

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusivity Progress Report 2024

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to demonstrate RCPE's progress in advancing diversity, equity and inclusion. RCPE is an authority on professional standards for physicians across the UK and internationally. The College is committed to promoting equity, diversity, and inclusion within the medical profession and across the health sector to improve community, patient and staff experience and outcomes.

Diversity groups referred to within this report include, but are not limited to, people identified by:

- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Sexual orientation and identity
- Disability
- Religion
- Age

POLICY OVERVIEW

At RCPE we have implemented several changes to assist Deans and committees to promote our principles to ensure diversity and inclusivity at all college events and enable equitable decision-making in everything that we do.

We know that events at the College are an important way to create a strong community of practice that facilitates formal and informal networking that is crucial for professional enrichment and career development. We recognise that there are many groups who are still under-represented among our membership and at more senior leadership levels. One of the ways we have addressed this issue is to take active steps to promote equality, diversity and inclusion within all the activities that are associated with the College. RCPE branded events respect the dignity of the individual and proactively enable people to fully participate in an inclusive way.

Our Fellows and Members, by joining the RCPE must agree to adhere to the laws and codes of conduct set by the College. Those within a leadership position and those who also hold responsibility within a committee, working group or role must also complete a declaration of interest as well as code of conduct. This ensures that there is appropriate accountability across all work of the College.



Child and Disability Friendly

We have strived to ensure that the RCPE building is a child friendly and accessible space to members with young families and those with a disability. We provide toys and games, as well as a breastfeeding room, a quiet room, and prayer room. We have installed a fully accessible lift, a hearing loop in the auditorium, and grace signage to ensure inclusive access for all.

Equity of Access to Membership

We provide discounted rates to people who may experience barriers to access such as LTFT, retired physicians, and based on World Bank Development Indicators. We provide free membership to refugee doctors. Considerations are also done on a case-by-case basis for those who are wanting to attend our events, but they are currently in an unpaid post, out of work or on long term leave.

GOALS

The equality, diversity and inclusion strategy identify 5 priority areas:

- 1. Embedding an inclusive culture and role-modelling leadership excellence**
- 2. Gender equity, anti-racism, and inclusion of all diversity groups**
- 3. Cultural competency education and training**
- 4. Diverse representation on Council and in other leadership roles**
- 5. Measuring impact - Benchmarking and reporting**

OBJECTIVES

By 2025, the College will have:

- Embedded a culture of equality, diversity, and inclusion across the College; ensuring leaders role-model behaviours that empower diverse participation, removes barriers and bias to opportunities, and provides an inclusive environment for members and Fellows.
- Used its position as a leader in the UK health system, to convene discussions, disseminate research, and communicate the importance of addressing health equity and discrimination.

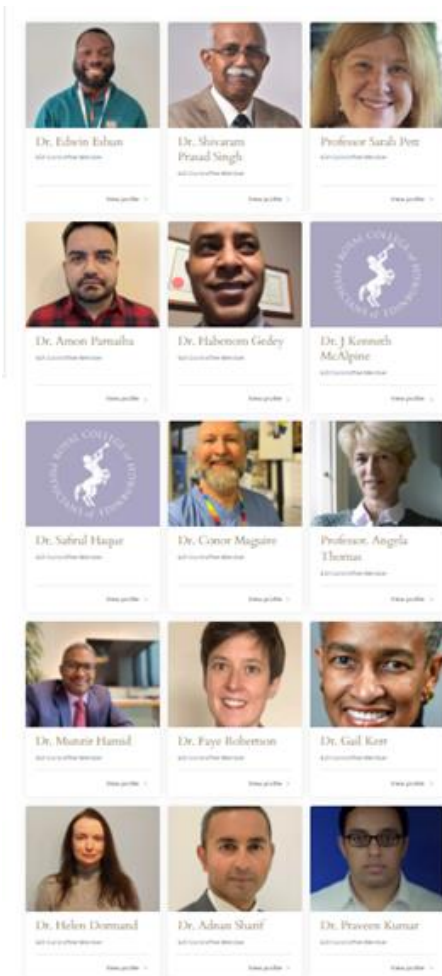
- Used its position as an education provider and influencer of training standards and curricula, to recommend and guide best practice for managing diverse trainees, promote flexible and supportive workplace practices, and reduce differential attainment in career progression.
- Increased the representation of underrepresented groups by 50% at the level of Council, Chair and Directors. The College will also aim to significantly increase the representation of underrepresented groups within committee membership and the College workforce.
- Developed a digital method for seeking feedback from Members and Fellows, and monitoring progress towards achieving the outcomes set out in this strategy. This will be delivered in a format that can be transparently and openly shared with the membership.

