

Description of committee

The British Paediatric Surveillance Unit (BPSU) was set up in 1986, to undertake active surveillance of rare paediatric conditions and infections across the UK and Ireland. The responsibility of the BPSU Scientific Committee (BSC) is to deliver and implement the aims and objectives of the BPSU reporting system. Its objective is to advance knowledge of rare or uncommon childhood conditions, disorders or infections, which are of public health importance, through active monthly reporting by paediatricians participating in a national reporting scheme. Internationally known, it is a joint initiative between the RCPCH, Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and University College London GOS Institute of Child Health (ICH), each of whom contribute to its funding. All three organisations are represented on the BSC, along with representatives from Health Protection Scotland (HPS) and the Faculty of Paediatrics of the Royal College of Physicians Ireland (RCPI). Other members of the BSC are appointed in order to provide a broad range of expertise: currently in community health, neonatology, infectious disease, nephrology, general paediatrics, epidemiology, public health and public involvement in research. There are two medical advisers, one each from the ICH and DHSC, who support the work of the chair and BPSU office. The BSC is overseen by a Governance Board that includes the 3 main partners of the BPSU.

The function of the committee:

- the implementation of the aims and objectives of the reporting system
- guiding and monitoring the operation of the reporting system
- providing peer review of and approving applications from investigators proposing conditions to include on the BPSU reporting system
- advising on the design and conduct of studies
- developing written and other guidance for potential applicants, to include the process for applying and expected good practice in relation to research governance and public involvement by study investigators
- receiving and reviewing draft reports and publications from investigators
- supporting the wide dissemination of BPSU outputs and impact to a variety of stakeholders
- encouraging engagement of clinicians in surveillance activities and promoting awareness of conditions being researched
- approving reports of the Unit's work, including the annual report

In accordance with College policy, all candidates should be in Good Standing with the RCPCH.

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- encouraging and monitoring public involvement in BPSU studies

The BSC committee reports to the Governance Board. The Governance Board membership is drawn from the BPSU's parent bodies, RCPCH, GOSH-ICH and DHSC.

Role details

- The appointment is for 3 years or once the holder has taken up a substantive consultant position.
- The appointee is accountable to the BPSU Scientific Committee Chair.
- To discuss any aspects of this post please contact: Farhana Ahmed, Head of BPSU
Email: Farhana.ahmed@rcpch.ac.uk

Eligibility

Applicants must be Members of the College and a training grade doctor at any ST (specialty training level) or undertaking paediatric academic training and whose primary mailing address is in the **UK/Ireland**.

Role purpose and responsibility

The main responsibility of the Scientific Committee Member is to attend and support the work of the BSC. This includes peer review, methodological contribution to and approval of study applications, selection of the annual Sir Peter Tizard Bursary awards, contribution to the working of the BSC and promotion of the aims and objectives of the BPSU.

The Trainee Representative will be required to attend up to 6 meetings of 4 hours duration (11.00am-15.00pm) per year. Majority of committee meetings are held virtually but 1-2 meetings may be held in person in London. Attendance at BSC meetings is monitored. Membership is reviewed if individual attendance drops below fifty percent or if Member's are absent from more than two consecutive meetings. It is expected that at least two-thirds of Committee Members are in attendance at each meeting. Members may be asked to represent the BPSU at other internal or external meetings of each of the parent bodies of the Unit.

Duties include:

- 1) Supporting the Unit to achieve its strategic aims and objectives.
- 2) Supporting the chair of the BPSU Scientific Committee and supporting the peer review and approvals process of studies of conditions proposed for inclusion on the 'orange card.'
- 3) Supporting the work of the Medical Advisers and the appointment, induction and work of other committee members as required.
- 4) Contributing to the development of a yearly strategic review including work and financial plan
- 5) Being an advocate for the work of the BPSU

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Further information on the BPSU can be found at www.rcpch.ac.uk/bpsu

Working relationships

The Trainee Representative is primarily accountable to the BPSU Chair. Committee Members work closely with the BPSU Project Manager, the two Medical Advisers, and the BPSU Project Co-ordinator. The Chair is the spokesperson for the BPSU and liaises with the BPSU Partnership Board.

Time commitment

Committee members will be required to attend 6 half day meetings per year and devote sufficient time to the role to meet the demands of the role. You may be asked to represent the Committee at other internal or external meetings of the College. Meetings will normally be held online via Teams, with 1-2 in person meetings per year at the RCPCH office.

Support provided from the College

The first point of contact will be via the *Head of the BPSU*.

Members will be reimbursed for the cost of travelling expenses (in line with the College's expenses policy) and subsistence to attend College meetings. Remote attendance options may also be offered for some meetings.

Knowledge, skills and experience required

Essential:

- [Member of the College in Good Standing with RCPCH](#)
- Has attended [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion](#) training within the last 3 years.
- Training grade doctor at any ST (specialty training level) or undertaking paediatric academic training
- Good communication and team working skills

Desirable:

- Higher degree (MD or PhD)
- Epidemiological and public health knowledge
- Research or academic experience

Process

Applications for roles should be submitted electronically at [volunteering opportunities](#) no later than the closing date. Your CV should also be uploaded, and we will ask you to include a statement of up to 250 words outlining the relevant experience and reasons for applying to the post.

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When undertaking a role at RCPCH all role holders must agree to respect and uphold the charitable objects, vision, and values of the RCPCH and uphold the [code of conduct](#) which embodies of the values that the RCPCH holds the breaking of which could lead to sanction. Core to RCPCH's values is the exemplary behaviour of its members, both as professionals and also as individuals.

Appointed candidates will be asked to [register their interests](#). This is to ensure that personal circumstances that might compromise a volunteer's ability to be seen as acting correctly are properly disclosed.

The role holder must be committed to following the College's safer working practices guidelines when working with children, young people and adults at risk. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, with the role holder required to comply with the College's Safeguarding policy. Appointed candidates must also have attended Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training within the last 3 years.

The College may – at its discretion and with the agreement of the candidates – choose to offer this role as a role-share between more than one candidate once the appointment process is complete. Details will be discussed with candidates at the time should this arise.

The RCPCH wants to represent all the communities we serve and are dedicated to creating an inclusive working environment. The College is particularly keen to receive applications from those who belong to an underrepresented group as defined in the equality act 2010, including age, disability, sex, race, religion or belief, gender reassignment, married or in a civil partnership, pregnancy/parental leave, or sexual orientation.

The College is a disability confident leader, please let us know if you require any reasonable adjustments or accommodations as a result of a disability, impairment or health condition.

Members can also receive support to cover the costs of caring responsibilities, where these responsibilities would otherwise prevent them from undertaking voluntary work for the College, as per the [removing barriers](#) fund. Claims must be submitted using the appropriate form and the College should be made aware of these requests at least a month in advance. For further information please contact edi@rcpch.ac.uk.

Eligible candidates who have the required knowledge, skills and experience may be invited to attend an interview either at the College's Offices or via tele-conferencing. Following the interview, a recommendation will be made to Committee on any appointment.

Personal information about unsuccessful candidates will be held for 6 months after the position has been filled, it will then be securely destroyed. Personal information about successful candidates will be retained on their membership file. The

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information contained in this will be kept secure and will only be used for purposes directly relevant to that person's responsibilities as a committee member. Please also refer to the [membership privacy notice](#) which explains how we will use the data we collect from you.

Dr Jan Dudley
Registrar
2026

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