



## **Newsletter from Dr Mike Osborn, President, The Royal College of Pathologists – February 2021**

### **President's Messages of the Month**

#### **COVID-19 pandemic – vaccine schedule**

The number of people receiving their first dose of the vaccine the UK is now over 12 million.

You will no doubt have seen coverage of some College members' different viewpoints regarding the prioritisation schedule between first and second doses of the vaccine.

I was quoted in the *Observer* stating the College view that current data supports vaccinating as many people as feasible with the first dose to protect as many as possible.

It is very important for me to stress, however, that there are caveats. This is a rapidly evolving situation and we must constantly review the data as it becomes available and respond accordingly. We are in frequent communication with those running the vaccination programme and have stressed this to them as well as communicating to them the concerns raised by our members

The Academy of Royal Medical Colleges has also published a statement about the prioritisation of doses, which we support.

#### **College member survey**

The Trustee Board are extremely interested in hearing the views of members and trainees to aid discussion around the activities and strategic plans of the College as we move forward. To help us do this, we recently sent a survey to members. The survey is open until 21 February so If you haven't already completed it, please do consider doing so – RCPATH member survey. It would be much appreciated.

I am also always keen to hear from College members directly. You can get in touch with me via my email below.

#### **A guide to COVID-19 tests for the public**

We recently published a guide to COVID-19 tests for the public. Covering diagnostic and antibody testing, the aim of the guide is to provide clear, accessible information for the public, as well as those who work in sectors such as social care and teaching, who may find it useful.

## On the agenda

- I also wanted to draw your attention to the [National Vaccination Guidance](#) 'the green book', which states that groups such as forensic pathologists, even if not directly employed by the NHS, are classed as frontline healthcare staff and should be vaccinated appropriately.
- I am very pleased to be co-presenting, with my colleague Brian Hanley, Cellular Pathologist at Imperial NHS Trust, as part of the College's COVID-19 webinar series. Brian and I will be presenting on 17 Feb from 7pm. We will be *Providing an Update on COVID-19 Autopsy Pathology*. Visit [RCPATH Learning programme: COVID-19 pandemic update](#) for more details.
- College Fellow, Dr Judy Wyatt, spoke at a meeting of the [APPG on liver health](#), providing a perspective as a clinical expert. There was also a talk at the event from Dr Rebecca Wilkinson, Public Health Registrar at Public Health England, on Hepatitis C interventions for the homeless population during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- We are hosting the [Medical Examiner Annual Conference](#) on 27 April and I am pleased to announce that Nadine Dorries MP, Minister for Patient Safety, Suicide Prevention and Mental Health, will be giving a ministerial address. [You can book your place and see the full programme on the College website.](#)

**Dr Mike Osborn, President, The Royal College of Pathologists**

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## WORKING FOR MEMBERS

### **Updated guide for College members**

We've updated our introductory guide, which explains how the College works to new trainees, Fellows, Council members, staff and Honorary Officers. [Download the guide](#) ([login](#) required).

### **Pathology Portal - An online educational platform for trainees**

The College of is working in partnership with Health Education England to create a specialist educational solution to support the training of pathology specialties. For more information, please visit [Pathology Portal](#)

### **On the Agenda: topical issues in pathology**

We are continuing to add to our series of [On the Agenda](#) pages, which outline the College's position on topical areas in pathology. These pages contain links to further information on each area.

The latest in the series, [COVID-19 and the pathology workforce](#), highlights the workforce pressures across UK, which are being compounded by the pandemic. The College has serious concerns over preparations to deal with the backlog of non-COVID-19-related illness, especially cancer care, and the related surge in demand for pathology services, particularly those relating to cancer diagnosis and treatment.

### **Blog series – Wellbeing: How can team leaders spot burnout and support their staff?**

Starting the conversation about stress and burnout can seem daunting. As part of our Professional Development Blog Series, Dr Chris Tiplady, Honorary Senior Clinical Lecturer and Director of Undergraduate Studies for University of Sunderland, tackles the subject of [stress at work](#).

Other blogs in the series include:

- [How to recognise when you're being bullied at work and what to do about it.](#)
- [How to get through those days when you just want to scream.](#)
- [Uncertainty in diagnosis: what to do when you don't know what to do.](#)

### **Audit Evaluators Wanted**

We are still looking for audit evaluators across cellular pathology, clinical biochemistry, haematology and medical microbiology to evaluate whether the criteria and standards for audits for certification are met appropriately.

