

ACP news

Worldwide pathology

Histopathology training in Jordan

International healthcare under the microscope

Pressure cookers to precision diagnostics: reflections on the evolution of pathology training and practice in an Indian academic centre

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ASSOCIATION OF CLINICAL PATHOLOGISTS
2026 Meetings

Date	Time	Meeting	Type of Meeting
3 July	All Day	No Micro, No Problem? Meeting	RCGP, London
4 July	9.30am	Council Meeting and AGM	RCGP, London
30 Sept – 2 Oct	All Day	ACP Leadership & Management Course	Chilworth Manor, Southampton
16 July	6.30pm	The Derm Diaries: Tales from the Microscope	Zoom Webinar
23 July	6.30pm	The Derm Diaries: Tales from the Microscope	Zoom Webinar
30 July	6.30pm	The Derm Diaries: Tales from the Microscope	Zoom Webinar
For further information please see the website: www.pathologists.org.uk			

The ACP accepts no liability for errors or omissions in this calendar of meetings. Readers are reminded that advertised meetings may be cancelled. Those intending to attend are obliged to check the details on booking with the organiser in every instance. There will be a £25 administration fee per issue for entries in this table.

ACP news

Spring 2026

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This is a picture from Mauritius, in keeping with our worldwide pathology theme! Mauritius has a stunning landscape, dominated by huge mountain ranges, the highest peak of which is the Piton de la Petite Riviere Noire. As well as beautiful beaches, it offers an array of activities and is home to some exceptional flora and fauna. Alas, if only I could return!

Invitation to Contributors

In addition to the constant flow of material from ACP Council, ACP committees and ACP branches, *ACP news* needs new material from you, the members of the ACP.

Pathology news items (1200-1500 words): Any items related to the ACP or the College, pathologists in general, or medical and management matters that may have an impact on pathologists.

Articles (1500-2000 words): These can be papers, reviews, essays, commentaries, critiques or polemics. Submitted articles are always very welcome, as well as suggestions for articles and/or details of people whom the editor may approach.

Reports (1000 words): These may be personal views and reports on interesting meetings, travel or anything else of interest to the readership. Travel reports are specifically for holders of ACP travel fellowships; however, other reports from abroad are welcomed.

Columns (600 words): Regular and irregular columnists exercise their thoughts. Please feel free to rant.

Pathological creative writing: All literary forms, URGENT Pull up banner - needed in circa 8 languages including short stories, serials, surrealism and even poetry.

Appreciations (1000-1500 words): We prefer appreciations on retirement, rather than obituaries. Please discuss these with the editor before submission.

Photo-journalism: Favoured subjects include pathologists doing something interesting, or College and ACP officers doing anything at all. Interesting or artistic photographs are welcomed.

Cartoons: Suggestions are welcomed.

Curetings: Jokes and humorous titbits are always needed.

Debate: Letters to the editor are welcomed, but may be shortened for publication, or even converted into articles. Please try to refrain from writing unless you are prepared to be published. All criticisms of organisations or named individuals will entitle the parties to a right of reply. Please bear in mind the UK libel laws!

Trainees: Trainees are especially encouraged to submit material in

any and all of the above categories. These will normally be placed in the trainees' section. Appointments committees in particular value publications in *ACP news*.

Editorial Policy: The editor would particularly encourage overseas contributors, material from trainees, material from non-histopathologists, commentary on current affairs in pathology, occasional columnists, innovations in pathology, humorous writing on pathology-related topics, and anything downright cantankerous.

Format: The *ACP news* style guide is now available on line via the ACP website in PDF format at: http://www.pathologists.org.uk/allpagestuff/publications_frameset2.htm. The publication is a magazine, not an academic journal, and long lists of references are generally considered unnecessary. Where given, references should be in the Vancouver style and should be kept to a maximum of around six per article, unless absolutely necessary. Alternatively, authors may prefer to give a recommended reading list, or a list of relevant internet links. The editor prefers these as they take up less space.