PROGRESS

EDI COMMITTEE

The EDI committee membership was reviewed and expanded to include a broader range of members and included international members. This positively resulted in the committee obtaining a wider range of diverse skills and lived experience.

An expression of interest was sent to all RCPE members and **154 people applied** to join the committee in February 2023. Following an equitable assessment process, **15 new members** were invited to join the EDI committee. Details of the current committee members is listed below.



“In the EDI committee, we listen to the experiences of our diverse membership, advocate to increase representation in college leadership, and engage members in cultural awareness. It is critical that we address bias and discrimination that exists within health and champion for equality, diversity, and inclusion.”

Dr MaryAnn Ferreux

“My interest in EDI is driven by personal experiences, a desire to diversify the profession so it better reflects the diversity of the larger population, and a desire to improve the experience of healthcare and healthcare outcomes for minority and marginalised groups.”

Dr Edwin Eshun

"I am truly honoured to be a member of the EDI committee which aims to help nurture and grow members of the College in the career journeys, to ensure they are happy, successful and attain their full potential in medicine and the allied sciences." Prof. Sarah Pett

A key action for the committee was to review the Terms of Reference for the committee and the RCPE position statement; this led the team to develop an overarching commitment on our website which encapsulates RCPE's core values on discrimination, diversity, cultural safety, and inclusiveness for members. The committee members act as role models and champions across the College and advocate for EDI action across all committees and groups.

In 2024 the EDI committee supported 3 sub working groups, focused on:

- **Addressing racial bias and discrimination** (*in partnership with Melanin Medics*) – key outcomes included sending out resources highlighting opportunities and activities available within RCPE and expanding our reach to Afro-Caribbean medics and students.
- **Addressing sexual safety at work** (*in partnership with Surviving in Scrubs*) – key outcomes included a review of RCPE policies on women's safety at work, mandatory staff training, and Council approval to add questions relating to sexual harassment into the membership survey which will go to all members in 2024/25.
- **Addressing differential attainment** (*in partnership with BAPIO*) – key outcomes included a presentation on the "Trainee in difficulty" by Dr Tanvir Alam and Council approval for a RCPE roundtable to tackle differential attainment.

INCLUSIVE CULTURE AND LEADERSHIP EXCELLENCE

As our population and healthcare workforce becomes increasingly more diverse, it is critical that healthcare leaders acquire an inclusive leadership approach, whereby all team members feel that they are valued and treated respectfully and fairly. The evidence shows that teams with inclusive leaders are more likely to be high performing, making high-quality decisions and behaving collaboratively. The EDI committee Chair has worked closely with the College President and Deans to openly foster a culture of inclusivity and belonging, ensuring that all voices are included in college decision-making and striving to increase the diversity of people within leadership roles.

Inclusive Leadership Definition

Inclusive leadership is the practice of leading with empathy, respect and an open mind to perspectives and contributions from all team members. Inclusive leaders seek to foster diverse teams and make everyone feel empowered to do their best work. An inclusive leader often exhibits the following traits and behaviours: commitment to diversity and inclusion, humility, courage, mindful of own personal bias, open-minded, curious, culturally aware and collaborative.

The EDI committee have also collaborated with the RCPE communications team to develop a messaging strategy that promotes and acknowledges our diverse membership and leadership. The communications team have actively championed the EDI strategy across the college, enabled internal and external engagement and supported implementation of the strategy to ensure its effectiveness. Our approach has ensured that the diversity of physicians is represented across our digital presence, including our website and social media outlets. The EDI committee regularly join conversations on equality, diversity and inclusion online, as well as supporting international campaigns such as Pride, Black History Month, International Women's Day, Disability Awareness and South Asian Doctor month. An example of our inclusive culture is shown below:



Celebration Wall

This wall celebrates our global membership, international partners and wide community of physicians.