The evaluation process consists of a series of tick-boxes and a brief text field and takes 10–15 minutes, as candidates will have already been reviewed and accepted by the Clinical Effectiveness team. You will be able to claim one CPD credit for each evaluation. For more information and how to apply, please go to [Get Involved at the College](#).

### **Deadline for CPD returns extended to 30 September 2021**

The College recognises the pressures that members are under during this extremely difficult period.

To help alleviate the pressure of submitting CPD returns within the normal deadline, we have extended the 2020–2021 deadline to 30 September 2021. If you need more time to submit or have any queries, please contact the CPD Department: [cpd@rcpath.org](mailto:cpd@rcpath.org)

### **International Collaboration on Cancer Reporting (ICCR) datasets consultation**

The [ICCR draft Bone and Soft Tissue datasets](#) are now available for review. The documents are available for comments until Friday 19 February 2021.

### **College building and facilities**

The College's building at 6 Alie Street remains open, within government restrictions, throughout the lockdown period for essential activities such as training and meetings. The building will be closed when not in use, so if you wish to come in, please contact [reception](#) for opening times.

College staff are continuing to work remotely and are contactable by [email and phone](#). We will be constantly reviewing arrangements in line with official guidelines.

## GET INVOLVED AT THE COLLEGE

### New member of the Working Group on Cancer Services

The College's Working Group on Cancer Services is seeking to recruit a new cellular pathology member who has a broad knowledge base in cellular pathology reporting and is interested in clinical guideline development, information management and improving the standards of service delivery. For more information and details of how to apply, please visit [Get Involved at the College](#). Completed applications should be returned by Friday 19 February 2021.

## REGIONAL NEWS

**SAVE THE DATE** – please save the dates below for the regional symposia taking place online this year. Further information about each of the events will follow over the next few months:

- Northern Ireland Symposium – **Thursday 27 May 2021 (9.30am – 1.30pm)** to be followed by Trainee Forum with the President (2–3pm)
- Wales Symposium – **Wednesday 9 June 2021 (1–5pm)** – Trainee Forum with the President (12-1pm)

## PROMOTING PATHOLOGY

### Join us for the RCPATH Book Club and apply for a grant to run your own public events

#### **Book your place for the RCPATH Book Club event – 6pm GMT, Wednesday 24 February**

In our second virtual RCPATH Book Club event, we'll be featuring *Nine Pints: A Journey Through the Mysterious, Miraculous World of Blood* by award-winning investigative journalist Rose George. [Sign up for free](#) to join the conversation with Rose and an expert panel. You don't need to have read the book to take part.

#### **Our annual public engagement grant scheme is now open.**

Grants of up to £1,000 are available for individuals or organisations who wish to develop pathology-related public engagement activities or events. The public engagement team is happy to answer questions and provide advice to any prospective grant applicants, so [get in touch](#) if you would like to discuss your application. Online/virtual event ideas are welcomed. Find out more on our [website](#).

## NEW PUBLICATIONS

- [Tissue pathways for renal transplant biopsies.](#)
- [Dataset for histopathological reporting of primary bone tumours.](#)

## COLLEGE CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

### **COVID-19 – College conferences update**

All scheduled College face-to-face conferences and events have been postponed until the end of March. We continue to review the situation and the pandemic's impact on our events, as it's possible other postponements will be announced.

However, we are pleased to be able to run many of our meetings and conferences virtually to ensure we can provide all Fellows, delegates and guests with appropriate learning and CPD. Details will be shared if there are changes to any events.

### **Pathology and the environment – virtual event**

**Thursday 11 February 2021**

**CPD Credits: 1**

The College aspires to reduce and minimise the environmental impact of its activities and to advocate for the health of our planet, by collating and disseminating examples of good practice in pathology, and educating and inspiring members to adopt these practices. Following on from the publication of *The College's Strategy for a sustainable future*, this webinar will encourage people to think about changes they could make to lessen the impact of pathology on the environment.

This free event is aimed at everyone who works in pathology, including pathologists (consultants, trainees, SAS doctors), administrative staff, laboratory managers, MLAs and biomedical scientists.

### **The Beautiful Brain – Virtual Event**

**Thursday 15 and Friday 16 April 2021**

**CPD credits: TBC**

This event now taking place virtually is a special course focuses on the instrumental role of neuropathological study in the analysis of human brain disorders, examining prenatal onset, management, cause identification, genetic advice, and research on human neurodevelopment and new therapies.

This course is recommended to perinatal and paediatric pathologists, neuropathologists, neuroradiologists, neurologists, gynaecologist-obstetricians, geneticists and neuroscientists, and health professionals involved in prenatal/fetal medicine.