All suggestions are welcome; however, the editor's decision is final. *ACP news* is published quarterly. Regular publication dates are:

Issue	Publication month	Copy date
SPRING	July	28 April
SUMMER	September	31 July
AUTUMN	November	31 September
WINTER	December	31 November

Copy is best submitted by email, in any version of Microsoft Word, although it should be possible to accommodate other formats. Submissions on paper by snail mail will also be accepted. Illustrations should be sent as JPEG digital images or hard copy prints. **Please do not embed images in your text. Send them as separate files.**

Please send email submissions direct to the editor at sruane@doctors.org.uk

In keeping with GDPR, please state if you wish your contact details to be published; they will appear in the print issue and will also be available as a PDF in the members' area of the website.

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the spring edition of the *ACP news*! Although the weather might not quite befit the title, we welcome even the odd day of sunshine, and I think we're all ready for some outdoor living after a long cold winter!

Our theme for this edition is 'worldwide pathology'. We thought it would be a fantastic theme as pathology is a wonderfully diverse speciality. We are fortunate enough to have articles in this edition from Africa to Jordan, and lots of interesting places in between! I had a taste of worldwide pathology this year when I was kindly given a grant by the ACP and PathSoc to attend the Cleveland Clinic's Immersive Soft Tissue course in Ohio.



Figure 1. On route to Cleveland via Dublin, and my first time flying transatlantic with Aer Lingus – it was a brilliant flight



Figure 2. Walking past the Cleveland Clinic path labs, the sheer size and scale of the buildings was a real reminder about the financial weight that US healthcare has, and how everything seems to be supersized!

Without wanting to give any spoilers away, it was a brilliant trip, not only as the course taught me so much, but being with American pathologists for four days gave me the chance to ask anything and everything I'd wanted to know about pathology in the USA. It's amazing to see the contrast between a private and national healthcare system, and it's on a scale that I certainly had no real appreciation of before making the transatlantic trip!

It's been a hectic time since the winter edition, and I'm so relieved to say I managed to pass my FRCPath Part 2 exam! I had completely written off my chances after an exceedingly difficult day 2, so unfortunately for my team, I'd been a tad glum trainee, who was only kept sane by our local Greggs and chocolate from sympathetic consultants! Indeed, in one memorable encounter on the stairs with said Greggs coffee, a brilliant consultant who I've had the pleasure of working with over my time in training said to me 'what on earth's wrong?' to which I replied, 'I've failed my exams and this coffee is the only thing keeping me going right now!' He was surprised that I'd already had my results, so when I stated it was just my feelings after an awful day 2 he said in the most broad, northern accent 'Let's turn that frown upside down' – which instantly had me in stitches and perked my day right up again! He also gave me a valuable piece of advice that helped pass the time and shake me from my morbid state: 'throw yourself into work, cut up, reporting, whatever, it'll keep your mind busy'. So I did, and I found solace in cut-up for the following two weeks before results. To all my fellow exam goers, my congratulations to those who passed, and my heartfelt commiserations to those that didn't; it's a hard knock to take, and I know it means another slog of revision. I won't be contrite with any words of wisdom (not that I have any, anyway!) but a friend and colleague (Matt Clarke) said to me, 'You have to believe you can do it, no protecting yourself that you might fail or that you may not be worthy; you have to believe, and rightly so, that you deserve this exam'. I hope even if one person reads this, that they take it to heart the way I did – I do believe it helped (well that, and seeing 400+ cytology cases!)

I've also embarked on renovating our new house, which is extremely chaotic. I wouldn't recommend sandblasting wood beams at the same time as ripping out one's kitchen; it turns out the dust is relentless and your drive can only fit so many skips. Needless to say, our lovely neighbours are wondering who on earth has moved into their country idyll. We've managed to escape a few times, and I both walked and ran

(well partly ran) a fantastic route in North Yorkshire, Guisborough to be exact, on a little birthday trip away. Without wanting to (but probably being) too boring, our rough itinerary saw us park at the bottom of Roseberry Point, and make the steep climb up to the top. We then wound our way down the hill to take in a vantage point of Captain Cook's monument and then back for a cheeky coffee at the car park, surprisingly only losing our way once! If you are ever in the area it's a brilliant two-hour jaunt, and the coffee in the car park is worth it, even if you don't do the hike!



