
Description of role

The Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health is seeking nominations for Vice-President for Science & Research. This is a vital Officer post and nominees must be Fellows of the RCPCH.

The Vice President for Science & Research is responsible for leading, overseeing and delivering the elements of the 'harnessing knowledge, data and intelligence' strategic priority in the RCPCH's three-year organisational strategy that has as its objective improving the quality of care for children and young people. The post-holder will have a pivotal and influential role in improving the child health research environment and paediatric quality improvement initiatives across the UK.

The role holder works closely with College staff in the Research & Quality Improvement Division (R&QI) and will have responsibility for:

- overseeing and leading initiatives to improve child health research and academic training
- supporting the growth and roll out of quality improvement initiatives
- oversight of the RCPCH's work on the national clinical audits which the College is externally commissioned to deliver, and signing off the annual reports
- the prioritisation and development of clinical guidelines
- supporting impactful rare disease surveillance.

Activities will be delivered with support from the RCPCH Officer for Research, Officer for Digital Paediatrics, Officer for Quality Improvement & Clinical Standards, the Clinical Leads for the audits and the Chair of the Scientific Committee of the British Paediatric Surveillance Unit. The Vice President will also work in close collaboration with other RCPCH Divisions and Senior Officers to lead and coordinate the overall delivery of RCPCH objectives.

The successful postholder will have a clear vision of how to make improvements in the child health research and quality improvement environments. Coupled with strong leadership and management skills, you will be able to work collaboratively with senior external and internal stakeholders on these strategically important areas for the College which focus on improving outcomes for future generations.

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

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Role details

- Senior Officer for child health research and academic training, quality improvement, national audits, clinical standards and guidelines, and research surveillance projects,
- This role is accountable to the RCPCH President
- Term of Office (*normally 3 years with option of reappointment for a further 2 years*)
- This role will take office in March 2027

Eligibility

The post calls for significant experience, understanding and knowledge of child health research, an interest and knowledge of current external priorities relating to the quality of clinical practice and standards that are required to deliver the best and safest care for children and young people. Experience of RCPCH activities and committee business would be advantageous.

In accordance with the Bye Laws nominees must be Fellows of the RCPCH with a primary postal address in the in the UK or the Republic of Ireland.

Appointment to the role will be by ballot of all Ordinary Members, Fellows, Senior Members, Senior Fellows and Honorary Fellows of the RCPCH eligible to receive voting papers. Candidates must be nominated by at least two Ordinary Members or Fellows.

Role purpose and responsibility

The Registrar, the Treasurer and four Vice Presidents (VPs) support the President of the RCPCH. Together the Senior Officers are responsible for distinct and inter-related areas of RCPCH work. The respective remits of the VPs are Education & Professional Development, Training and Assessment, Health Policy and Science and Research. Each Vice-President is supported by the Executive Director of the relevant RCPCH division. The Vice President for Science and Research is supported by the Executive Director of the Research & Quality Improvement division.

Any Vice-President may be asked by the President or CEO to attend external meetings as appropriate and to undertake other duties as necessary to advance the work of the RCPCH

Research into child health outcomes and services for children and young people lags behind that of other medical specialties, despite the potential for substantial impact on life-long health. This reflects lack of critical mass and falling capacity across the NHS for activities that are not delivering direct clinical care. Research into child health and services is vital to ensure that children and young people are receiving the best care. Research has long been supported and recognised by clinicians for its importance in healthcare and a growing body of evidence is now demonstrating that research-active hospitals have better patient outcomes. This post provides an opportunity for an individual with influential research stature and experience to play a central role in shaping the national landscape to make UK paediatric research world leading.

In recent years the RCPCH has developed a range of resources to support paediatricians and the wider child health workforce to be at the forefront of continuous quality improvement, providing opportunities to develop and share quality improvement work and co-produce solutions with children and young people, and

their families. The successful post holder will work with Officers both within the Division and across the College to develop a strategy for clinical standards and quality improvement to support paediatricians in their day to day delivery of high quality and safe services to children and young people.

The Vice-President Science and Research has responsibility for promoting and enhancing academic activity in the UK among paediatricians at all levels. There is a separate oversight role for the HQIP-commissioned national clinical audits, for both commissioned and College-driven quality improvement and research projects and for the development of clinical guidelines and standards within the RCPCH.

Effectively, there is a portfolio of activities that reaches from discovery to implementation in the area of child health science and research. This post is an opportunity for an individual with vision and energy to develop and enhance the direction of travel for the RCPCH.

