



Royal College
of Physicians

Setting higher standards



RCP strategy
2015–2020

About the RCP

Everything that we do at the Royal College of Physicians (RCP) aims to improve patient care and reduce illness. We are patient centred and clinically led. We drive improvement in the diagnosis of disease, the care of individual patients and the health of the whole population, both in the UK and across the globe.

Our 30,000 members worldwide work in hospitals and the community across 30 different medical specialties. They range from medical students to retired doctors. Physicians diagnose and treat illness, and promote good health. They care for millions of medical patients with a huge range of conditions, from asthma and diabetes to stroke and yellow fever. Physicians' clinical work ranges from caring for patients who are acutely unwell in hospital, to supporting patients to manage long-term health problems at home and encouraging people to stay fit and healthy in the community.

The RCP works to ensure that physicians are educated and trained to provide high-quality care. We improve the quality of care by auditing and accrediting clinical services against national guidelines, and we provide resources for our members to assess their own services. We involve patients and carers in every aspect of our work. We work in partnership with other medical royal colleges and health organisations to drive health improvement, enhance the quality of medical care, and promote research and innovation, so that our members are well equipped to diagnose and treat ill health. We also have a wider duty to reduce preventable illness from causes such as smoking and drinking, and to promote evidence-based policies to government to encourage healthy lifestyles.

We work in partnership with our faculties, specialist societies and other medical royal colleges on issues ranging from clinical education and training to health policy, meaning that physicians and other healthcare professionals can have a powerful and unified voice to improve health and healthcare. ■



Our commitment

As physicians, we have a duty to strive for the best possible care for our patients, to shape how healthcare is delivered, and to support and inspire the next generation of doctors. As the president of the RCP, I have a duty to lead an organisation that empowers our members and fellows across the world to achieve this.

This new strategy draws on conversations with our members and fellows about the support that they need from the RCP. We listened to what patients need from their doctors and the health service. We also spoke to our partners to understand how we can work with them – locally, nationally and internationally.

For nearly 500 years, the RCP has brought doctors together to find innovative ways of doing things in health and healthcare. We have a vibrant history, with evidence of sustained impact on healthcare over many centuries, and a remarkable heritage. One of the great privileges of leading this organisation is talking directly to doctors about how they are improving patient care, leading groundbreaking research or finding new ways to prevent ill health. The RCP is committed to championing and celebrating these achievements and to using our members' knowledge to shape the future of healthcare, in partnership with patients. This is what we are doing with our Future Hospital Programme. We will work with our members across the world to promote the highest standards of clinical care. In the UK, we will continue to work with politicians to promote a thriving NHS – run as a public service – that delivers for all patients and communities.

Being a physician is rewarding and exciting. Education is crucial and physicians should be supported to develop throughout their careers. Over the next 5 years, we will explore ways to make our world-leading education and training programmes accessible to more doctors, in more places. We will also use our influence to ensure that the NHS continues to provide the best possible training in medicine and its specialties.

As a profession, I believe that we are strongest when we draw on a diverse range of experiences. That's why we'll be working to make medical careers more accessible to people from a range of backgrounds. We are also committed to making sure that all our members know their voice is important to the RCP. We will enhance the support we provide to our members so that they feel engaged with the RCP, wherever in the world they are based. This ambitious strategy for 2015–2020 sets out how the RCP will make this happen. ■

Professor Jane Dacre
President





Our vision:
The best
possible
health and
healthcare
for everyone

Our mission

We are the professional membership body for physicians, with over 30,000 members and fellows across the globe. Physicians diagnose and treat illness, and they promote, maintain and restore health. As the leading body for physicians in the UK and internationally, we will work to achieve our vision by:

- > influencing the way that healthcare is designed and delivered
- > promoting good health and leading the prevention of ill health across communities
- > supporting physicians to fulfil their potential.

Our values

The RCP sets higher standards and works to improve care in practice. We are committed to:

- > **being patient centred:** we put patients at the centre of everything that we do
- > **being clinically led:** we empower our members and value their knowledge, expertise and experience
- > **wellbeing:** we are committed to promoting disease prevention, and good physical and mental health for individuals and communities
- > **quality:** we deliver the highest quality and best value service
- > **innovation:** we are forward looking and evidence based
- > **openness:** we champion equality, promote diversity and are open and transparent in everything that we do.



