



The Royal College of Pathologists
Pathology: the science behind the cure

RCPATH online communities: networking, learning and support for members

The College is developing online communities for specialties and member groups to connect, collaborate and access valuable resources.

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A key aim of the College's 2024–2029 strategy is to foster a sense of belonging among our members. To support this, we are developing more opportunities for members to network, share best practice and find support to address any challenges they face. Our online communities form a key part of this objective.

How do the College's online communities benefit members?

Each community is designed for specific member groups or specialties. They provide a professional, private space where members can share knowledge and access exclusive online events tailored to their needs.

These spaces allow peer-to-peer support across a variety of settings and locations, both in the UK and internationally. They encourage connection and collaboration between College members, which transcends local silos, further supporting members in their professional practice, diagnostic work and service delivery.

Our online communities offer continuing professional development (CPD)-approved online webinars and resources that are relevant to our members' specific role or specialty and their CPD.

What communities does the College currently offer?

The College has 2 established online communities, with another recently launched:

- the Medical Examiner/Medical Examiner Officer (ME/MEO) Hub
- the Haematopathology Hub
- the Infection Community (launched at the beginning of January 2026).

The ME/MEO Hub

The ME/MEO Hub was our pilot online community. Since its launch in December 2024, over 470 College members have joined the Hub – almost half of our total medical examiner and medical examiner officer membership. The Hub is guided by 2 community leads – Dame Suzy Lishman, Senior Advisor on Medical Examiners, and Daisy Shale, Lead Medical Examiner Officer for Wales.

Alongside a very active discussion space, we have hosted 10 webinars on the Hub, each focusing on a different topic relevant to the medical examiner service.

We have received very positive feedback on the ME/MEO Hub, with many members citing the ease and benefit of information-sharing through the webinars and discussions:

- “The presentations by various experts in their field, plus all the questions posed, are extremely useful as it validates the fact that we commonly experience the same issues.”
- “Easy to access and use; great to hear what other MEs are challenged about; I learn things; I like the summaries.”
- “Central place to go for all updates.”

The Haematopathology Hub

Building on our pilot, our second dedicated online community is the Haematopathology Hub. Launched in May 2025, this Hub provides a curated space for College members working in, or with an interest in, haematopathology.

Community Lead Dr Hebah Ali, Consultant Haematopathologist, wanted to develop this community because “haematopathology is a dynamic and evolving specialty ... I felt there was a genuine need for a dedicated space where colleagues could come together to share insights, ask questions and support one another.”

The Haematopathology Hub now hosts useful resources and tailored webinars for almost 200 members. Some prominent guest speakers include Professor Kikkeri Naresh, Professor and Section Head of Pathology at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center in Seattle, Washington; Dr Chris Tiplady, Consultant Haematologist and Programme Lead for the Master of Medical Education

Degree at the University of Sunderland; and Professor Richard Byers, Consultant Haematopathologist and Programme Lead for the Sub-Saharan Pathology Resident Teaching Programme.

The Infection Community

Our newest online community is the Infection Community, designed for College members working in microbiology, virology and infection prevention and control. Launching earlier this month, this community is led by Infection Consultant and Joint Medical Microbiology and Medical Virology Special Advisory Committee (SAC) Chair, Dr Natasha Ratnaraja. We hope it will develop into a thriving space for College members specialising in infection.

What's next for College communities?

We will continue to develop our communities offering, with a view to refining the existing communities to ensure the best experience for our members, and expanding to serve more member groups and specialties.

“Our goal is to offer a community platform to all members, exploring different community groups to best serve members’ needs... Progress here should enhance member satisfaction by providing valuable resources and opportunities for meaningful interactions. Embracing this initiative serves not only to strengthen the pathology community, but also drives innovation and progress, potentially making this a cornerstone for future success,” says Stephen Rainbird, Member Engagement and Support Manager.

If you are interested in joining one of the College’s online communities, have feedback on a community that you are already a part of, or are keen to lead a new community for your specialty or member group, we’d love to hear from you. Please get in touch with the College’s Member Engagement and Support team at mycollege@rcpath.org.

Meet the author

MEMBER ENGAGEMENT AND SUPPORT TEAM