is kindly sponsored by [Sonic Healthcare UK](#) and closes on 30 August 2024. Find out more about the competition and get inspired by previous winners [here](#).

### **[Volunteering Opportunities – The Access Project](#)**

RCPATH members and Fellows are invited to consider volunteering as a tutor for [The Access Project](#).

The Access Project supports pupils from under-resourced backgrounds to access top universities. We are looking for undergraduates, postgraduates, staff, and alumni who would be able to tutor a young person aged 14-16, online, one hour a week in term-time Autumn 2024- Summer 2025 to support them with their academic studies. No prior teaching or tutoring experience necessary, we provide a full comprehensive training and induction to help you build the confidence to be the best volunteer you can be. We'll match you with a student who is looking for support in your subject.

Find out more and [sign up here](#).

### **The Pathology Portal**

The Pathology Portal team is delighted to be celebrating two-years.

Free to access, It has become a fantastic free resource for pathologists worldwide. To sign up visit [The Pathology Portal](#).

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Our dedicated community of over 3,800 active users and 100 contributors has played a crucial role in this success. The Pathology Portal has received numerous accolades, including The an award for Outstanding Innovation at the [2023 Healthcare Honours](#) and a highly commended at the [Health Service Journal Digital Awards](#) in 2024.

As we celebrate this milestone, we look forward to introducing new resources, courses, and features to further enhance the learning experience. For more information or to contribute, contact us at [pathologyportal@rcpath.org](mailto:pathologyportal@rcpath.org).

### **The College's 5-year strategy 2024–2029**

The College's new five-year strategy was developed with our members and pathology services at its core. It highlights the College's values, aims and our collective mission to shape the future of pathology. Visit: [RCPath 5-year strategy](#).

## **Get involved in the College**

### **Lead for Undergraduate & Foundation Pathology Education**

The College is seeking to appoint a Lead for Undergraduate & Foundation Pathology Education working with a number of College teams to develop increased awareness of the pathology specialties in those graduating from UK medical schools, universities and Foundation Training. A role description and person specification is on the [College website](#) and the closing date for applications is Friday 30 August.

### **The College is currently advertising the following posts:**

- [Histological Dissection Conjoint Board member \(College representative\)](#) closing date: **Friday 6 September**.  
Apply to become a College representative on the Histological Dissection Conjoint Board of the Royal College of Pathologists and the Institute of Biomedical Scientists.
- [Cytology Reporting Conjoint Board member \(College representative\)](#) closing date: **Friday 6 September**.  
Apply to become a College representative on the Cytology Conjoint Board of the Royal College of Pathologists and the Institute of Biomedical Scientists.
- [Histopathology Reporting Conjoint Board member \(College representative\)](#) closing date: **Friday 6 September**.
- Apply to become a College representative on the Histopathology Reporting Conjoint Board of the Royal College of Pathologists and the Institute of Biomedical Scientists.

## **Regional news**

### **[RCPath Northern Ireland Symposium 2024](#) (3 CPD credits)**

- This is a free and in-person only event.
  - **Date & Time:** 19 September 2024, 9.30am-2pm
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- **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 have the opportunity to find out about 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. For further information on the programme and how to register, please access [RCPATH Northern Ireland Symposium 2024](#).

### **RCPATH Wales Symposium 2024 (SAVE THE DATE!)**

- This is an in-person only event.
- Date & Time: 25 October 2024, 1pm-5pm
- Venue: to be confirmed.

## **International**

### **Recruitment for International Regional Advisors**

We are currently recruiting for International Regional Advisors for Europe, Middle East and North Africa and Western Pacific regions. The International Regional Advisor will support the work of the Clinical Director of International Activities by implementing priorities at a regional level, coordinating with Country Advisors, identifying opportunities for engagement, project collaborations and member development. The closing date for applications is 11 September 2024. To find out about the role [click here](#).

### **Global Antimicrobial Resistance Webinar Series**

Our 6-part Global Antimicrobial Resistance Webinar series has completed. The speakers provided country perspectives from Australia, Canada, Cuba, Hong Kong, India, Kenya, Nigeria, Qatar, Sri Lanka, the United Arab Emirates and the UK. We had hundreds of attendees join from around the world. We would like to thank our Clinical Director for Publishing and Engagement, Professor Angharad Davies for creating and moderating these webinars, the speakers for their thoroughly engaging presentations and all those who attended over the course of the series. If you would like to watch the webinar recordings, you can find them on our [website here](#).

### **Join Professor Sally Davis, UK Special Envoy for AMR at this year's International Pathology Day. – secure your place!**

We are delighted to welcome Professor Dame Sally Davies, the UK's Special Envoy on Antimicrobial Resistance, as keynote speaker at our virtual conference for International Pathology Day themed 'The Rise of Global Antimicrobial Resistance'.

Additional speakers include Professor Walid Al-Wali, who will discuss the evolution of AMR and Dr Wael Elamin's presentation will focus on environmental work he is involved with in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). More speakers will be announced in the coming weeks.



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inspired by our recent 6-part free '[Global Antimicrobial Resistance Webinar Series](#),' our signature roundtable discussion will focus on Global Perspectives on AMR. Additionally, we are pleased to bring back the poster competition.

Keep close to our main [event page](#) for updates on speaker announcements, details about the poster competition, and access to free virtual IPD resources as they become available and register to attend at our [booking page](#).