Our strategic aims 2015–2020

Over the next 5 years, our activities and resources will be focused on delivering five strategic aims:

1 We will improve care
for patients p2–3

2 We will develop physicians
throughout their careers p4–7

3 We will lead and support
our members p8–9

4 We will shape the future
of health and healthcare p10–11

5 We will invest in our future
and build on our heritage p12–13

- **Measuring our success:** By 2020, we will have established our vision of the future hospital at the centre of care, in the UK and beyond.

1 Improving care for patients

The RCP is a world expert in quality improvement. We work to improve patient safety, patient experience and clinical outcomes and to reduce health inequalities.

We develop standards for clinical care, and assess whether they are being achieved. We support clinical teams to improve the care that they offer and – through our Future Hospital Programme – shape the way that whole services are structured.

We work directly with physicians, clinical teams,

hospitals and policymakers to design services that deliver the best possible care for patients. We involve patients across our projects so that their needs and experiences shape clinical practice. Our work is always patient centred and evidence based, and we host the largest evidence-based clinical guideline centre in the world.

Ways of working

- We are person centred and we work across all domains of quality, including clinical outcomes, patient safety and patient experience.
- We consider the practice of medicine in its broadest sense – from prevention of ill health to diagnosis, treatment, recovery and self-care.
- We develop the best possible evidence, and we use this to establish patient-centred standards.
- We drive the implementation of higher standards of clinical practice and our vision of the future hospital.
- We promote team working and strong clinical leadership.

Over the next 5 years, we will:

- **Support physicians and multidisciplinary teams to lead quality and service improvement**
- **Set, measure and promote standards that improve care for patients**
- **Implement our vision of the future hospital and promote good practice in health service design**
- **Develop health services that promote patient safety, patient experience, staff wellbeing and service improvement**



Principles of patient care

We want a health and care system in which:

- > everyone is supported to lead a healthier life
- > people's basic care needs are always met
- > people's experience of care is valued
- > people:
 - > know who is responsible for their care
 - > are involved in decisions about their care
 - > are supported to self-care
 - > have timely access to appropriate and effective care, across 7 days
 - > receive coordinated services tailored to their needs
 - > receive care in settings that best meet their medical and support needs
 - > have an individual care plan focused on recovery or wishes at end of life
- > staff are supported to care, collaborate, improve and lead.

Adapted from Future Hospital Commission. *Future hospital: Caring for medical patients*. London: RCP, 2013.

**I couldn't do what
I need to do without
it [the stroke audit
programme]**

Stroke nurse specialist, Dorset

- **Measuring our success:** By 2020, we will be recognised as the leading expert on medical education and training in the UK and across the world.

2 Developing physicians throughout their careers

The RCP sets the international benchmark for medical education and training. We provide advice, expertise and practical support to shape how physicians are educated and trained throughout their careers.

We lead thinking on the future of the medical workforce, continuing professional development for physicians, and the delivery of postgraduate medical education and training. We work with governments, national and international bodies, and other partners to embed our recommendations into practice.

We promote careers in medicine, support physicians and medical students to make informed choices about their future, and are committed to promoting the diversity of the medical profession. Our education, training, events and careers programmes support

physicians to fulfil their potential, lead rewarding careers and deliver the best possible care for patients. Through these programmes, we support physicians to become excellent clinicians, great leaders, inspiring educators and effective communicators.

All our work is rooted in evidence. We are at the cutting edge of educational research and the development of innovative ways of working for physicians and their teams. We work with partners to develop outcomes-focused training programmes and methods of assessment that span the medical specialties.

Ways of working

- > We anticipate the future needs of patients and support physicians to meet them.
- > We promote diversity in the medical profession, and accessibility and broad participation in our programmes.
- > We respond to doctors' needs as they develop throughout their careers, from graduation to retirement.
- > We apply latest research and innovation to teaching, assessment and educational practice.
- > We consider the training of physicians in the context of the wider healthcare workforce.

