



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

RCPATH President's newsletter – April 2026



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President's Message

News of the World...

World and national news clearly remains focused on wars in the middle east, which show no sign of resolution. Impact on fuel prices, supply chains and concern over global defence are the inevitable downstream consequences. It remains to be seen how this will impact healthcare in the UK, and in particular, pathology services. It would seem sensible however to develop potential mitigation plans, ready to react, to preserve the most important pathology services – moving to **PATHCON-3...**

Within the UK, much attention is focused on the upcoming parliamentary elections in Scotland and Wales, and local elections in some parts of England. This and continued focus on the Peter Mandelson issue, continue to divert much needed discussion away from healthcare. Despite this, pathology and diagnostics have emerged as being very important within the National Cancer Plan and the Community Diagnostic Centres expansion announced recently. This has enabled the College to further promote the many issues that pathology services are facing. More on this below...

I was delighted to attend this week our annual **Industry Leaders Forum**, here at the College. This was an extremely well attended meeting with over 100 leading individuals from industry, academia, NHSE and the profession in attendance. We also benefitted from an encouraging address from Dr Zubir Ahmed, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health Innovation and Safety at the Department of Health and Social Care, where he focused on the importance of pathology and the role of the College. It was reassuring to see complete consensus as to the continued importance of the profession, industry and academia working together for the good of pathology. We will report fully on this later next month.

I have also been able to attend a meeting this week with the **Medical Protection Society**, including their new medical director, Dr Pallavi Bradshaw, and their Council President, Professor Dame Jane Dacre. I was able to highlight the growing concern shared by pathologists over medical legal implications of their work, especially given the growth of artificial intelligence and the uncertainty around who is responsible for results and the accompanying uncertain regulatory landscape.

I also attended this week, a reception hosted by the **Health Foundation**, in London. Timely, in that they have just published their report on healthy life expectancy, showing a 2 year reduction over the last decade for both men and women. In addition, a widening margin between affluent and deprived areas – now extending to a 20 year gap. Healthy life expectancy is a key measure of the population's health, providing a more comprehensive picture of the UK's health than life expectancy alone. It can also be mapped to likely demand for pathology services, adding further evidence to the need for additional resource.

Finally, we look forward next month to finding out who will form the new respective governments in both Wales and Scotland,

and we look to engage with them at the earliest opportunity.

National Cancer Plan

We have produced a more detailed response and briefing to the Government's [National Cancer Plan for England](#).

We welcome the expansion of diagnostic capacity with new histopathology capacity. The aim for 98% of histopathology tests to be reported within 10 days by March 2029 is very ambitious given the current state of consultant staffing in pathology departments. Despite new developments such as digital pathology and artificial intelligence-based tools, the level of vacancies and planned retirements within the profession is likely to be the most significant contributor to turnaround times. Download the College's full briefing [on our website](#).

This briefing has led to good engagement with politicians, and we now have a date for Dr Scott Arthur MP, Labour, Edinburgh South West, to visit the labs at The Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh and a meeting arranged with Paul Davies MP, Labour, Colne Valley.

Professor Adrian Bateman, Chair of the College Cellular Pathology Specialty Advisory Committee spoke at the [Westminster Health Forum](#) event, 'Next steps for 10 Year Health Plan delivery and NHS reform' on priorities and practicalities for implementation of the 10 Year Health Plan and delivery of wider reform to the NHS.

We also welcome the King's Fund's publication '[Delivering the National Cancer Plan: What Will It Take to Build Innovation-Ready Cancer Services?](#)' The report followed a roundtable convened by the King's Fund which Professor Adrian Bateman, Chair of the RCPATH Cellular Pathology Specialty Advisory Committee, joined to highlight the importance of

pathologists in translating national ambition into change for people with cancer.

Government announces £237 million investment into Community Diagnostic Centres (CDC) across England.

As a result of the investment, four new CDCs will be opened in Gorton, Luton, Boston and Bideford during 2026/27. A further 17 will be physically expanded, and 15 will receive enhancements to increase diagnostic capacity.

This is welcome investment, bringing diagnostic service closer to patients in the community is one we support.

Pathology services form an integral component of CDCs and we would like to see more data about the role of pathology in and the difference this makes to patient outcomes and waiting lists.

RCPATH Celtic Nations Summit 2026

The Royal College of Pathologists hosted its second Celtic Nations Summit in February, bringing together representatives from Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, alongside College officers and senior staff, to discuss the future of pathology services across the UK.