The celebration wall is located in the upper foyer of the conference area as a way to celebrate and welcome our Fellows and members when they enter the college.

GENDER EQUITY, ANTI-RACISM AND INCLUSION OF ALL DIVERSITY GROUPS

Our members come from across the world, representing different ethnicities, educational backgrounds, gender identities, nationalities, languages, cultures and beliefs. This diversity of our membership promotes unique perspectives and innovative solutions to address global healthcare challenges. **The College represents over 14,700 Members and Fellows in 113 countries and is committed to championing equality, diversity and inclusivity within its workforce and its membership.**

Gender equity is a core value of RCPE, and we have made substantial strides in enhancing the gender diversity on our Council and advancing gender equality policies and practices, including equal pay, professional development and promotion. The communications team have supported this mission through promotion on our website, increasing our social media profile to promote activities of both organisations and influencing system change.

Key Actions:

- **Investigation into the development of a policy** for EDI at RCPE activities and events with consideration for speakers (gender and diversity), breast-feeding friendly venues, and accessible access.
- **Advocacy for gender equity** – Supporting women in leadership and the need for male allies, addressing sexual safety at work through education and training.
- **Partnership working** with a diverse range of organisation's – Melanin Medics, Surviving in Scrubs, British Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (BAPIO).
- **Women in Leadership event 2023** - A joint event with the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh on behalf of Academy of Royal Medical Colleges, hosted over 200 participants.
- **Global Women in Healthcare Awards 2024** in association with EMMS to celebrate the global impact of women working in healthcare.



Women in Leadership Conference

Participant feedback:

"This was the best conference I have ever been to. Full of incredibly inspiring women sharing their story and uplifting others, empowering the audience to take a lot home to their own workplace and be a force for implementing change."

CULTURAL COMPETENCY EDUCATION AND TRAINING

We aim to make our education provision accessible to all our fellows, members' and the wider physician community throughout the world. We host over 70 educational events annually and of these many are free or reduced fee to enable participation across any career stage or country. Many of the events are hybrid and recorded, allowing participation at a time that suits delegates, and increasing access. The monthly Evening Medical Updates are livestreamed to hospitals where it is free to participate.



We are striving to support diversity within education and training. We are committed to reducing unconscious bias and supporting learning environments where diversity is both visible and valued. We are on a journey to increase the presence of visible BME leaders and Executive commitment to an inclusive culture.

Our Education Portal has a wide array of recorded talks many of which are captioned, and our global health talks are freely available to the public. Our full series of podcasts are available to all, and we have some podcasts which are of relevance to our EDI work. The College have worked hard to organise International Medical updates (IMU) in many countries. These are hosted by the local Regional Advisor and are free to all Doctors and healthcare workers in that country.

In collaboration with the Dean of Education, we have ensured that the organising committee monitor the programme development in relation to gender and diversity balance. Through our bespoke EDI work, we are continuing to progress towards equity. Our Fellows and members can now access the following courses:

Equality, diversity & inclusion education includes:

- Breaking the silence - exploring the stigma of women's mental health, March 2025
- Transgender Inclusive Healthcare: Key Concepts and Practical Applications 2024
- Gastroenterology: a Global Perspective 2024
- RCPE Iraq: Journey of Acute Coronary Syndrome 2024
- Wellbeing in Medicine 2023
- Eliminating bias, cultivating governance and leadership 2023

RCPE Podcasts

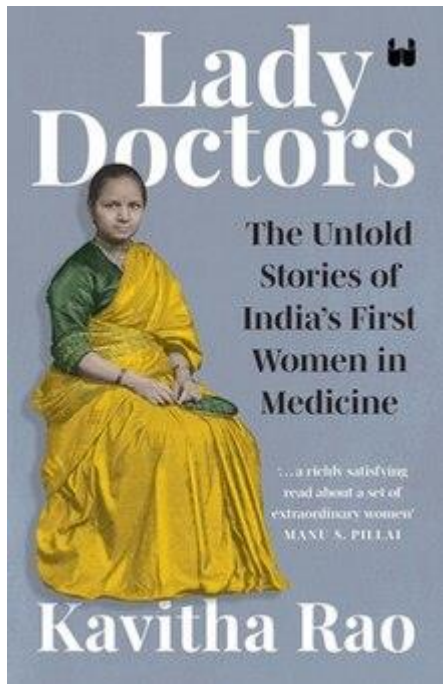
- Being Trans in the NHS [Re-release] 2023
- International Medical Graduates in the UK 2023
- Championing women in leadership 2023
- Microaggressions
- Women in Cardiology
- Less Than Full Time