Over the next 5 years, we will:

- > Shape the future of the medical workforce in the UK
- > Promote high-quality medical education and clinical leadership across the world
- > Promote lifelong learning for physicians and aspiring physicians, and accessible opportunities for development
- > Support physicians throughout their careers
- > Promote medicine as a career

I really enjoyed this [conference] and found it both motivating and inspiring. I would recommend this to all my colleagues

Foundation doctor, Manchester



Working in partnership through the Federation

The RCP is committed to working in partnership in the UK and internationally to achieve our vision. Our most active partnership is with the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh and the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow (a partnership collectively known as the Federation) to deliver exams, training and curriculum development, and CPD for physicians. The RCP seeks to continue to develop and foster good relationships with the other UK colleges for physicians via the Federation structure over the next 5 years and works collaboratively in the following areas.

MRCP(UK) examinations

MRCP(UK) develops and delivers the internationally recognised 'membership' diploma and Specialty Certificate Examinations, which assess the knowledge and clinical skills of physicians in training. These qualifications are the clearest articulation of our aim to promote high standards of patient care globally and are a key point of contact for the RCP with patients, trainees, members and fellows. MRCP(UK) is committed to ensuring that its examinations are:

- > fair – no candidate group will be unfairly disadvantaged in MRCP(UK) examinations and they will be managed cost-effectively to ensure that they are fairly priced
- > relevant – the content of MRCP(UK) examinations will drive essential learning and be central to the needs of today's patients
- > the best – academic processes, service quality and delivery standards, and the qualifications themselves will be internationally recognised as the best in internal medicine.

JRCPTB (Joint Royal Colleges of Physicians Training Board)

JRCPTB is responsible for setting, maintaining and monitoring standards for physician specialist training and assessment in the UK. Its core activities are:

- > to set and maintain the highest standards of training through curriculum and assessment development and thereby to promote the quality of patient care
- > certification of trainees, including recommendations to the General Medical Council (GMC) for issue of certificates of completion of training
- > to offer advice and support on the quality management of training programmes
- > to provide a high-quality and fair recruitment process that meets Health Education England's requirements.

Internationally, JRCPTB also provides services to the GMC by assessing applications from non-UK doctors who apply for specialist registration via the Certificate of Equivalence for Specialist Registration (CESR) route, and is starting to advise other countries on setting curricula for the training of physicians.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

The CPD Team enables physicians to engage in CPD by providing an online database of approved educational events, and a mechanism to record and reflect on CPD activities to meet the requirements for revalidation. The CPD team works to improve the quality of educational events for physicians by providing criteria that events must meet in order to gain approval, and by facilitating feedback from participants to evaluators and providers.

- > Measuring our success: By 2020, we will have 40,000 members.

3 Leading and supporting our members

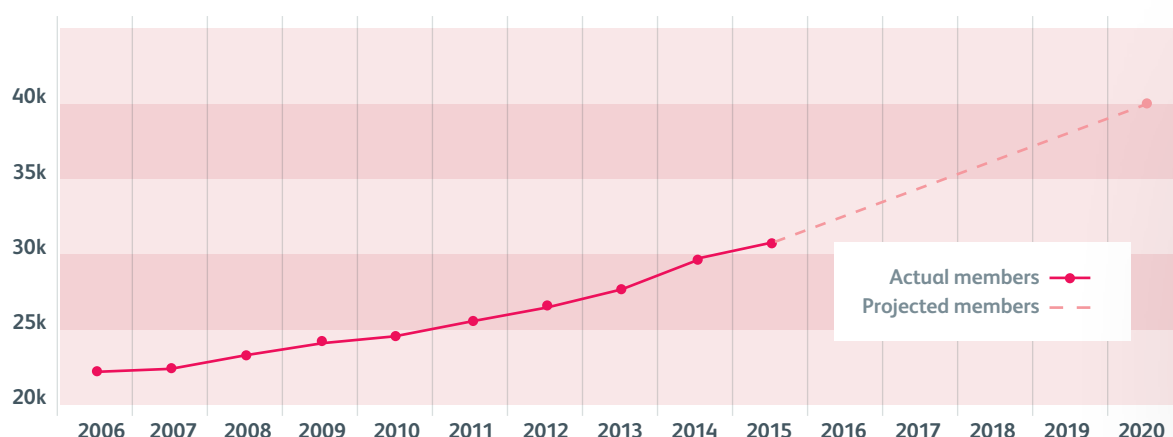
The RCP is a membership organisation. Our members give us the mandate to drive improvement in health and healthcare.

We have a truly international network, with over 30,000 members based across the UK and in more than 80 countries around the world. Our members range from medical students and doctors in training to consultant physicians and retired doctors.