Discussions focused on workforce sustainability, service configuration, and quality and accreditation, with attendees highlighting growing pressure on pathology services across all nations. They emphasised that long-term investment in workforce, digital infrastructure and IT is essential before any major service reorganisation is considered.

I'd like to thank all attendees for their valuable insights which played a key role in shaping discussions. You can read the [full report here.](#)

Glasgow University Medical Research Society (GUMRS) Conference 2026

I had the pleasure of addressing students at this conference earlier this month at my Alma Matar. The audience mainly featured medical students but also students from a range of other disciplines, including nursing, dentistry, and life sciences, as well as a small number of academic foundation doctors and trainees from specialties such as neurology and cardiology.

The conference was centred around supporting students in engaging with medical research early in their careers, with a focus on practical skills, career insight, and interdisciplinary collaboration.

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

College welcomes publication of the National Allergy Strategy

The National Allergy Strategy Group (NASG) has published a [UK-wide framework](#) for improving allergy prevention, diagnosis and management of those affected by allergies across the UK.

The strategy advocates for a coordinated approach to improve outcomes and reduce the burden of allergic diseases on individuals and their families. Immunologists are central to the diagnosis and treatment of allergies, yet the workforce remains fragile. Our [Clinical Immunology Workforce Report](#) – released in September 2025 – found that demand for immunology and allergy tests is rising, on average, by 11% per year, without coupled workforce increases. The UK requires at least 44% more consultant immunologists (an additional 52 posts) to meet current demand.

Read the full College's response here: [College comments on the publication of the National Allergy Strategy](#)

Shaping the future of genomic cancer diagnostics

As genomic testing continues to become embedded in cancer pathways, it is essential that the diagnostic network recognises the expertise across the whole diagnostic workforce and delivers the best possible outcomes for patients by providing clinically relevant turnaround times. Through recent consultation work, members have highlighted major challenges – from delays in turnaround times to infrastructure gaps and workforce pressures – all of which impact timely, high-quality cancer care.

The College is working to develop a pathology professions' position on the configuration of service and the skills needed to deliver genomic testing services for cancer patients in the UK. This will foster collaboration with patients, governments, service providers, industry, oncologists and other professions, and aid the shaping of service deliver. For further information, read the [full article](#).

[The Royal College of Pathologists' Science Communication Prize](#)

The [RCPATH Science Communication Prize](#) is now open to undergraduates, foundation doctors and pathology trainees, to recognise excellence in science communication throughout the year.

There are 2 categories: Trainee, for pathology trainees; and Undergraduate, for UK undergraduates and foundation doctors. The winner of each category will be awarded £500 and will be invited to accept their award at the College's New Fellows Ceremony, where it will be presented by representatives of Sonic Healthcare UK who sponsor the prize.

The closing date for the 2026 competition is 23:59 on Monday 27 July. Please pass on details of the competition to any students, foundation doctors or trainees that you know of who are involved in public engagement activities.

[Integrated genomic profiling in sarcoma diagnostics: clinical applications of whole-genome, transcriptome and methylation analysis](#)

12:30pm, Tuesday 19 May 2026

CPD credits: 1 (self credited)

Sarcomas comprise a highly heterogeneous group of tumours where accurate classification is often challenging using morphology and immunohistochemistry alone. Join us for this free lunchtime webinar in which we will discuss how integrated genomic profiling—combining whole-genome sequencing (WGS), RNA sequencing, and DNA methylation profiling—can improve diagnostic precision and refine tumour classification. Using real clinical examples, the session will illustrate how these technologies detect structural variants, fusion genes, copy-number alterations, and epigenetic signatures that are not identifiable with conventional testing. The talk will also address practical considerations for clinical implementation, including interpretation of results, integration with histopathology, and the potential impact on patient management.

The webinar is being delivered in partnership with our corporate member, Illumina, and will last approximately 1 hour. Find out more and book your place [here](#).

CPD returns reminder!

The College's 2025/2026 CPD year has now ended. Completing your CPD return will help support your [revalidation](#), so please ensure you have completed and [submit your CPD return here when you're ready](#).

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

Get involved at the College

Veterinary Pathology Trainee Registration

Trainees in anatomic veterinary pathology, clinical veterinary pathology, and veterinary microbiology are eligible to register with the Royal College of Pathologists for an annual fee of £54. Registration provides access to the various veterinary pathology curricula, the MyRCPath portal with member resources and committee documentation, quarterly Bulletins, an annual Veterinary Pathology newsletter,

access to the Pathology Portal, reduced rates for scientific meetings and CPD events, and additional benefits such as TOTUM PRO eligibility.