The responsibilities of the post holder are to:

- seek to improve research and training opportunities by encouraging closer working and collaboration between the NHS, universities, the National Institute of Health Research and a range of research charities and stakeholders working to benefit child health; this is currently addressed through the attendance at external meetings and through the United Kingdom Child Health Research Consortium. The post holder will be responsible for developing and delivering RCPCH research priorities and will be expected to drive development of proposals for funding of research projects
- be a driving force for accelerating, facilitating, and increasing the discovery, development and dissemination of paediatric academic medicine solutions that improve clinical practice and outcomes for children and young people. The role will include responsibility for supporting and developing academic training, and seeking funding opportunities for academic posts
- lead collaboration and engagement with a range of stakeholders, including (but not limited to) government departments, child health research charities and Research Councils and academic institutions or groups
- represent the RCPCH on external groups, working parties, and other groups dealing with child health research and work with RCPCH divisional teams to co-ordinate RCPCH responses to consultation documents which relate to the child health research agenda
- be assisted by the Officers for Research, the Officers for Clinical Standards & Quality Improvement and the Officer for Digital Paediatrics a number of clinical leads in the delivery of this portfolio. The Vice President will liaise with other Senior Officers but particularly with the Vice President for Education & Professional Development to fully integrate research and quality improvement into the training pathway
- member of Council (3 meetings per year) and Executive Committee (10 meetings per year)
- chairing a number of project/programme boards including the Research Collaboration Committee, the Academic Training Committee, the National Children and Young People's Diabetes Quality Programme and national clinical audit project boards

- RCPCH member of the British Paediatric Surveillance Unit Scientific Committee and Partnership Board
- representing the RCPCH at Academy of Medical Royal Colleges' level on academic research
- participate in working groups e.g. UKCHRC and Trainee Research Networks
- leading the development of research projects/provision with partners/collaborators and identifying opportunities and potential external funding for research projects and other related areas of work within this portfolio
- line manage the Officers for Research to operationalise the RCPCH's research strategy to increase research capacity and capabilities of child health research, particularly within intractable areas of health.
- developing further iterations of the research strategy in consultation with CYP, families and the membership.
- lead on large scale bids to secure targeted funding for child health research
- line manage and work with the Officers for Clinical Standards and Quality Improvement to support the development of and operationalisation of a strategy for quality improvement.
- line manage the Officer for Digital Paediatrics.
- work with the Officer for Workforce Planning to use research activities as a means to facilitate workforce retention.
- work with Officers for Education on a range of academic issues including training, academic training pathways and curricula and child health research interests across the UK.
- attendance is also required at other committees and working groups, both internal and external to the RCPCH, as appropriate.

Working relationships

The post holder will work with a number of individuals, including the President, the Registrar, other Officers, the RCPCH Senior Management Team and individual committee members.

Time commitment

It is estimated that an average of two days per week will be required to carry out the above duties, some of which may be professional leave. Some work can be undertaken out of working hours by email and remote meeting attendance.

Support provided from the College

The first point of contact will be via the Executive Director of Research & Quality Improvement.

Officers 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. Limited financial support may be available for secretarial work done at the Vice-President's home Trust.

Knowledge, skills and experience required

Essential:

- [Member of the College in Good Standing with RCPCH](#) as a Fellow of the College
- Has attended [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion](#) training within the last 3 years
- Registered for and up to date with CPD.
- Active in Clinical Practice, i.e. neither retired nor suspended from practice.
- Commitment to the RCPCH and willingness to take an interest in all areas of the organisation.
- Experience and a track record of undertaking high-quality academic research in child health.
- Track record in leading and being awarded research grants.
- Evidence of publishing in peer-reviewed journals and of dissemination of research.
- Extensive knowledge of UK research infrastructure and services.
- Knowledge of clinical and service standard setting, national clinical audit processes, quality improvement and guideline reviews and development.
- Experienced senior leader with excellent management skills who can set out a vision, provide direction and bring people together to work in a collaborative way.
- Excellent communicator with good networking skills and experience of high-level engagement with senior stakeholders and other influential organisations involved in developing child health research.
- Well-organised.
- Advanced IT literacy

Desirable:

- Working knowledge and understanding of RCPCH structure and function.
- Experience of working collaboratively across a range of teams with different functions to deliver tangible outcomes and outputs.

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 500 words outlining the relevant experience and reasons for applying to the post.

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.

Successful 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 three years.

The College may – at its discretion and with the agreement of the candidates – choose to offer this role as a job-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.

Personal information about unsuccessful candidates will be held for six 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 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.

Eligibility & Election

Applicants must be Fellows of the College normally resident in the UK. The post is subject to election by ballot of all Ordinary Members, Fellows, Senior Members, Senior Fellows and Honorary Fellows of the College eligible to receive voting papers.

Candidates must be nominated by two Ordinary Members or Fellows whose primary postal address registered with the RCPCH is in the UK.

If more than one eligible application is received, a vote by electronic ballot will be held after the close of the application process. Those eligible to receive voting papers will be Fellows, Senior Fellows, Ordinary Members and Honorary Fellows whose primary postal address registered with the RCPCH is in the UK.

Candidates standing for election will be invited to provide a video statement within guidelines set by the College. Candidates for election will also be asked to adhere to

the RCPCH's guidance on canvassing in elections (available on our [website](#)). The election will be administered independently and supervised by the Registrar.

The 500-word written statement provided within your application form will be shared with all registered Fellows, Senior Fellows, Ordinary Members and Honorary Fellows whose primary postal address registered with the RCPCH is in the UK if there is more than one applicant for the position. If a vote has to be taken it will be used to communicate your proposals to the voters. Personal Information provided within your application form will not be shared with any other third parties

Professor Steve Turner
President
2026