We lead the profession by supporting and inspiring our members to meet the challenges of modern medicine and deliver ever-better care for patients. With our members, we work to deliver higher standards in health and clinical care, professionalism and practice, and medical education and training.

It is important that all our members have a strong personal and professional relationship with the RCP. Our local, national and international networks allow us to work with our members in the places that matter to them, wherever they are based. Through these networks, we enable physicians and aspiring physicians to inspire, support and learn from each other.

Projected RCP membership (2015–2020)




Ways of working

- > We recognise that our members are our greatest asset – we listen to them, support them and learn from them.
- > We challenge and improve professional practice, and support our members to learn from each other.
- > We are responsive to the needs of our members, their patients, the public and our partners.
- > We will develop a relationship with each member that is relevant to their needs and the context in which they work.
- > We recognise that membership engagement is the responsibility of all RCP staff and officers.

Over the next 5 years, we will:

- > Lead the medical profession and champion medical professionalism
- > Increase our reach and relevance to all our members
- > Support our members in their daily practice
- > Deliver an exceptional membership experience for all
- > Increase our understanding of the context in which our members work in the UK and around the world



The RCP is not just an organisation but a focal point for high-quality medicine, medical training and support for physicians of all shades and indeed many countries

Retired consultant, Birmingham

- > **Measuring our success:** By 2020, we will be renowned for a seminal 'State of the UK's Health' report that sets the national direction for our health and our health service.

4 Shaping the future of health and healthcare

The RCP is the leading body for physicians in the UK and globally. We use the expertise and insight of physicians, and the patients they work with, to shape our vision for the future of health and healthcare.

We work on their behalf and use our national and international influence to promote better health, reduce health inequalities and set the course for the future of healthcare. To do this, we will put physicians and patients at the forefront of public debate about health and healthcare. We will listen to physicians, patients and the public, and champion their aspirations. We will nurture innovation and foster healthcare systems that put research at their core.

We will advocate powerfully for evidence-based policymaking that is in the best interest of the public's health.

We will champion what works, not only to improve our ability to treat ill health, but to prevent it. Based on our reputation as a leading healthcare organisation, we will advocate for whole systems of health and healthcare that work for patients, the public and physicians everywhere.

The best healthcare for everyone

The RCP believes in the NHS as a public service, free at the point of need. Across the world, we want to support the development of services that meet the needs of patients and communities. This means designing clinical services and health systems that:

- > deliver joined-up care for patients
- > are patient centred, compassionate and holistic
- > deliver for people who are vulnerable or have complex needs
- > involve patients, professionals and communities in their design.

Ways of working

- > We reach out to physicians, patients and the public and ensure that their voices are heard.
- > We empower patients and physicians to lead public debate on health and healthcare.
- > We promote evidence-based and patient-centred policy at every level.
- > We champion transparency in policymaking and challenge conflicts of interest.
- > We find ways to engage the public on all aspects of health and healthcare, and support our members and fellows to do the same.

Over the next 5 years, we will:

- > Use the expertise of physicians and the experience of patients to influence the future of healthcare, from parliaments to wards
- > Ensure that patients' and carers' experiences shape everything that we do
- > Improve the public's health by championing evidence-based action to prevent ill health, nationally and internationally
- > Foster innovation in health and promote research

I'm delighted to see the RCP's commitment to putting patients at the centre of what it does. The first-hand experiences of patients and carers aren't just heard – they're really valued

Chair, RCP Patient and Carer Network, Yorkshire



- > **Measuring our success:** By 2020, we will be renowned as an organisation that lives by its values, and that sets an example for the health sector as a socially responsible organisation.

5 Investing in our future, building on our heritage

The Royal College of Physicians has a bold ambition for the future and a diverse and dynamic work programme. We are as proud of our leading role in innovation as we are of our esteemed past.

We are at the heart of 21st-century clinical innovation, yet we also share and learn from our medical heritage, which dates back to the 1500s. As we look to our 500th anniversary in 2018, and to the next 500 years, we will take the opportunity not only to celebrate the RCP's illustrious past, but also to focus our efforts on delivering transformational change to tomorrow's healthcare at home and abroad.

Put simply, we will use our knowledge, expertise and heritage to make a lasting difference to people, communities and the future advancement of medicine.