New virtual registration fees and programme available soon. [Contact us](#) for more details.

### **Diagnostics and classification of pituitary neoplasms**

**Friday 23 April 2021**

**CPD credits: 4**

This webinar will provide an up-to-date overview on accurate, clinically relevant classification of pituitary tumours, with routine histological and advanced molecular techniques.

The webinar focus:

- review of pituitary gland development
- clinically relevant classification of posterior pituitary tumours and recommendations for classification of neuroendocrine tumours of adenohypophysis
- comparative diagnostic approaches to classification of pituitary tumours across the UK centres, with recently proposed diagnostic criteria and national audit findings
- the landscape of genetic alterations in pituitary tumours and their role in diagnostics and biological behaviour
- classifying neuroendocrine tumours of adenohypophysis, integrating histological and molecular findings

### **Medical Examiner Annual Conference – Virtual Event**

**Tuesday 27 April 2021**

**CPD credits: 6**

The first annual Medical Examiner Conference is being held via Zoom on 27 April 2021. The National Medical Examiner will present his first *Annual Report* and there will be contributions from representatives of the Department of Health and Social Care, the Healthcare Safety Investigation Branch, the Care Quality Commission, the Chief Coroner and faith communities. There will also be an opportunity to hear about local implementation in England and Wales. This conference will be of interest to medical examiners and officers, coroners and anyone who works to improve patient safety or support the bereaved. The day will run 9.30–4.30pm.

### **Update on placenta: physiology and new concepts**

**Thursday 17 and Friday 18 June 2021**

**CPD credits: 9**

Placental pathology is a unique area of perinatal pathology. Its understanding requires knowledge of normal development, physiology and histopathology, as well as fetal and maternal medicine. Requests for placental examinations have grown in recent years, but this has not been matched by a growth in numbers of histopathologists trained in reporting them. This course will provide an update on placental physiology, current classification and new insights into the knowledge of placental conditions.

The course is designed for paediatric/perinatal and general histopathology trainees at any stage of their training, as well as consultants. The course will also be of benefit to obstetricians, both consultants and those in training.

### **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 26 mandatory 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.

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 session – Virtual Training**

**Thursday 22 April 2021**

**CPD credits: 6**

### **Medical examiner training session – Virtual Training**

**Thursday 20 May 2021**

**CPD credits: 6**

### **Medical examiner training session – Virtual Training**

**Wednesday 16 June 2021**

**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, e.g. nurses, healthcare scientists or bereavement officers although this list is not exhaustive. More information, including a [model job description](#), is on the [College website](#).

The face-to-face training day is the second part of MEO training. Everyone attending the course must have completed the 26 mandatory core e-learning modules before the date of the course to get the most out of the training day. The e-learning modules [can be accessed here](#). (Registration with e-Learning for Healthcare is required.)

### **Medical examiner officer training session – Virtual Training**

**Thursday 25 March 2021**

**CPD credits: 5**

**For further information, please contact the RCPATH Conference department at [meetings@rcpath.org](mailto:meetings@rcpath.org) or on 020 7451 6700.**

## **NEWS FROM EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS**

### **COVID-19 Wellbeing UK**

Healthcare workers across the UK are facing an increasingly challenging situation in tackling the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. The COVID-19 Wellbeing Study is an international research effort exploring the experiences of healthcare workers at the forefront of the pandemic and how it affects their psychological wellbeing

The study is funded by University College London (UCL) and is approved by the UCL board of ethics. All data remains anonymous. The survey takes 15 minutes and can be accessed here: [COVID-19 Wellbeing survey](#).

## **OTHER EVENTS OF INTEREST**

**10–11 February 2021**

[British Association of Urological Pathologists: Virtual Bladder Pathology Course](#)

**10 February 2021**

[Dental Decontamination and the Pandemic: is Your Practice Recovering?](#)

**15–26 February 2021**

[Systemic FRCPATH Pathology Course in the EoE](#)

**19 February 2021**

[St Mark's GI Histopathology workshop](#)

**10 March 2021**

[UK CLL Forum Annual Scientific Day](#)

**17 March 2021**

[UKMF Spring Day](#)

**22 March 2021**

[Joint BSAC/EWMA webinar: The impact of Covid-19 on chronic wound management and the effect on antimicrobial stewardship](#)

**24 March 2021**

Post ASH Significant Highlights

**21 April 2021**

Non Operative Breast Pathology Update Course

**21–23 April 2021**

EFI 2021, From Research to Clinical Reality

**RCPATH CPD-accredited online resources can be found [here](#).**





