

June welcome: Professor Mumtaz Patel

Welcome to this new edition of *Commentary*. It was wonderful to see so many physicians gathering at the RCP in London for our flagship conference in May. *Medicine 2026* brought together hundreds of physicians, and it was lovely to have the chance to meet so many of our members and fellows.

June's edition of *Commentary* covers some of the great events that took place over the 2-day conference. Our clinical director for improvement programmes, Dr Aklak Choudhury, looks at the sessions through the lens of improvement, and we also congratulate the winners of the abstract competition – always a highlight of the conference.

Several of the topics covered in sessions at *Medicine 26* are featured in articles this month, from how we can use AI and digital in the NHS, to our global work with the RCP Iraq Network and improving end-of-life care; reflecting the work that is being done across the RCP to shape better health for all.

I was also excited to launch our new strategy, which sets our direction for the years ahead. It reflects what our members, both in the UK and internationally, have told us they need from their college.

However, as we move forward, there is also important work being done to protect the RCP's past. Our 'Adopt a treasure' campaign, launched last year, has helped preserve and conserve several beautiful historical objects. Thank you to all those who have generously supported this initiative so far.

In this edition we also welcome Dr Dan Furmedge, who was elected as vice president for education and training, in his interview with Professor Ollie Minton, *Commentary* clinical editor. Previously, he was an RCP censor; a role which is explored in this edition by Dr Anita Banerjee.

Finally, I am delighted to share a piece on the Pan Arab Women Physicians Association from founding president and consultant gastroenterologist, Dr Maisam Akroush,

as she explores how the RCP helped shape her vision of medicine.

As we head into the summer, I hope that you enjoy reading this edition.

Wishing you all the best,

Mumtaz

This feature was produced for the June 2026 edition of *Commentary* magazine. You can read a [web-based version, which includes images](#).

Developing a new diploma

Following the closing of the Diploma in Tropical Medicine in 2023, we were keen to collaborate with a global healthcare partner to develop a new examination that focused on health services in resource-limited and humanitarian settings – in a simplified and more accessible manner than before. MSF was a natural partner for this diploma's development.

Developing the exam was a lengthy and complex process, but with the support of the team from MSF we have produced a fit-for-purpose and up-to-date knowledge-based assessment. It is delivered in a single best answer format that meets the needs of the workforce. A team of specialist doctors and clinical experts from MSF have been working with the RCP since 2024 to establish the processes and plans for the exam, including syllabus generation and question production.

The RCP Assessment Unit has built collaborative relationships with clinical volunteers in 18 countries through our open recruitment. These governance groups oversee question selection, clinical review and examination results sign-off. The exam is managed

