



The Royal College of Pathologists

Pathology: the science behind the cure

Consultancy services

A service from

The Royal College of Pathologists

Services to be provided

Responding to unmet demand in the United Kingdom and beyond, The Royal College of Pathologists, through its trading subsidiary, RCPATH Trading Limited, provides a range of consultancy services as RCPATH Consulting (RCPC).

1. Advice on the provision of pathology services.

RCPATH Consulting may provide advice where an authoritative independent view is required on the provision of a high quality pathology service. Services offered include assistance with the objective measurement of end-to-end quality of the laboratory service and prioritisation of improvement projects. The purpose of *RCPATH Consulting* involvement is to clarify concerns about current and future service quality and efficiency, and to help local managers and pathologists effectively to address and resolve difficulties, as well as sign-posting existing guidance and methods of quality assurance.

2. Advice on the commissioning or tendering of pathology services.

RCPATH Consulting provides advice on pathology commissioning and / or tendering in situations where it is helpful to have an authoritative view which is independent from local providers and others with a vested interest. The purpose of *RCPATH Consulting* involvement is to help local commissioners, managers and pathologists to specify effectively an efficient, high quality service.

3. Advice on reconfiguration of pathology services.

Where plans for the provision of pathology services involve reconfiguration across more than one Trust an authoritative independent view on the impact of proposed changes on the quality and efficiency of pathology provision may be helpful. The purpose of *RCPATH Consulting* involvement is to provide input which is independent of all local providers and will help to ensure the quality of services is maintained or improved for all users, while providing the most cost-effective services.

4. Advice as part of an option appraisal process.

RCPATH Consulting provides independent input to an option appraisal process when pathology plans are assessed, options considered and prioritised and decisions taken. In these circumstances, where one-off independent input is required, no report will be prepared.



Requests for consultancy services

Requests for *RCPATH Consulting* services may be received from NHS Trusts, Foundation Trusts, Commissioner groups, Strategic Health Authorities, independent Advisors and pathology networks in writing, through our web-site or via e-mail. The individual Scope and Schedule of Services will vary depending on the circumstances of each request and *RCPATH Consulting* will respond individually to requests. However *RCPATH Consulting* retains the right to refuse requests for its services.

RCPATH Consulting involvement will take place according to individual Scope and Schedule of Services agreed in advance with the organisation(s) requesting the service. If agreed as part of those Scope and Schedule, *RCPATH Consulting* Pathology Advisors will produce a report with recommendations. Any report produced will be scrutinised by a further panel within *RCPATH Consulting* prior to being shared with the requestor and will follow quality assurance processes as described in Appendix 2 below.

RCPATH Consulting Lead and Advisor Panel

In order to provide the consultancy services outlined above, a consultant has been appointed by the Directors of RCPATH Trading Limited to be the RCPC Lead and a panel of preferred Pathology Advisors has been established. *RCPATH Consulting* will only recommend Advisors who are senior Fellows of The College or IBMS and who have considerable experience of the issues involved in management in pathology (see Person Specification, Appendix 1) and who have been successful in the appointments process (see below). Following agreement on the specific requirements of the requestor, *RCPATH Consulting* can advise on whether input from an individual or a team may be appropriate in a particular case and provide a Pathology Advisor from the list held centrally. Unless otherwise requested or agreed, Advisors will be recommended who do not work in the same geographical region as the requestor. The requesting body will then contract with RCPATH Consulting and agree to pay for the review.

Appointments Process

Appointments to the RCPC Lead position and panel are made by the RCPATH Trading Limited Directors and ratified by College Trustee Board. The person specification (see Appendix 1 below) for Pathology Advisors is circulated and expressions of interest sought by e-mail from the Fellows of the Royal College of Pathologists using the College database. An interview panel is convened by the College President and Chief Executive and interested Fellows that meet the person specification are invited to interview. Successful candidates are invited to join the panel of *RCPATH Consulting* Pathology Advisors and are required to complete a declaration of interests which will be shared with the requestor. An induction and training meeting will define the terms under which the panel of Advisors will operate.

Improving Standards in Pathology

The efficient use of resources as an integral part of any assessment of laboratory quality, and our approach is to optimise the quality of the service for the benefit of the patient, not for the benefit of employers or employees.

Pathology Advisors may use the experience gained to inform standards in pathology services more widely, for example, by running workshops for pathology commissioners, managers, scientists, Fellows and members of the College to share good practice and learning. Alternatively 'lessons learnt' articles may be written for the College Bulletin. At all times *RCPATH Consulting* and its Pathology Advisors will respect the confidentiality and commercial sensitivity of the requestors and information gained during consultancy work and requestors will be informed of any publications or presentations and invited to comment.

