



The Royal College of Pathologists

Pathology: the science behind the cure

The College's strategy 2018–21

Our mission

Advance the science and practice of pathology.

Further public education in the field of pathology.

Promote study, research and innovation in pathology and disseminate results.

Our vision

Engaged and inspired professionals delivering excellence in pathology practice for the benefit of the public.

A College supporting members, developing and maintaining high standards in pathology education, training and research to deliver the best patient care.

A College improving awareness and understanding of pathology.

Our values

Teamwork – we achieve excellence by working together.

Service – we support members to deliver the best patient care.

Ambition – we aspire to provide the best quality services and lead innovation for pathology.

Message from the President

The Royal College of Pathologists' Strategy for 2018–21 sets out our vision for promoting and advancing excellence in pathology.

The work and expertise of pathologists support patients throughout their entire life and we are very proud of this. They also advance diagnosis and treatment through research and innovation to build a better future.

The College's members work in healthcare, universities and industry in the UK and overseas. The expertise of our membership is diverse, with 17 specialties covering both human and animal health.

We support our members in a wide range of ways. A high priority is to offer continuing professional development accredited programmes of learning and development, so that our members remain up to date and resilient in their practice of pathology throughout their careers.

As a College, we have a responsibility to support excellence in training. Providing curricula and examinations across our 17 specialties, we examine and assess pathologists to exacting standards, to help safeguard patient safety and maintain high-quality outcomes.

Improving patient safety is a key area for the College. We will continue to share learning from incidents and will be pleased to welcome medical examiners as members of the College when they begin work in 2019. We are ready to provide the training and support they need.

The College is also here to act as a collective voice for the pathology profession. We raise awareness and understanding among government, policy makers and stakeholders of the central role pathologists play in shaping and delivering the best patient care.

Inspiring the next generation of pathologists is fundamental to the work of the College. We have developed a programme of activity to showcase the rewarding opportunities of choosing a career in pathology to medical undergraduates and school students.

With our members and patients at its heart, this new three-year strategy provides a foundation on which to build our shared vision of the future.

Professor Jo Martin

Our objectives

Develop and maintain high standards of pathology education, training and research

We are committed to improving the standards we set for pathology education, training and research, to improve patient care and safety.

Promote excellence and advance knowledge in pathology practice

We work with members to improve the services they deliver to patients in disease prevention, diagnosis and treatment.

Increase the College's influence through a clear, coherent, professional voice

By communicating the central role that pathology plays in patient care, outcomes and safety, we will strengthen our position as an expert body, extend our influence and affect national and international policy for the benefit of patients and pathologists.

Resource the future of the College

We will make best use of the College's resources and improve financial stability in order to achieve our strategic aims and charitable objectives.

Develop and maintain high standards of pathology education, training and research

The College sets the standards for pathology education, training and research to improve patient care and safety. We are committed to leading the development of these standards. We aim for all members to demonstrate excellence in the practice of pathology and support them in this.

We will achieve this through delivering these strategic objectives.

Provide curricula and examinations for professional groups, making sure they meet the future requirements of the profession

Keep all curricula and assessment systems under review, making sure they maintain four-country endorsement and meet professional requirements and regulatory standards.

Optimise the efficiency and effectiveness of the examination process by developing centralised systems and providing enhanced support for examiners

Continue to develop an electronic infrastructure for examinations and optimise the efficiency of the marking process.

Provide support to pathologists working outside the UK to prepare for the College's exams

Pilot the College's recognition framework and process for non-UK postgraduate specialty training and residency programmes.

Provide our members with opportunities to increase their professional knowledge of the latest developments, innovations and technologies

Develop and deliver high-quality education for pathologists at all stages of their career through blended learning; for example, continuing professional development (CPD) approved conferences, symposia, webinars and e-learning.

Encourage our members and trainees to undertake and publish high-quality research to advance the practice of pathology

- Use the RCPATH online publishing gateway to develop an open access research community to promote and publish the results of research in pathology.
- Support the involvement of trainees in research by offering bursaries to medical and scientific trainees publishing on the RCPATH online publishing gateway.
- Award annual research prizes to trainees.
- Improve the information and support available to members and trainees pursuing research in pathology, including CPD and learning courses.
- Work with other professional organisations to promote research and careers in research.

Promote excellence and advance knowledge in pathology practice

Working with members to improve the services they deliver to patients in disease prevention, diagnosis and treatment.

We will achieve this through delivering these strategic objectives.