Figure 3. A lovely two-hour jaunt to Roseberry Point

Our sandblasting also meant we had to vacate for half term, and we did a little tour-de-grandparents, taking in the borders for the latter part. During the fantastic heatwave I took the little beans to Spittal Beach in Berwick upon Tweed – a gem of a seaside break. As it was not half term in Scotland, the beach was invaded by the English – moreover the Geordies – and it was a gorgeous way to while away the time.



Figure 4. Berwick on Tweed: a) Spittal Beach, b) walled garden

I even saw some dolphins, but only after a kind fellow mum managed to point them out on the shoreline! This

mixed with some lovely secret walled gardens (again with ridiculously good cake and coffee), felt like ample a reward for passing my exams, and it was nice to alleviate the mum-guilt that had built up over the past months spent revising. This leads me to a wonderful article by the ACP's own Wiaam Al-hasani, who has masterfully summed up what many mums, including myself, have felt when undertaking the daunting task of bringing a newborn into the world. I'm sure many pathology dads also feel the struggle between parent-life, work-life and being ourselves, and although there's no simple solution, I think Wiaam sums up beautifully the professional and parental tightrope we all walk.

Indeed, we are lucky to have lots of brilliant articles this edition, and our enigmatic Dr Carl Gray never disappoints. His article on Laestrygonians is a great read, and I'm also pleased in this vein to encourage you readers to drink in Dr Emyr Benbow's letter to the editor. I've had the fortune to work with Emyr at Manchester Royal over the years, and his insights into both pathology and people are always entertaining!

Our next edition is focused on 'Pitfalls in pathology'. This theme came from our most recent ACP Editorial team discussions, namely about what drives people to enter, sustain themselves and succeed in pathology. We all fear the malorientated specimen, mislabelled blocks and reporting mistakes that inevitably occur in pathology, and we hope to explore in the next edition the pitfalls people have made, the pitfalls within the system we work in, but most importantly how those pitfalls shape and influence us as reporting pathologists. Some of the most important teaching sessions I've had, or been lucky enough to observe, have been centred on practical approaches to avoiding these pitfalls, but also what to do and who to turn to when they do happen. One of my most treasured mentors once said to me 'part of being a professional is learning to deal with our mistakes', and although it sinks my stomach, I know it will happen to me many times over the course of my career. As my FY1 GI consultant said to a fellow consultant when he had perforated a colon during a very tricky endoscopy: 'if you haven't had all the complications you haven't done enough.' With that thought, I leave you to read through the pages of this edition and enjoy all the articles on offer.

Best wishes,

Sarah.

Letter to the Editor

Carl muses and amuses – Emyr Wyn Benbow

It is good to see that Carl Gray continues to distract and entertain readers of *ACP news*, despite the many and undeserved attacks on his sense of identity (1). Were he Welsh, of course, he might be Carl Lloyd (Lloyd being a malformation of Llwyd, which means grey), with all the bafflement that would go with that initial digraph. In English, “ll” is sounded just the same as “l”, but in Welsh, it stands for a voiceless alveolar lateral fricative sound that is quite different. If you don’t know what a voiceless alveolar lateral fricative sound, it’s basically a phoneme that many outside Wales can’t attempt without generating a fine mist of saliva. On second thoughts, there is nothing fine about a mist of saliva. It’s just spitting, isn’t it?

Carl might also be hailed as Carlo in Wales, and not realise that this might not be meant kindly: I remember Carlo as a name much more often given to a dog. It was also an appellation applied to the current King in his former role as the Prince of Wales, also with faintly impolite intent.

