



President's newsletter – December 2020

President's message

I am delighted to introduce my first newsletter.

During my three- year term my priority will be representing and supporting the College membership to ensure all members feel they get value from the College and are valued by the College. I want to use members' voices to shape healthcare policy and practice, and to highlight that pathology is at the very centre of patient care

COVID-19 will continue to dominate everything we do, both directly through having to treat and test for COVID and indirectly through the treatment backlog which is a legacy of lockdown. Championing the vital need for adequate pathology services and a pathology workforce which is at full strength will be a major priority.

You can read more about my plans in an interview in the [October Bulletin](#).

I will be working with a fantastic team to help deliver this agenda. I am delighted to welcome the newly appointed members of the of Trustee board and Council and indeed to welcome anyone who has agreed to give their time and help so generously to the College. Without the help and support of members we could not function - thank you.

I also want to thank my predecessor Professor Jo Martin for all her hard work and advice and for laying the strong foundations on which I will continue to build.

On the agenda

While I was President-Elect:

- I enjoyed taking questions from the audience at the [National Pathology Week Meet the Presidents](#) event: from careers advice to the future of pathology. Thanks to all who joined us and to our guest host for the evening, medical microbiologist Dr Nicola Hardman from Calderdale and Huddersfield NHS Trust
- I was pleased to have the opportunity to welcome attendees to [International Pathology Day 2020](#) and to mark the [poster competition](#). It was a fascinating day of talks on infection through the lens of COVID-19 with great presentations and fantastic speakers from all around the world.
- Earlier in the year I met Angela Burns MS, an Assembly member in the Welsh Parliament, with Assistant Registrar Esther Youd, to discuss the importance of

post mortems in understanding COVID-19. I was pleased to see that Ms Burns has highlighted our suggestions during a debate on 4 November and that Vaughan Gething, Minister for Health and Social Services in Wales, is following this up.

One of my first statements as President was to respond to the recent Spending Review announced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I highlighted that we would like to see more investment to allow us to recruit and retain more pathology staff, we would also like to see more training places, better IT for day-to-day work and capital investment to implement digital pathology more widely.

Later on this month I'm attending a roundtable organised by the Health Service Journal on how COVID-19 testing is developing, and how it could and should develop.

I will also be joining the New Statesman for an online event on the Age of the Genome – Securing the Future of Precision Medicine in Cancer Care.

A personal message

2020 has been a truly strange and taxing year for everyone both on a personal and professional level. During this time of genuine national and worldwide crisis, you, the members of the College, together with our colleagues in the NHS and beyond have truly stepped up and done incredible things to help overcome the COVID-19 pandemic and the havoc it has wrought on everything. Thank you for all your hard work and effort. You should all be very proud of what you have done.

I, and everyone at the College, wish you all a very merry Christmas and a happy new year; a new year which we hope will see us return to something resembling normality.

Best wishes
Mike

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WORKING FOR MEMBERS

COLLEGE NEWS

College building and facilities

The College's building at 6 Alie Street remains open throughout the lockdown period until the end of the year for essential activities such as training, exams and meetings within government restrictions. 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. For the Christmas period the College will be closed from 3pm on Thursday 24 December and will reopen on Monday 4 January 2021.

Health and Social Care and Science and Technology select committees on lessons learnt on coronavirus – Evidence session

Professor Jo Martin, immediate past College President, gave spoken evidence to the Health and Social Care and Science and Technology select committees on lessons learnt on coronavirus, highlighting the fantastic effort of NHS labs, scientists and organisations that have worked through challenging times. You can find out more and watch the session on our [On the Agenda](#) page.

Submit a case study and claim CPD credits

Would you like to share your knowledge and experiences and earn CPD credits?

We are looking for case studies that have, or may have, impacted on patient safety. The case study should describe what went well or less well, and why.

We would also like to hear: how the situation was approached and resolved; what was learnt; and how this was shared. You can claim 1 CPD credit per case study you send us in your online CPD portfolio.

For an example case study, please see [Overtesting](#). For more information, please email cpd@rcpath.org

GET INVOLVED AT THE COLLEGE

Opportunity to join the Cellular Pathology Specialty Advisory Committee (SAC)

A fantastic opportunity has opened up to join the Cellular Pathology SAC. Nominations are invited for committee member roles and Subspecialty Advisor roles (in various disciplines). It is a chance for you to make a difference and help to shape College activities and policy by building the profile of your specialty. Visit the [Get involved at the College](#) page and submit your application to elections@rcpath.org by 4 January 2021.

