



Clinical Director of Safety and Quality

Job Description

Responsible to:	Vice President for Professional Practice
Accountable to:	President
Term of post:	Three years from date of the AGM in the year of appointment
Working hours:	Average of two programmed activities (PAs) per week (including attendance at meetings)
Location:	The Royal College of Pathologists, 6 Alie Street, London E1 8QT or any of the place(s) of business of the College as determined from time to time

Introduction

The College is a professional membership organisation dedicated to the advancement of the science and practice of pathology. There are currently approximately 12,000 members, all of whom are pathologists and scientists based in hospitals, universities and laboratories in the UK and overseas. The College's main tasks are to set and maintain training standards for doctors and scientists, to advise on the appointment of consultants, to ensure the membership is kept up to date with current practice through the continuing professional development scheme, and to promote the latest developments in pathology by holding scientific meetings. The College's mission is to promote excellence in the practice of pathology and to be responsible for maintaining standards through training, assessments, examinations and professional development.

We are committed to increasing diversity and inclusion within our organisation, as well as using our voice and platform to help make pathology as a profession more inclusive. This means reflecting critically on issues of diversity and inclusion within all that we do, identifying and taking appropriate actions to reduce inequality, and welcoming challenge.

We welcome applications from anyone regardless of their disability, ethnicity, heritage, gender, sexuality, religion or socio-economic background.

The College

This College has a key role in the professional aspects of pathology services for the development and delivery of health care. Those holding office in the College provide professional leadership and thereby contribute at a national level to the maintenance and development of pathology services, and the quality of care that patients receive.

The College expects its office holders to be proactive, and to provide leadership not only in their own specialty but also in pathology in general, in the wider context of health services. The College's influence extends to all sectors of healthcare provision.

The College is its membership, and we aim to listen and be responsive to its needs. The coordination between international, national, regional and local activities is paramount. All office holders are expected to subscribe to these principles, and the local leads and regional Chairs are expected to provide the professional leadership within their region. The College is also expected to provide advice and guidance on specialty specific issues nationally, regionally and locally. The Specialty Advisory Committees provide professional leadership within their specialty.

Main purpose of the role

The Clinical Director of Safety and Quality provides clinical leadership and strategic advice for the College's work on professional guidelines, patient safety, quality improvement, best practice recommendations and professional performance matters.

The post holder will support the development, delivery and review of the College's Patient Safety Strategy, helping to promote safer cultures, safer systems and high-quality pathology practice across the membership and wider healthcare system.

Working closely with the Vice President for Professional Practice, Director of Professional Practice, Head of Professional Practice and Professional, and the Professional Guidelines Manager, the post holder will provide senior clinical input into the development, review and promotion of College guidelines, best practice recommendations, patient safety resources and related professional outputs.

The role will help ensure that the College's work is clinically credible, relevant to members, responsive to developments in pathology and aligned with the College's strategic priorities. The Clinical Director will act as a spokesperson for the College where required and will support engagement with members, committees, external partners and other stakeholders.

The post holder will not be responsible for the day-to-day operational management of staff or services, which sits with the relevant permanent staff team. The Clinical Director will provide clinical advice, leadership, challenge and support to enable effective delivery.

The job description is subject to review as the role develops and if there are any changes in College governance.

Responsibilities

1. Strategic and clinical leadership

- Provide senior clinical leadership for the College's work on professional guidelines, patient safety, quality and professional standards.
- Support the development, delivery and review of the College's Patient Safety and Quality Strategy 2024–2029, working in partnership with the Professional Guidelines Manager, Professional Guidelines team and Patient Safety Steering Group.
- Advise on the clinical scope, relevance and priority of professional guidelines, best practice recommendations and related outputs.
- Help identify current and emerging risks relating to patient safety, pathology practice, professional guidelines and professional standards.
- Provide clinical insight across pathology specialties to support decision-making, prioritisation and service development.
- Keep abreast of relevant research, policy, legislation and developments within patient safety, quality improvement, professional standards and pathology practice, sharing this information with staff to enable timely and coordinated responses.

2. Professional guidelines and best practice recommendations

- Provide clinical advice into the development, review and approval of College clinical guidelines and best practice recommendations.
- Support the Professional Guidelines Department in maintaining clinically robust, up-to-date and relevant guidance for members.
- Encourage and support members to become authors, reviewers, working group members and contributors to College guidance and related outputs.
- Help promote College guidelines and best practice recommendations to members and external stakeholders.
- Provide clinical advice where issues arise in relation to guideline content, professional interpretation, stakeholder feedback or complaints.
- Support the College's work to improve awareness, accessibility and use of guidance through articles, webinars, workshops, factsheets, infographics or other member engagement activities.

3. Patient safety, quality and safer systems

- Promote the College's position on safety culture, safer systems and learning across the membership and to key stakeholders.
- Support communication with members on the relationship between learning, safety, quality improvement and professional practice.
- Provide clinical leadership for work that raises awareness of human factors, safe system design and quality improvement in pathology.
- Link the cultural aspects of learning and safety to high-quality working and learning environments, staff effectiveness and professional satisfaction.
- Support the development of educational or engagement resources that raise awareness of patient safety and quality improvement in pathology.
- Provide clinical leadership and advice to support delivery of the Patient Safety and Quality Strategy 2024–2029, working closely with the Professional Guidelines Manager, Professional Guidelines team and Patient Safety Steering Group.
- Support the Patient Safety Steering Group in identifying priorities, reviewing progress and promoting work that improves patient safety across pathology.