And while we’re discussing Welsh and dogs’ names, a quick digression. Boris Johnson adopted a dog from a South Wales rescue charity in 2019, and was told that the dog was already called “Dilyn”, which was a Welsh instruction meaning “Follow”. I suspect that’s a fiction, a cover-up for the much more believable version that Boris heard a member of staff at the adoption kennels call “Dilyn” to the dog, and naively assumed that Dilyn was the dog’s name. But that’s like naming your dog “Heel”. Yell that in a public park, and a fair proportion of the dogs (well, the few that are properly trained) would be at, um, your heels.

I first met Carl at a meeting of the Pathological Society in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, I think in 1988 (I might be conflating two events here, but in my vast old age, conflating only just two events at once is a triumph). We were in a queue waiting to be admitted to a nightclub, and unusually for two men, admiring each other’s shoes – but only because they were identical. These shoes were in a style that has long disappeared, manufactured by Clarks, with prominent stitching around the edges of the sole; they were often referred to as Cornish pasty shoes. Of course, Cornish pasties are distinguished by having a single crimp around the base, whereas the shoes resemble a Cornish pasty with a crimp on either side. But in no way did it resemble a Devon pasty, so that’s all fine. Anyway, the

nightclub doorkeepers thought Carl’s shoes were far too casual for their seedy nightclub, but mine, given my far greater skill at disappearing into a crowd, were accepted without question.

This may or may not be the occasion when the first room had a circle of seats, and a telephone in front of each so that participants could ring a person anywhere else in the circle for a “chat”; several members of our group of young up-and-coming pathological academics participated, though I don’t think any of them had even a sniff of a satisfactory conversation. I wandered around, through a bar and into a distant room, where there was a strip act. Pathologists have a different take on the objectification of human flesh, so I wandered back to the telephone room, and found a seat outside the circle, close to the exit. Watching pathologists out of their depth is a fine spectator sport, so I was content. A little later, a young woman sat next to me, even nearer the door. “Your face seems familiar,” I said. “Thank you for noticing my face,” she said, “I’m the stripper from the other room. Most men never even look at my face”. She was waiting for a taxi to take her to the next club, and it was late. By the time it arrived, we were deep in conversation about bodies, and our different ways of earning a living from them. And how funny my colleagues were, staring wistfully at silent red telephones.

Some time later, I wrote something for ‘acp News’, as it was then referred to, but when it was published, there was a comma missing. A whole, carefully crafted comma. Utterly unacceptable. I wrote to complain, and I must confess that I was so bitter about the comma that my riposte, meant to be full of entertaining irony, emerged as a dull grumble. But life has occasional surprises: the Editor must have been so seriously impressed that an author would take the trouble to write about a single comma that Carl invited me to become his successor as Editor. So from 2002 through 2004, readers were treated to a lot of ramblings like the above, desperately filling the pages, and frantically heeding Carl’s warnings that I should never leave any white space. But I had a lovely time.

And if you choose to publish this, dear Editor, LEAVE THE COMMAS ALONE.

Reference Gray C. Spelling, life and identity: what’s in a name? *ACP news* 2025; Winter: 45-48.



NEXT ISSUE

This is a picture from the top of Roseberry Topping, in Guisborough. Although ‘only’ 320 mts high, its distinctive jagged edge means that it carves out a real presence within the surrounding Yorkshire landscape. It’s a bit of a steep climb to the top, but when you are there the views are breathtaking (no pun intended!), and you really can see for miles.

This picture accompanies the theme for the next edition, which will be ‘Pitfalls in pathology’. The editorial team and I would love to share people’s emotions and drivers towards their careers in pathology. Is it the fear of making a mistake that drives you? Is it the excitement of finding the one zebra in a sea of antelopes? Have you made any pitfalls in pathology that you’d like to share? Have you learnt from anyone else’s pitfalls, and would you like to pass on any pearls of wisdom? Whatever the lesson, we’d love to hear about it. Please send your articles to sruane@doctors.org.uk.



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