

Joint Medical Microbiology and Medical Virology Specialty Advisory Committee

Terms of Reference

1. The College's Mission Statement

The Royal College of Pathologists' mission is to: advance the science and practice of pathology; further public education in the field of pathology; and, promote study, research and innovation in pathology and disseminate results.

2. Purpose

The Specialty Advisory Committee (SAC) has delegated responsibility from Council for matters, including the professional, clinical and continuing professional education functions relating to their specialty.

3. Oversight Responsibilities

- Delivery of agreed strategic objectives for the specialty which will be approved through College Council. These will be within any budget parameters and resource limitations of the College.
- Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Key Assurance Indicators (KAIs) that monitor the effective delivery of their specialty. These will be in keeping with any applicable College policy or strategy.
- Standards, continuous quality improvement, clinical audit and patient safety in the specialty
- Training and Continuing Professional Development for established practitioners
- Workforce issues and actions taken within the specialty
- Specialty networks and links or relationships with other networks or bodies related to the specialty
- Specialty engagement through an annual conference, other meetings and published articles

4. Accountabilities

4.1. Strategy

- To promote the work of the specialty and the College
- Reviewing latest research and considering its implications on the specialty
- Developing strategic objectives for the continuous improvement of their specialty in the context of the College vision and strategy
- Monitoring and considering workforce issues and actions taken within the specialty

4.2. Standards and best practice

- Developing and maintaining standards, clinical guidelines and best practice recommendations, working with college staff and other college committees as appropriate
- Providing advice on how clinical pathologists in the specialty should demonstrate compliance with relevant regulatory bodies' requirements
- Advise and contribute to patient safety initiatives within the specialty
- Support ongoing development of continuous quality improvements and clinical audit
- Establishing and periodically reviewing specialty KPIs and KAIs
- Supporting and fostering a culture of research and evidence-based practice

4.3. Specialty engagement

- Develop a regular programme of conference and academic activity for the specialty
- To develop regular articles for publication on the specialty
- Providing advice on College communications with members with an interest in the specialty and key stakeholders as appropriate
- To receive reports from representatives from outside bodies ('Outbods') associated with specialties
- Delivery of the College membership engagement plan through regular communication
- To regularly keep the specialty webpage(s) under review and update as appropriate in co-operation with College Communications department
- Contribute/organise the provision of specialty input into NICE consultations
- Recognising and monitoring specialty networks and links or relationships with other networks or bodies related to the specialty

4.4 Supporting other Committee and College activities

- To receive for information reports on Examinations from the Chair of the specialty Examiners Panel following each examination session
- To provide CSTCs which are associated with the SAC with a member to attend the CSTC meetings
- For all SACs with no CSTC, SACs will take responsibility for training, curriculum and examinations
- To respond to requests for specialist advice from exams and training committees
- Partnership and links with specialist societies
- Responding to College consultation processes
- Participating in College processes for administering Fellowship applications as required
- Through the specialty trainee representative, the SAC will gain an understanding of issues experienced by trainees in the specialty

5. Approval Authority

- Communications plan within specialties
- Review periods for approved standards in the specialty
- Review periods for specialty KPIs/KAIs
- SAC annual report to Council

6. Governance

- Reporting to Council on the activities of the SAC, including production of an annual report

- In relation to the speciality, raising ethical issues in specialties up to Council for consideration and action when an SAC becomes aware of them

7. Membership

- The membership of the SAC will be College appointed members and shall be approved by Council. Normally there will be 9-11 members, with exceptions to this requiring Council approval.
- The Royal College of Pathologists understands the value and strength that diversity brings and we are proud to be an organisation of members from a wide range of backgrounds. We are keen to encourage and enable more people of all identities and from all backgrounds to become involved in the College.
- As a Joint Committee to represent Microbiology and Virology, arrangements for supporting both interests will be provided through an alternating Chair role and appointing a Deputy Chair as follows:
 - The Chair will alternate between a Microbiologist and a Virologist.
 - A Deputy Chair will be appointed to represent the group opposite to that of the Chair i.e. when a Microbiologist holds the position of Chair, a Virologist will fill the Deputy Chair role and vice versa. The Deputy Chair will be counted as one of the specialty members of the SAC

The membership shall comprise the following:

- Chair.
- Deputy Chair to be appointed from SAC membership.
- Specialty Members from Association of Clinical Pathologists, British Association in Forensic Medicine.
- Trainee Representative.
- Chair of Associated College SACs (if applicable).
- Honorary Officer (ex officio). Officers are all ex-officio members of committees and should be included in any item that requires a vote.
- Co-opted external representation dependent on the SAC. Each SAC will recommend organisations they should be collaborating with for the approval by the Governance Committee or Council.
- Co-opted devolved administration representatives will be sought should any region not be represented by a SAC member
- Lay Member (where required, this will be specified)
- Academic
- Charities will be offered observer status, at the request of the SAC.

See appendix for current membership.

8. Meetings

- Three meetings a year should normally be held, with the possibility to hold one of these via teleconference. Discussion and decision via email or other electronic means is encouraged outside of formal meetings.
- Administrative support will be provided by a member of the College's Governance and Committee Services team
- Agendas and papers will be circulated at least one week before each meeting
- Minutes will be made available on the College website, with access restricted to College members only via myrcpath

9. Resources

- Travelling expenses will be paid to members (but not observers) of the committee in line with the College's expenses policy. The expenses policy is available on the website. Claims should be made through the College's on-line finance system.

Terms of Reference agreed at SAC meeting

Chair of SAC _____

Signed _____

Approved at College Council meeting

Review date (3 years following Council approval)