The registration process requires completion of a form with evidence of training appointment, followed by online payment within 14 days. The College operates a "1 fee only" policy whereby trainees pay either the registration fee or diplomate/fellowship fee depending on their status, with special provisions available for circumstances such as maternity leave. It should be noted that the Diplomate and Fellowship fees supersede the trainee registration fee. This registration is intended to offer valuable professional resources and networking opportunities throughout veterinary pathology training. Veterinary Pathology trainees can register [here](#). For registration queries, contact the Training Co-ordinator at training@rcpath.org.

Veterinary Pathology SAC member vacancies

We have a number of vacancies on the Veterinary Pathology SAC. If you are interested in any of the following roles, please follow this [link](#) to apply.

- Veterinary Clinical Pathology Specialty Advisor.
- Curriculum Development Representative.
- CPD Advisor, Clinical Lead for Academic Activities

Trainees Advisory Committee member vacancies

We are inviting applications from trainees interested in joining the Trainees' Advisory Committee, which represents all specialties and College regions. TAC Members play an active role by attending committee meetings, participating in discussions, and ensuring trainees' views are shared within their specialty. This is a valuable opportunity to influence how your specialty is organised, network with peers, contribute to College activities, and support your professional development.

Roles currently available include:

- Veterinary Microbiology Pathology Trainee Representative
- Veterinary Clinical Pathology Trainee Representative

Successful applicants will be expected to attend four Trainees' Advisory Committee meetings each year and two Specialty Advisory Committee meetings, providing updates on behalf of their specialty. Applications must be submitted using the [nomination form](#) by 5pm on Tuesday 5 May 2026.

College courses and events

Veterinary Pathology Spring webinar series

The RCPATH has a long and distinguished history in veterinary pathology. Membership and Fellowship examinations in veterinary pathology have been conducted since the 1970s. Today, Fellowship of the RCPATH continues to carry significant professional recognition, with Fellows acknowledged as specialists by both the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) and the Veterinary Council of Ireland (VCI).

We are delighted to present the RCPATH Veterinary Pathology Spring Webinar Series, a programme designed to engage and educate pathologists, residents, specialists, veterinary surgeons, and undergraduate students across all specialties. The series will feature sessions on anatomical pathology, clinical pathology, and microbiology, covering topics of current relevance and interest. These include large animal disease surveillance, with a focus on emerging viral threats such as Bluetongue virus, wildlife forensic pathology, lipases, immunohistochemistry and pathology findings associated with telemetry devices and therapeutic oligonucleotides. The series will conclude with a dedicated discussion of the RCPATH Fellowship examinations in veterinary pathology/microbiology, offering guidance and insight for those considering this qualification.

Autopsy webinar series: Cognita a mortuis 2026

Wednesday, 20 May 2026

CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)

The autopsy has revealed expected and unexpected information that might help preserve the health and life of future patients ever since the time it became a routine tool. However, we have never made more than sporadic use of the information it generates. Where have we gone wrong?

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

Autopsy webinar series – Post-operative deaths

Wednesday, 10 June 2026

CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)

The session will cover an approach to post-surgical and post-procedural deaths, particularly focusing on tying together the patient's pre-operative condition, intra-operative events and post-operative care and on answering the key questions from the coroner, clinical team and family.

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

Autopsy webinar series – Industrial lung disease

Wednesday, 15 July 2026

CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)

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

Autopsy webinar series: How we learned the clinical pathology of HIV/AIDS

Wednesday, 9 September 2026

CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)

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

Medical Examiner Annual Conference – Virtual Event

Wednesday, 13 May 2026

CPD credits: tbc

The annual conference is an opportunity for those working in and with the medical examiner service to hear updates from key stakeholders and learn more about topical issues. There will be plenty of opportunity to ask questions. The programme is still being finalised and will be published when available.

Representatives from the following organisations are expected to participate:

- Royal College of Pathologists

- NHS England
- Department of Health and Social Care
- Office for National Statistics

Confirmed speakers

- Dr Huw Twamley, National Medical Examiner
- Dr Helen Vernon, Chief Executive, NHS Resolution
- Professor David Fishwick, Chief Medical Adviser, Health and Safety Executive
- Dr Vicky Price, President, Society for Acute Medicine
- William Vineall, Director of NHS Quality, Safety and Investigations
- Dr Aidan Fowler, National Director of Patient Safety in England

The conference will be on Zoom and will not be recorded.

[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 drinks reception followed by a 1.00pm lunch. The lunch is to be held in the Terrace Room at the Royal College of Pathologists, 6 Alie 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.