4. Working Group on Cancer Services and specialist professional outputs

- Provide clinical advice and strategic oversight for the work of the Working Group on Cancer Services where required.
- Support the development and review of datasets, tissue pathways and other specialist outputs where these fall within the department's remit.
- Help ensure that relevant outputs are clinically credible, consistent and responsive to the needs of the profession.
- Oversee, advise on or support specialist projects that may require input from committees and clinical leads, for example antimicrobial resistance, genomics or other emerging professional priorities.

5. Professional performance and disciplinary matters

- Provide clinical advice to support the Professional Performance Committee and related professional performance work.
- Provide advice on performance, revalidation, disciplinary or concerns matters where senior clinical input is required.

- Support the College's role in maintaining professional standards while ensuring fairness, confidentiality and appropriate governance.
- Act as a senior clinical adviser or arbiter in complex, sensitive or escalated matters where required, including queries or complaints relating to departmental processes.

6. Stakeholder engagement and representation

- Act as a spokesperson for the College to external stakeholders, the membership and staff on professional guidelines, patient safety, quality and related matters.
- Represent the College at internal and external meetings, committees and events as required.
- Build effective relationships with members, specialty representatives, College officers, staff, healthcare bodies and other stakeholders.
- Promote, present, liaise and negotiate with relevant external stakeholders on behalf of the College.
- Write or contribute to articles, statements, reports, briefings or other materials for publication on College platforms.
- Provide feedback to officers and staff following external meetings, stakeholder discussions or relevant developments.
- Communicate regularly with members to support understanding of the College's work on professional guidelines, safety, quality and professional standards.

7. Governance, reporting and planning

- Attend relevant College committee meetings.
- Report to Council, officers and relevant committees as required.
- Provide information to the Director of Professional Practice, Head of Professional Practice and Professional Guidelines Manager to support formal reporting on progress against strategic goals, forward plans and departmental work plans.
- Contribute clinical input to departmental planning, risk management, business planning and budgeting where required.
- Participate in the College's planning and budgeting processes with relevant staff, providing clinical and strategic advice rather than operational management.
- Support monitoring of progress against agreed strategic objectives, work plans and service priorities.
- Abide by the Code of Conduct for College officers and committee members.
- Be aware of and adhere to College policies.
- Act as a role model, demonstrating commitment to College values, behaviours and equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Deputise for the Vice President for Professional Practice or other office holders when requested.

Scope and accountability

The Clinical Director is responsible for providing clinical leadership, strategy advice and professional judgement to support the College's on professional guidelines, patient safety, best practice recommendations and, where required professional performance.

The post holder will inform the future development of College services and outputs by identifying professional priorities, advising on clinical risk, supporting member engagement and representing the College's position to internal and external audiences.

The Clinical Director will work collaboratively with College officers, staff, committees, members and external stakeholders. They are expected to support the delivery of agreed plans and deadlines, but day to day operational management, process management and delivery of departmental work plans remain the responsibility of the relevant permanent staff team.

The role requires a broad understanding of pathology specialties, patient safety, quality systems, professional standards and practical challenges facing pathologists and pathology services.

Delivery of the role will be reviewed in line with College procedures, including contribution to strategic objectives agreed work plans, committee activity and the effective use of College resource.

Key relationships

The Clinical Director will work closely with:

- President and College officers
- Vice President for Professional Practice
- Director of Professional Practice
- Head of Professional Practice
- Professional Guidelines Manager
- Professional Guidelines Department staff
- Professional Performance Committee
- Patient Safety Steering Group
- Working Group on Cancer Services
- Quality and patient safety committees
- Specialty Advisory Committees
- Council and Trustee Board, where required
- External stakeholders.

The Clinical Director is supported by the permanent staff, team, who are responsible for operational delivery, administration, staff management and implementation of agreed work plan.

The Clinical Director is responsible to the Vice President for Professional Practice and accountable to the President.

Additional information

Current College committees (subject to amendment during term of post)

- Patient Safety Steering Group Working Group on Cancer Services
- Professional Performance Committee
- Council
- Internal meetings with staff and Vice President in the Professional Practice.

Current external committees (subject to amendment during term of post)

- Any relevant external groups relating to patient safety, professional guidelines, quality improvement or professional standards.

**Clinical Director of Quality and Safety
Person specification**

Requirements	E	D
Knowledge and experience		
Fellow of the College	✓	
In active practice	✓	
Not currently subject to any investigations related to professional performance or probity	✓	
Broad overview of all pathology specialties	✓	
Up to date participation in a CPD scheme	✓	
<u>Understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion and how this applies to professional leadership and College work</u>	✓	
Previous experience as a spokesperson, communicator, public speaker or negotiator at senior level		✓
Previous experience of writing to a range of audiences and in a range of formats	✓	
Experience of communicating at multiple levels – to staff and to external audiences	✓	
Senior leadership experience	✓	
Understanding of patient safety, safety culture, quality improvement and systems-based approaches to safety.	✓	
Experience of working with committees, professional groups or multidisciplinary stakeholders.	✓	
Skills and abilities		
Ability to communicate effectively and develop effective working relationships on an individual basis with College colleagues and staff	✓	
Excellent verbal and written communication skills	✓	
Ability to make decisions and give clear, balanced guidance	✓	
Ability to present effectively to an audience, using a variety of methods, and to respond to questions and queries	✓	
Ability to take responsibility and show evidence of leadership	✓	
Qualities		
Excellent interpersonal and communications skills	✓	
Flexible and proactive attitude	✓	
Awareness of personal limitations	✓	
Proven experience of working constructively as part of a team	✓	
Proven experience in leadership and strategy development	✓	
Track record of achievement	✓	