

Turner-Warwick lecturer scheme: the alumni experience

Five resident doctors share their experiences of being Turner-Warwick lecturers – including the opportunities that this prestigious award gave them, how it improved their confidence and why resident doctors should apply for the 2025–2026 scheme.

The scheme

The RCP's Turner-Warwick scheme is a fantastic opportunity for early-career doctors – one that not only emphasises the value that resident doctors bring to healthcare, but also builds confidence, a sense of pride and public speaking skills.

The scheme gives RCP resident doctors the chance to give a lecture at one of the RCP Update in medicine conferences, attended by a diverse medical audience. Winners also receive free RCP membership for a year, the opportunity to publish a digital presentation on RCP Player and several other prizes – including a profile in Commentary magazine. The RCP works with our lecturers to help foster public speaking skills and their professional profile.

Named after the RCP's first female president, Dame Margaret Turner-Warwick, the scheme has been running since 2019. However, it is still evolving in order to bring the most value and support to our resident doctors. The application window for 2025–2026 is now open, closing on 2 July; it offers three resident doctors the chance to become the Turner-Warwick lecturers on clinical research, advances in medical education or quality improvement for 2025–2026.

New opportunities

There is a huge breadth of topics that Turner-Warwick lecturers have presented on – and the scheme can offer unique and exciting opportunities.

In 2023, Dr John McDermott delivered a presentation on implementing pharmacogenetics the NHS. The scheme gave him the opportunity to present his work to a multidisciplinary audience and receive feedback from opinion leaders in multiple specialties. Since giving his lecture, he has been appointed as an NIHR academic clinical lecturer, expanding on the work that he presented on as a Turner-Warwick lecturer.

He returned to speak at the Update in medicine Liverpool in June 2025 to provide an update on his work: 'Being asked to be a Turner-Warwick lecturer acts as a demonstration that your research is of high calibre and

respected by your wider medical colleagues. This award undoubtedly strengthened my CV and contributed to my success in applying for personal fellowships.'

Dr Michael Drozd was also appointed as an NIHR clinical lecturer and continues to investigate infection risk and inflammation in people; he gave his lecture 'Anti-inflammatory therapy in atherosclerosis: balancing cardiovascular and infection death' at the 2024 Update in medicine in Newcastle. He described being selected as a lecturer as 'a tremendous honour [which] created an invaluable opportunity to present my research'.

Similarly, Dr Roopa Chopra was offered a GIM clinical lead role in her trust. She believes that these opportunities were related to her Turner-Warwick lecture on 'Enhanced support programme to improve transitioning of IMGs to the NHS' and publishing an RCP blog in August 2024. She said: 'I reckon that boost in confidence and my improved leadership skills were the result of winning this scheme.'

Dr Daniel Pan gave his lecture 'Can we make better tests to quantify host infectiousness?' at the Update in medicine in Loughborough in October 2024. He has found the Turner-Warwick lecturer scheme to be a 'great opportunity for the findings of my work to be disseminated to a broader expert audience'. It has opened doors, 'allowing me to catch the attention of experts across the world, for the purpose of collaboration and exchange'.

The Turner-Warwick lecture was 'overwhelmingly a positive experience', according to Dr Charlie Finlow, a palliative medicine resident.

She found that the scheme had impacted the environment within her trust and opened up region-wide conversations and quality improvement work, including a pilot project in the area she gave her lecture on: 'Caring for the deteriorating patient: Implementing an evidence-based complex intervention to improve end-of-life decision-making'.

Roopa said: '[The Turner-Warwick scheme] has helped me understand my strengths and also weaknesses as a leader. This has made me realise my potential and that the sky is the limit.'

Confidence

Our Turner-Warwick lecturers have also emphasised how the scheme helped them to improve their confidence in presenting and going forward with their research.

John stated: 'Speaking in front of such a diverse audience is a rare opportunity, and meant I had to ensure my work was framed in a broadly applicable way. I have taken this forwards, and now feel confident in speaking about my research to colleagues from across the medical profession.'

Charlie stated that the scheme helped with improving confidence and skills in presenting in front of an audience of all medical backgrounds. 'The scheme has given me the confidence to apply for other schemes.'

Balancing the award with his final year of his PhD, Daniel found that planning and delivering the lecture helped him to develop his thesis ideas, gain early feedback and responses, and prepare confidently for his viva voce examination to discuss his research. He said that 'everyone at the RCP who is part of this scheme is incredibly helpful and a huge asset to the organisation ... [I] highly recommend application to the scheme.'

Michael shared a similar perspective: 'Presenting complex research findings about plasma protein biomarkers to a diverse audience significantly enhanced my confidence both as a researcher and science communicator ... The scheme represents a fantastic opportunity for medical [resident doctors] to showcase important research and gain recognition for their work. I'm very grateful for this experience and would highly recommend it to others.'

This feature was produced for the June 2025 edition of *Commentary* magazine and published on 18 June 2025. You can read a [web-based version](#), which includes images.