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 - Vascular lesions of the liver](#)

Wednesday, 6 May 2026

CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)

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

[Liver Pathology Bitesize Webinars - Frozen sections in Liver Pathology](#)

Wednesday, 1 July 2026

CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)

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

[Liver Pathology Bitesize Webinars - Cholangiocarcinoma](#)

Wednesday, 2 September 2026

CPD credits: 1 (self-credited)

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

[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.

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 - Virtual](#)

Thursday, 7 May 2026

CPD credits: 6

[Medical Examiner Training - Virtual](#)

Wednesday, 23 September 2026

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 Examiners Officer \(Virtual training\)](#)

Wednesday, 29 April 2026

CPD credits: 6

Regional news

Workforce planning in Scotland

Workforce pressures across Scotland's pathology and laboratory services continue to intensify, amplified by changes to the reduction in the working week for Agenda for Change staff from 1 April 2026. The College is using opportunities including the Scotland Future Medical Workforce Project and the introduction of Public Services Delivery Scotland to highlight key workforce issues and secure sustainable solutions to ensure that pathology services remain effective and sustainable. For more information, read the [full article](#).

SAVE THE DATES:

RCPATH Wales Symposium 2026

This is a free and in-person only event.

Date: Tuesday 8 September 2026

Venue: Wales Genomic Health Centre, Centre, Cardiff Edge Life Sciences Park, Longwood Drive, Whitchurch, Cardiff, CF14 7YU
Further details to follow.

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).
- Further details to follow.

International

Join us this June for our Train the trainer: Patient Safety and Quality Assurance 4-part webinar series.

Taking place every **Tuesday from 2 to 23 June, 13.00–14.30 BST**, this webinar series aims to highlight how pathologists and laboratory professionals are integral members of the health management team with essential roles and responsibilities in

the maintenance of quality healthcare and patients' safety. Patient management is dependent on laboratory results and diagnostic assessment, and adverse events can result from laboratory diagnostic errors. Sessions will feature guest speakers from the UK, USA, and Nigeria, offering perspectives from low-to-middle income and higher income countries.

Please register for each webinar separately using the links below. If you have any queries regarding this webinar, please contact international@rcpath.org

Tuesday 2 June, 13.00 – 14.30 BST

[Topic 1 of 4: What does quality mean to laboratory personnel and pathologists?](#)

Tuesday 9 June, 13.00 – 14.30 BST

[Topic 2 of 4: Barriers to and challenges to quality assurance and patient safety practices in laboratory medicine in low-resource settings and the way forward](#)

Tuesday 16 June, 13.00 – 14.30 BST

[Topic 3 of 4: Safety in laboratory medicine; ensuring safety of laboratory professionals, patients, environment and community](#)

Tuesday 23 June, 13.00 – 14.30 BST

[Topic 4 of 4: What minimal daily processes can be integrated in histopathology, haematology, chemical pathology and microbiology laboratories, to ensure quality in low-resource settings](#)

New publications

Other events of interest

05-08 May 2026

[Thrombosis UK - National Thrombosis Week Conference 2026](#)

06 May 2026

[Sustainability and Infection Prevention and Control \(IPC\) \(Insight Webinar\)](#)

06 May 2026

[British Society of Blood and Marrow Transplantation and Cellular Therapy \(BSBMTCT\) Scientific Day](#)

11-12 May 2026

[Severe Asthma Mastery - From A to Z](#)

12 May 2026

[Getting it right for the patient, are we good enough? ... the next steps](#)

13 May 2026

[Pathology Grand Round Lecture](#)

13 May 2026

[South West Acute Leukaemia Day](#)

13 May 2026

[Haemovigilance workshops](#)

14 May 2026

[Nottingham and Singapore Breast Pathology Masterclass](#)

14 May 2026

[East Midlands Lymphoma Forum](#)

14 May 2026

[Edinburgh Annual Transforming Digital Pathology & AI Conference](#)

14-15 May 2026

[British Society for Antimicrobial Chemotherapy \(BSAC\) Spring Conference 2026](#)

16-17 May 2026

Molecular Diagnostics Bootcamp - For more information, please contact: molecular.bootcamp@gmail.com.

15 May 2026

[Haemoglobinopathies and Gene Therapy: Pathways, Practice and Experience](#)

18 May 2026

[British Society for Antimicrobial Chemotherapy \(BSAC\) Hot Topics Webinar Series 2026](#)

18 May 2026

[Healthcare Infection Society \(HIS\) Infection Prevention and Control \(IPC\) leaders' course - Navigating the minefield: dealing with complaints, litigation and the media](#)

18 May 2026

[UK North Lymphoma Forum](#)

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](#).