Deliver high standards, audit and quality assurance practices

- Produce independently accredited clinical guidelines to support best practice.
- Increase our support to volunteer guideline authors.
- Support enhancement of pathology services by promoting continuous quality improvement and assurance methodologies.
- Provide expertise to support employers and provider organisations through our invited review service and RCPATH Consulting.
- Provide College input into the consultant appointment process to ensure recruitment of the highest quality pathologists.
- Maintain a user friendly CPD portfolio.
- Work with many others (including external quality assessment providers, UKAS and the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency) to improve the governance of external quality surveillance.

Lead on emerging innovations

- Promote the development and implementation of diagnostic digital pathology.
- Support implementation and education for new services such as genomic medicine, gene editing, molecular testing, liquid biopsy and augmented intelligence.

Develop an actively engaged membership

- Encourage members to engage with the work of the College by communicating with them and regularly inviting their views.
- Value members who are actively engaged in College activity by ensuring adequate recognition by employers that allows them time to engage in this important work on behalf of the wider NHS and healthcare systems.
- Support the development of medical examiners by offering training, support and College affiliation.
- Seek and respond to the views and needs of members.

Increase the College's influence through a clear, coherent, professional voice

We are committed to identifying methods and opportunities to promote the awareness and understanding of pathology, and increasing our influence with and relevance to members, policy makers and the public. By communicating the central role that pathology plays in patient care, outcomes and safety we will strengthen our position as an expert pathology body, extend our influence and affect national and international policy for the benefit of patients and pathologists.

We will achieve this through delivering these strategic objectives.

Champion the expertise that is available in all pathology specialties and within our medical and scientific workforce

- Promote pathology and the College to targeted audiences to increase the strategic influence and reach of the College on issues including workforce and patient safety.
- Continue to improve communications to medical and non-medical audiences about the central role of pathologists in healthcare, and the work that we do. Recognise the expertise and contribution of the wider pathology workforce by expanding opportunities for College membership.

Support current and future pathologists throughout their careers

- Inspire the next generation of pathologists by creating opportunities to promote pathology at undergraduate, foundation and postgraduate levels to improve recruitment.
- Provide support and opportunities for members to promote pathology.
- Work with specialty advisory committees and others to provide expert guidance and advice in their specialties, including delivering opportunities for CPD to professionals in their fields.

Influence policy to advance patient care and safety

- Work with influential contacts to showcase the work of the profession to raise awareness and understanding of pathology and its contribution to the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of disease.
- Work with governments, associated bodies, opinion formers and decision makers to raise awareness of the role pathology plays in providing safer patient care.
- Work in partnership with members, specialist societies and charities to make sure our impact on patient care is as effective as possible and that we reach our key audiences.
- Develop programmes of learning for patient safety across the College and in collaboration with other organisations.

Resource the future of the College

We are a responsible, sustainable organisation committed to delivering first class services to our members. The College will make best use of its resources and improve financial stability in order to achieve our strategic aims and charitable objectives.

We will achieve this through delivering these strategic objectives.

Improve facilities for members

- Complete the construction of and relocation to new headquarters at 6 Alie Street to budget.
- Encourage members and trainees to make use of the facilities and opportunities in the building and make sure the facilities and services act as a hub to serve the needs of all members in all regions.

Run the College well to deliver our strategy

- Maintain efficient and appropriate governance processes.
- Embed the requirement for lay input into College work.
- Improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the work of College committees.
- Identify opportunities for cross-departmental work.

Deliver financial stability to secure the future of the College

- Achieve financial planning targets.
- Maximise our income by delivering income targets from our commercial conference centre, rental of facilities, office space, academic programmes and related activities.
- Achieve an operating surplus by 2021.
- Support the continued improvement of College processes by using technology to its best advantage.

Develop the College's staff to provide excellent member services

- Embed a competence-based rewards system to enable us to attract, retain and develop the best people for each role, as well as making sure our staff deliver excellent service for members and stakeholders.
- Develop as an employer, working within the Investors in People framework, to invest in and develop staff so they are equipped and engaged to deliver this strategy.
- Seek feedback and ideas from staff to help develop a good working environment and great teamwork.
- Become an accredited London Living Wage employer at 6 Alie Street.

The Royal College of Pathologists is a professional membership organisation with more than 11,000 fellows, affiliates and trainees worldwide. We are committed to setting and maintaining professional standards and promoting excellence in the teaching and practice of pathology, for the benefit of patients.

Our members include medically and veterinary qualified pathologists and clinical scientists in 17 different specialties, including cellular pathology, haematology, clinical biochemistry, medical microbiology and veterinary pathology.

The College works with pathologists at every stage of their career. We set curricula, organise training and run exams, publish clinical guidelines and best practice recommendations and provide continuing professional development. We engage a wide range of stakeholders to improve awareness and understanding of pathology and the vital role it plays in everybody's healthcare. Working with members, we run programmes to inspire the next generation to study science and join the profession.

The Royal College of Pathologists

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