PROMOTING PATHOLOGY

Volunteering opportunity – Create a pathology career video for visually-impaired children

The College is contributing to a virtual science festival for visually-impaired children and young people. The event is being organised by [VICTA](#), a charity that provides supports children and young adults from 0 to 29 who are blind or partially sighted and their families. The festival coincides with [British Science Week](#) in March 2021 and is sourcing content that participants can enjoy it at their own pace. We are looking for College Fellows and trainees to create and contribute short 'selfie-style' videos describing their work and talking about their careers. Please [contact us](#) to find out more.

Competition winners

Congratulations to this year's Hugh Platt Foundation Essay Prize winner, Chuer Zhang, an FY2 trainee at Northern Ireland Foundation School. You can read the winning essay on our [essay competitions page](#). We are also delighted to announce the winner of this

year's Furness Prize for Science Communication: Matthew Clarke. Find out more about this year's entries on our [Furness Prize competition page](#).

National Pathology Week (NPW) 2021

Even though we have just wrapped up NPW 2020, it's not too early to start thinking of ideas for the next [National Pathology Week](#)! Save the dates for NPW 2021 - 1 to 7 November. If you have a suggestion for next year's theme, [please get in touch](#). The theme needs to be broad and inclusive – RCPATH members work across 17 different specialties! We will be sharing the results of our evaluation of NPW 2020 by the end of the year. Thank you to all who have contributed to the College's public engagement work during this very challenging year.

NEW CONSULTATIONS

- [Dataset for histopathological reporting of primary bone tumours](#) (closes 10 December 2020)
- [Guidelines for non-operative diagnostic procedures and reporting in breast cancer screening](#) (closes 17 December 2020)

COLLEGE CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

COVID-19 – College Conferences Update

All College face-to-face scheduled conferences and events have been postponed until the end of December 2020. We continue to review the situation and the pandemic's impact on our events, as there is the possibility that other postponements will be announced. However, we are pleased that we are able to run many of our meetings and conferences virtually to ensure we are able to provide all Fellows, delegates and guests with appropriate learning and CPD. Details will be shared if there are changes to any events.

Soft tissue tumours from infants to young adults: the age matters – Virtual Training

Thursday 28 and Friday 29 January 2021

This event will now take place virtually

CPD credits: 9 for attending both days

This event will be a case-based approach to the current major clinicopathologic issues in soft tissue tumours in different paediatric ages. The event is targeted at paediatric pathologists, histopathologists and trainees. This event was originally scheduled for March 2020.

This event will now take place virtually offering the chance for overseas delegates to attend. Please contact meetings@rcpath.org if you have any questions.

Medical Examiner Annual Conference - Virtual Event

Tuesday 27 April 2021 - 9.30am -4.30pm

CPD credits: 6

At the first annual Medical Examiner Conference, the National Medical Examiner will present his first Annual Report and there will be contributions from representatives of the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC), Health Safety Investigation Board (HSIB), and Care Quality Commission (CQC), 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 Beautiful Brain

Thursday 15 and Friday 16 April 2021

To be held at the Royal College of Pathologists, 6 Alie Street, London E1 8QT

CPD credits: 13

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

Update on placenta: physiology and new concepts

Thursday 17 and Friday 18 June 2021

To be held at the Royal College of Pathologists, 6 Alie Street, London E1 8QT

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 examination have grown exponentially in recent years, but this has not been matched by 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 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 mandatory 26 e-learning modules and attend an entire day of 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

Wednesday 10 March 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. 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 examiner officer training session – Virtual Training

Tuesday 2 February 2021

CPD credits: 5

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 or on 020 7451 6700.

NEWS FROM OTHER ORGANISATIONS

Donate your unused microscopes for malaria diagnosis in Africa

Microscopes for Malaria is organised by retired Professor of Immunology Dr Middleton, who arranges for good-quality, second-hand microscopes from UK universities and hospitals to be sent, for free, to Africa for the diagnosis of malaria.

So far, Dr Middleton has arranged for some to be sent to Ghana, Zambia and Kenya. Demand, however, outstrips supply, so if you or anyone you know has any unused microscopes, please contact Dr Middleton at jfsmidd@gmail.com

EXTERNAL EVENTS OF INTEREST

- 22 January 2021
[Into clinical practice: Pneumonia](#)
- 10-11 February 2021
[British Association of Urological Pathologists Virtual Bladder Pathology Course](#)
- 21 April 2020
[Non Operative Breast Pathology Update Course](#)

RCPATH CPD accredited online resources can be found at the following [link](#)