To do this, we will cultivate a strong and agile infrastructure that enables us to open up our world-leading knowledge, expertise and assets for wider public benefit.

We will operate in a sustainable and responsible way, and always look to innovate and improve the way that we work. We will be a role model for the values that we advocate across the health service – from the way that we treat the local environment to the way that we support the people who work with us.

A woman with long brown hair, wearing a black cardigan over a light-colored lace-trimmed top, is looking down at a display case in a museum. The display case contains various items, including a red book and some papers. In the background, another woman is visible, also looking at a display. The museum has a modern interior with glass railings and warm lighting.

Ways of working

- > We make the best use of our expertise and assets for the present and for the future advancement of medicine.
- > We cultivate equality and diversity, and value the benefits that they bring.
- > We provide an outstanding and responsive service to members, patients, staff and visitors.
- > We promote our charitable purposes and deliver public benefit.
- > We value our people and support them to do their best every day.

Over the next 5 years, we will:

- > Deliver a financially sustainable future by making the most of our expertise and managing our finances well
- > Run an excellent organisation that enables us to deliver our vision of better health and healthcare for everyone
- > Be a responsible organisation that lives by the values which we champion in the health service
- > Make our current knowledge and our long history work for the benefit of present and future generations

I have great managers who inspire hard work and give knowledge and insight into our area of work. The team is a true meritocracy and I feel I am given the chance to develop

Staff feedback to Best Companies staff survey

Making it happen



This strategy sets out an exciting future for the RCP as we embark on our next 500 years, a unique moment in any organisation's history. I believe this document sets a clear roadmap that will allow the organisation to deliver our ambitious goals between now and 2020.

The strategy builds on the RCP's considerable achievements over the last 5 years, not least the Future Hospital report and subsequent development of the Future Hospital Programme. It builds on our recognition as the leader in setting and auditing clinical standards and in world-leading education and training programmes. It sets out a vision for further exciting and innovative developments, including directly influencing health service improvements, launching the 'State of the UK's Health' report, and an expanded and more engaged membership and fellowship.

Underpinning the strategy is a series of plans to deliver our ambitious vision and aims. These give us a clear framework to ensure that the strategy is delivered effectively and that we hold each other to account for the important task we have set ourselves. However, we are committed to reviewing and revising plans regularly in light of what patients need, what members want and what external events dictate where appropriate.

By working together, this strategy will maximise the potential of the RCP's members and fellows, Patient and Carer Network, stakeholders and talented staff to truly realise our vision of 'the best possible health and healthcare for everyone'. ■

A handwritten signature in white ink that reads "Patricia Wright".

Patricia Wright
Chief executive



Improving care

Bringing doctors together with patients and carers is a powerful force for change. This strategy commits the RCP to listening – really listening – to patients and carers.

By working together, we can find radical new ways to improve care, promote good health and educate doctors. I am delighted that the RCP recognises just how essential this is. With projects like the Future Hospital Commission, the RCP has already shown that it is committed to turning this rhetoric into reality.

The next 5 years will see the RCP's Patient and Carer Network grow and thrive. Doctors need our support to shape the future of health and healthcare, but they also need the constructive challenge we can offer.

The next 5 years will see us challenge the RCP, physicians and policymakers to do things better – for the sake of patients, carers and communities. ■

Suzie Shepherd

Lay chair, RCP Patient and Carer Network

Our fellows and members

Our 30,000 members work worldwide in hospitals and the community across 30 different medical specialties, including:

- > Acute medicine
- > Allergy medicine
- > Audiovestibular medicine
- > Cardiovascular medicine
- > Clinical genetics,
- > Clinical neurophysiology
- > Clinical pharmacology and therapeutics
- > Dermatology
- > Endocrinology and diabetes mellitus
- > Gastroenterology
- > General internal medicine
- > Genitourinary medicine
- > Geriatric medicine
- > Haematology
- > Hepatology
- > Immunology
- > Infectious diseases and tropical medicine
- > Medical oncology
- > Medical ophthalmology
- > Metabolic medicine
- > Neurology
- > Nuclear medicine
- > Palliative medicine
- > Pharmaceutical medicine
- > Rehabilitation medicine
- > Renal medicine
- > Respiratory medicine
- > Rheumatology
- > Sport and exercise medicine
- > Stroke medicine



RCP strategy 2015–2020



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of Physicians**

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