In collaboration with the International Executive Group and Regional Advisers, the College have continued to extend their support for doctors from across the globe. Key areas of focus have been to support International Medical Updates on global population health needs and create opportunities for international trainees to gain experience working in the UK through the MTI programme. The International Newsletter is shared with members from over 100 countries and enables engagement in RCPE educational activities, supports networks within and between countries, and enables delivery of high-quality, sustainable healthcare locally. Doctors who have come to the UK as refugees have inclusive access to the College's education programme and free membership to continue their professional development and training.

In collaboration with the Heritage Trustee and Honorary Librarian, we have worked to increase awareness and understanding of bias and inequalities within the history of the College. The "Slavery Connections" report is available on the RCPE website, which demonstrates the College's commitment to transparency and a culture of openness regarding all aspects of our history, and the historical links of some individuals connected with the College to slavery. Through the work of the EDI committee, we are working collaboratively to address systemic racial discrimination and institutional inequality by increasing the book collection for the library from diverse authors, countries or on diverse subjects to create a legacy that reflects our commitment to EDI. Additionally in partnership with the library team we have promoted a more inclusive reading list for college members in line with key calendar events e.g. International Women's Day and Black History month. We will continue to advocate for structural reform in medical textbooks to include more diverse populations and promote historical figures from diverse backgrounds that have contributed to the field of medicine and science. An example is shown below:



ROYAL
COLLEGE of
PHYSICIANS of
EDINBURGH



Purchased for RCPE library Jan 2024

Diversity & Inclusion in the Library

"I am currently studying in the library at RCPE. This is my first time here, now having the need to escape my 2.5yr old at home. I just want to take the time to say thank you, not only for the toy boxes in the library but for the inclusivity that they show. I have a facial birthmark and as a child, I felt underrepresented and had nobody or no resources to look to so that I could feel more normal. I was absolutely thrilled to see 'Tyler's purple arm' and there is a vitiligo Barbie upstairs." Feedback from a member



Untold LGBTQ+ Histories in Medicine and Dr Sophia Jex-Blake

MEASURING IMPACT

College Leadership Survey

In 2023, members of the College's Council and Senior Management Team were invited to complete an EDI Survey to provide us with information about the diversity of our leadership. 19 members of Council completed the survey (58%) and 4 members' of SMT (100%). The College will use this information to identify existing gaps or issues and work towards improving them, with regular review. The goal for the 2025 leadership survey is 100% participation.

FUTURE PLANS

Although there has been significant improvement across the College that should be celebrated and acknowledged, there is still much work to do to ensure that the outcomes are sustainable and deliver long-term impact. We recognise that we are on a continuous improvement journey and continue to embed the EDI strategy into everything that we do across the College.

Our work for 2025 will include:

- Improve the quality of demographic data for Fellows and members
- Sexual safety seminar for Council – date TBC
- Cultural competency training for Council – date TBC
- Roundtable to discuss differential attainment in exams for ethnic minority candidates
- Review of the criteria for bursaries and scholarships
- Member and Fellow survey - additional questions added on barriers & challenges
- Development of a RCPE Sexual Safety Charter
- Development of a diversity dashboard for RCPE Council



- RCPE Executive to complete sign up to The BITC Anti-racism Charter

Key events:

- **Women in Leadership 2025: Developing Tomorrow's Leaders** - RCPE in association with NHS Education for Scotland (NES), to be held on 19th June. The programme includes a variety of talks, live interviews and workshops with topics including learning across sectors, intersectionality, active bystander training, how to get into leadership, and a session to help male leaders support women colleagues, mentees and employees with allyship, advocacy and coaching.

*Report written by Dr MaryAnn Ferreux – Chair, Equality, diversity and inclusion Committee
February 2025*