## New publications

- The National Medical Examiner's Good Practice Series 16: [Deaths after delays in care and treatment](#)
- [G074 Tissue pathways for cardiovascular pathology](#)

The following [College guidelines](#) are in consultation:

- G157 Guidelines on autopsy practice: Autopsy for bodies recovered from water
- G085 Tissue pathways for gastrointestinal and pancreatobiliary pathology
- G084 Dataset for histopathology reports for prostatic carcinoma.

## College Courses

### [Autopsy webinar series – Autopsy renal pathology](#)

**1pm, Wednesday 18 September 2024**

**CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)**

This webinar will discuss common renal pathology encountered in routine autopsy practice, and the value of renal histology in understanding causes of death.

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

### [How drug-related deaths analysis can inform coronial investigations](#)

**1pm, Wednesday 25 September 2024**

**CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)**

In this webinar, Dr Copeland will demonstrate how the NPSUM data can be used to inform coronial investigations of drug-related deaths, including the value of considering individual decedent demographics (e.g., age, gender, ethnicity, body mass index) when interpreting toxicology results, and the identification of novel drug-drug interactions which can impact drug toxicity profiles.

### [Autopsy webinar series – Sickle cell disease](#)

**1pm, Wednesday 16 October 2024**

**CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)**

The session will include a presentation of the common causes of death in sickle cell disease, based on local data, including a large series performed by Prof. Sebastian Lucas'. This will be followed by case vignettes illustrating autopsy pathology from sickle cell disease deaths.

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

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

[Diagnostic Neurobiomarkers – webinar](#)

**1pm, Thursday 10 October 2024**

**CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)**

In this webinar Dr Hart will discuss the role of various biomarkers to aid the diagnosis of neurological disease and will describe recent advances in the fields of neurodegeneration and neuroinflammation.

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

[Autopsy webinar series – Sickle cell disease](#)

**1pm, Wednesday 16 October 2024**

**CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)**

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

[Autopsy webinar series - Post Mortem CT](#)

**1pm, Wednesday 20 November 2024**

**CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)**

During this session we will discuss how the CTPM service in Leicester operates, the triaging of cases for CTPM (plain or angiography), the importance of our consultant radiologist colleagues in reporting the images and how this guides us with either providing a cause of death or by refining our subsequent investigations in determining the cause of death e.g. limited or targeted invasive post mortem examination +/- histology, microbiology/virology.

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

[Autopsy webinar series – The Human Tissue Authority](#)

**27 November 2024**

**CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)**

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

[From snails to sperm whales: PMs across 10 orders of magnitude](#)

**1pm, Thursday 28 November 2024**

**CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)**

Dr Simon Spiro is the veterinary pathologist for the Zoological Society of London, where he is responsible for the diagnostic pathology of the society's 23,000 animals of 800 species. He is also the pathologist for the Cetacean Strandings Investigation Programme (CSIP) which investigates dead whales, dolphins, sharks, turtles, and seals in English and Welsh waters. In this talk he will cover the what, where, how and why of wildlife pathology, covering everything from the practicalities of performing post mortem examinations on everything from tiny invertebrates up to massive whales, to the science and conservation work that results. This talk will cover topics such as cholesterol mediated diseases in meerkats, bacterial diseases in bats and orthopaedic disease in whales, all told with the aid of pictures, video and digital microscopy.

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

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## [Autopsy webinar series - Resuscitation and pre-hospital care-related injuries](#)

1pm, Wednesday 11 December 2024

CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)

This event will take place via zoom 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.

Please contact the college events team for further information on training dates on [meetings@rcpath.org](mailto:meetings@rcpath.org).

### **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.)

Please contact the college events team for further information on training dates on [meetings@rcpath.org](mailto:meetings@rcpath.org).

## **Other external events of interest**

21-23 August 2024

[The Diagnexia Histopathology Symposium 2024](#)

01-05 September 2024  
[International Biennial Pseudomonas Conference](#)

04-05 September 2024  
[7th Immunology Forum - Emerging technologies and therapies: What is relevant for immunodeficiency?](#)

06 September 2024  
[British Society for Antimicrobial Chemotherapy \(BSAC\) - Outpatient Parental Antibiotic Therapy \(OPAT\) Regional Workshop - London](#)

09-10 September 2024  
[Lymphoma Management 2024](#)

10 September 2024  
[British Society for Antimicrobial Chemotherapy \(BSAC\) - Outpatient Parental Antibiotic Therapy \(OPAT\) Regional Workshop - Bristol](#)

12 September 2024  
[Webinar: Laboratory Developed Tests \(LDTs\) and the coming of age of In Vitro Medical Devices Regulation \(IVDR\)](#)

13 September 2024  
[UK and Ireland myeloproliferative neoplasms educational day for allied health professionals, nurses and pharmacists](#)

13 September 2024  
[St Mark's Gastrointestinal \(GI\) Histopathology workshop](#)

20 September 2024  
[Trauma-induced bleeding – How the haemostasis lab can help](#)

24 September 2024  
[7th South West Stem Cell Transplant Day](#)

26 September 2024  
[The 5th Experts in Haematology Faculty Meeting](#)

26-27 September 2024  
[Cardiac Biomarkers in Real Time: Experiences and opportunities](#)  
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](#)