

The Royal College of Radiologists

Role and person specification for Lay Members on Faculty Patients' Liaison Group

Remit

The Royal College of Radiologists has two Faculties, Clinical Oncology and Clinical Radiology. Each Faculty has a Patients' Liaison Group¹ and the remit for both PLGs is as follows;

1. To provide patient and public perspectives on Faculty activities to assist in improving service delivery at a national level.
2. To provide patient and public input into Faculty work programmes.
3. To bring key issues of interest to patients to the attention of the Faculty Board.
4. To provide patient and lay input into consultations.

The Role of Lay Members

A lay member on a Faculty patients' group (PLG)¹ will be expected to contribute to the following areas of activity.

1. PLG Meetings

- Attending all PLG meetings
- Prepare thoroughly for PLG meetings
- Provide patient/public perspective in PLG deliberations.
- Enter into debate at PLG meetings
- Work constructively with the PLG and Faculty Board to foster the agreed aims for the PLG
- Lead/contribute to any initiative(s) which might be agreed with the PLG and Faculty Board including preparing papers for the PLG from time to time.
- Represent the PLG in any other forum agreed with the PLG and Faculty Board.

2. Faculty Sub-committees and/or working parties

- By agreement, attend and serve as a lay representative on Faculty Sub-committees and working parties
- Prepare reports for the PLG on issues arising
- Contribute to any agreed initiatives.

3. Consultation papers

- Read and consider consultation documents on areas agreed with the Chair of the PLG and other members
- Provide comments on the consultation documents where appropriate from a patient/public perspective

4. General

- Contribute to an annual review of the PLGs work, and to the establishment of an annual work plan lining up with the aims and action plan of the Faculty Board
- Contribute to RCR information including where appropriate: the designated area on the College website, Newsletter and Monthly News Bulletin.
- Contribute to the induction/briefing sessions organised by the PLGs

¹ Clinical Oncology Patients' Liaison Group or Clinical Radiology Patients' Liaison Group

- Feedback views on participation and involvement in the work of the PLG so that the process can be developed and refined.

Person Specification

The following range of skills and attributes are desirable, but it is recognized that individuals will have different levels of contribution to make in the different areas:

- Relevant experience as a patient or carer and/or experience or skills relevant to the particular patients' liaison group's remit
- An awareness of current medical issues and an understanding of their wider public perception
- Keen interest in healthcare in the UK
- Sufficiently developed knowledge of and/or interest in clinical radiology or clinical oncology (as appropriate) to carry out the specified role or willingness to add to knowledge
- Sufficient background awareness to feel confident in responding to the RCR on consultation documents
- The ability to communicate in a clear way and join in committee discussions and decision-making
- The ability to reflect on and communicate a broad public and patient perspective
- Experience of committee work would be helpful
- Interest in bridging the worlds of lay people and medicine
- Political and commercial neutrality.

The lay member will be expected to contribute independent and objective views representing the interests of the wider public, but not acting as a representative of any organisation or of any specific group of people.

Preference will be given to candidates who have not been employed in a medically or clinically-related capacity in a healthcare field, who are not and have never been a registered medical practitioner and who do not hold any qualification that is registerable under the Medical Act.

Candidates should note that the College has taken a strategic decision to deliver its services and information progressively by electronic means. Accordingly, lay members will find it very advantageous to have access to a PC, printer and the Internet and be reasonably proficient in their use.

Resources/Expenses

The College will reimburse all direct expenses (such as travel and hotel costs) on production of receipts. An annual expenses allowance of £400 (from which tax will be deducted) will be paid annually in January during the formal membership period. This sum is intended to offset the costs of general office consumables such as printing, telephone calls etc. (A one off sum of £300 is available to all members after their formal appointment commences to assist in the purchase of specific items (such as attendance at a skills training course, or a contribution to the purchase of office equipment) needed to participate as a member of the PLG. A case for this should be made to the chair of the PLG in the first instance).

The College produces a PLG Handbook for members to provide background information about serving on a PLG within the RCR.

The PLGs run an annual briefing session to update members on new developments.

Time Commitment

The time commitment is difficult to specify accurately but candidates should be aware that a full half day should be set aside for attendance at each of the three PLG meetings each year, together with a half day beforehand for reading the papers (minimum three days per year). In addition, the PLG sometimes adds a further induction or briefing session to at least one meeting per year.

The necessity of keeping up to date with relevant healthcare issues and issues in the media will add at least a further five days per annum.

Where an individual takes the lead on, or contributes to agreed PLG activities, this will require a further time commitment, although this will vary according to the activity. The number of consultation documents the College receives varies from year to year. Over the last year, the College has responded to c.3 per month.

Those taking a lay role should anticipate being invited to serve on other sub-committees, Boards or working parties as a result of membership of the PLG. Any such appointment will require further days allocated to work in attendance at meetings, in preparation and any follow up work. The demands will vary according to the activities, but attendance would be quite likely to add a minimum of a further three days per year per sub-committee or group.

Lay members are invited to an annual meeting of the lay representatives of all medical Royal Colleges and Faculties, organised by the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges.

College meetings are generally held in London, as are most other committees and group meetings, and the time for travel will need to be factored into the overall commitment.

The terms of office for lay members are as follows:

- Clinical Oncology PLG: three years (plus one additional year by agreement), to run from September each year
- Clinical Radiology PLG: four years.

Where possible, new lay members are invited to join their PLG as an observer member for a period in advance of commencement of their formal membership to give them some time to learn about the work of the PLG.

Administrative and Secretarial Support

Administrative and secretarial support for the PLG is provided by the Faculty Executive Office for each faculty. The role of the Faculty Executive Officer is to:

- Service and support PLG meetings
- Work with the Chair to co-ordinate and support the outcomes of meetings
- Support the lay members in the conduct of the PLG's work, giving advice and guidance about the College as appropriate
- Review and update website content with input from the PLGs
- Maintain the terms of reference for individuals sub-committees and ensure their regular review
- Maintain membership lists
- Participate in the recruitment and induction of lay members.

The Royal College of Radiologists is committed to an equal opportunities policy (available at www.rcr.ac.uk/index.asp?PageID=27) which provides that all applicants to participate in the work of the College are treated fairly.