Appendix 1 RCPATH Consulting Advisor person specification

Requirements	Essential (E)
Fellow of the College for seven years or more	E
In active practice or within five years after retirement from active practice	E
If in active practice, participating in a CPD scheme	E
Broad overview of all pathology disciplines	E
Previous experience of clinical management, i.e. management of a clinical service as clinical lead, clinical director or divisional director, or management within a pathology network, cancer network, deanery, research team, specialist society or the College	E
Interest/experience in developing and achieving measures of quality in pathology services	E
Interest/experience in commissioning of pathology services	E
Interest/experience in reconfiguration of pathology services	E
Ability to communicate effectively with managers, commissioners and pathology professionals	E
Good knowledge of and ability to use spoken and written English	E
Ability to present effectively to an audience using a variety of methods and to respond to questions and queries	E
Good presentation skills	E
Ability to develop effective working relationships on an individual basis	E
Flexible attitude	E
Ability to take responsibility and show evidence of leadership	E
Awareness of personal limitations	E
Experience of working as part of a team	E

Appendix 1 RCPATH Consulting IBMS Advisor person specification

Requirements	Essential (E)
Fellow of the IBMS for five years or more	E
In active practice or within five years after retirement from active practice	E
If in active practice, Be registered with HPC and participating in a CPD scheme	E
Broad overview of all pathology disciplines	E
Current/previous experience of laboratory management, i.e. management of a clinical pathology service at a minimum of Level 8 or equivalent on the NHS Career Framework	E
Interest/experience in developing and achieving measures of quality in pathology services	E
Interest/experience in commissioning of pathology services	E
Interest/experience in reconfiguration of pathology services	E
Ability to communicate effectively with managers, commissioners and pathology professionals	E
Good knowledge of and ability to use spoken and written English	E
Ability to present effectively to an audience using a variety of methods and to respond to questions and queries	E
Good presentation skills	E
Ability to develop effective working relationships on an individual basis	E
Flexible attitude	E
Ability to take responsibility and show evidence of leadership	E
Awareness of personal limitations	E
Experience of working as part of a team	E

Appendix 2 Quality assurance policy for RCPATH Consulting

Pathology is the science at the heart of modern medicine, vital for the diagnosis and clinical management of disease. The College's mission statement is **to promote excellence in the practice of pathology and to be responsible for maintaining standards through training, assessments, examinations and professional development, to the benefit of the public.**

The Royal College of Pathologists was established in 1962 to coordinate this development and maintain the internationally renowned standards and reputation of British pathology. Today, the College advises on a vast range of issues relating to pathology and, responding to unmet demand in the United Kingdom and beyond, the College, through its trading subsidiary RCPATH Trading Limited, will provide a range of consultancy services as RCPATH Consulting (RCPC).

Quality in delivery of consultancy services is as important to us as the quality of our clinical services, teaching and research. The College's reputation is built on well-informed and considered approach to challenges and a commitment to continuous improvement. In order to ensure that we provide total satisfaction to our clients for consultancy services, RCPATH Consulting has put in place the following quality assurance system.

1. The RCPATH Consulting Lead provides each RCPATH Consulting requestor with a single point of contact and management of their consultancy contracts.
2. The RCPATH Consulting Lead gathers and monitors requestor feedback.
3. RCPATH Consulting refers opportunities for service improvement to the Board of the Royal College of Pathologists
4. The RCPATH Consulting Lead is responsible for resolving requestor complaints.
5. Training and development is available to advisors delivering consultancy services.
6. Policies and procedures relating to the management of RCPATH Consulting and the delivery of consultancy contracts are subject to review by our internal panel, and changed where improvements to customer service can be made.
7. The Directors of RCPATH Trading, through the RCPATH Lead, have ultimate responsibility for the quality assurance of all services provided by RCPATH Consulting, but all employees involved in managing and delivering these services have responsibility within their own areas of work, so helping to ensure that quality is embedded within the RCPATH Consulting ethos.

Appendix 3 RCPATH Consulting Lead person specification

Requirements	Essential (E)
Fellow of the College for seven years or more	E
In active practice or within five years after retirement from active practice	E
If in active practice, participating in a CPD scheme	E
Broad overview of all pathology disciplines	E
Previous experience of clinical management, i.e. management of a clinical service as clinical lead, clinical director or divisional director, or management within a pathology network, cancer network, deanery, research team, specialist society or the College	E
Interest/experience in developing and achieving measures of quality in pathology services	E
Interest/experience in commissioning of pathology services	E
Interest/experience in reconfiguration of pathology services	E
Ability to communicate effectively with managers, commissioners and pathology professionals	E
Good knowledge of and ability to use spoken and written English	E
Ability to present effectively to an audience using a variety of methods and to respond to questions and queries	E
Good presentation skills	E
Ability to develop effective working relationships on an individual basis	E
Flexible attitude	E
Ability to take responsibility and show evidence of leadership	E
Awareness of personal limitations	E
Experience of working as part of a team	E
Experience of performing and leading RCPATH Consulting work	E
Experience of RCPATH Consulting report-writing	E