

## Chair - Lay Advisory Group (LAG)

### Volunteer opportunity

**Name of position:** Chair - Lay Advisory Group (LAG)

**Start date:** May 2025

**Term:** Three years

**Time commitment:** Three annual LAG meetings, four annual Council meetings and equivalent contributions between meetings. Lay Members also have the opportunity to represent Lay opinion on other Committees.

**Number of Vacancies:** 1

**Meetings:** LAG Meetings: 6 February 11am – 1pm (virtual), 12 June 11am– 1pm– (in person), 9 October, 11am – 1pm – (virtual)

Council Meetings: 7 March, 9:30am – 12noon (in person), 6 June, 9:30am – 12 noon (virtual), 5 September, 9:30am – 12noon (in person), 5 December, 9:30am – 12noon (virtual)

**Contact:** Mariann Peters, [mariann.peters@rcophth.ac.uk](mailto:mariann.peters@rcophth.ac.uk)

#### About the position

The Lay Advisory Group (LAG) supports the advancement of the science and practice of ophthalmology by representing lay opinion at the College.

The Lay Chair plays a crucial role in leading and providing strategic direction for the Lay Advisory Group, ensuring effective collaboration and valuing each member's contributions to advance the group's work. Responsibilities include offering constructive feedback to the College, supporting the development of group members, and reporting directly to the CEO, President, and College Council on the group's activities. Additionally, the Lay Chair may represent the College when needed.

The Lay Advisory Group's functions involve meeting three times per year (twice online, once in person) to advise College officers on patient-related issues, reviewing College documents, helping create accessible patient information, and considering the impact of government policies on ophthalmic care. The LAG Chair also attends the quarterly College Council meetings to report on the group's efforts.

#### Criteria for position

The LAG Chair should have knowledge of ophthalmic services, patient journeys, or similar health and social care settings, along with an understanding of how to support and coordinate partnerships in complex environments. They should be aware of the key issues faced by patients, including NHS and social care policies, system changes, and specific challenges in eye health. The role requires board-level experience and senior leadership within a complex setting, with a proven ability to lead diverse groups and foster collaboration. Experience in integrating patient and lay perspectives, the confidence to scrutinise information and peers constructively, and a commitment to maintaining accuracy, confidentiality, and security of electronic information in discussions and reporting are also essential.

As an inclusive organisation, we encourage diversity and equal access to opportunities to take up roles and lead in the work of the College. We are happy to provide accessibility accommodations such as virtual joining options for all meetings and applicable training opportunities.

#### Benefits

Volunteering as the LAG Chair offers the opportunity to make a substantial impact in the field of ophthalmic care by influencing policies and practices that directly benefit patients. It provides a platform to work at a strategic level, collaborating with senior leaders and stakeholders to shape the future of eye health services. The role allows for meaningful contributions to patient-centered improvements by integrating the perspectives of those who use these services, enhancing the quality and accessibility of care. Additionally, it offers professional growth through leadership responsibilities in a complex environment, with the chance to drive innovation and effect change in collaboration with a diverse and expert group. This position also grants the satisfaction of directly supporting the improvement of patient experiences and the broader healthcare landscape.

### **How to apply**

To apply for this exciting opportunity, please complete the [volunteer application form](#). The form should be emailed to Mariann Peters at [mariann.peters@rcophth.ac.uk](mailto:mariann.peters@rcophth.ac.uk). Please also feel free to email Mariann if you have any questions.

All eligible individuals will be contacted via email. Eligible individuals will be asked to attend an online interview with a selection panel.

## **LAY ADVISORY GROUP – TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Lay Advisory Group is a group set up within the College and is responsible to the Council of the College and shall abide by the Ordinances and Bye-laws of the College.

### **Purpose**

- To support the College in the advancement of the science and practice of ophthalmology.
- To represent lay opinion to the College.

### **Composition**

The Group will consist of a maximum of fifteen people. There will be a maximum of ten lay members, the President of the College and a maximum of three other members nominated from the council. The Chief Executive is also a member.

A lay member cannot be currently employed in an allied ophthalmic profession or be employed in a company that produces ophthalmic instruments or ophthalmic pharmaceutical items. A person who is, or has been, an ophthalmologist cannot be a lay member.

### **Selection of lay members**

Members shall be appointed by the College after national advertisement.

Members will serve for a period of three years, renewable once.

Members should act as individuals rather than on behalf of outside organisations.

### **Chairmanship**

The Chair of the Lay Advisory Group will be a lay member and will serve for a period of three years, renewable once. In the first year, the term begins at the first meeting after the College's Annual General Meeting. In the absence of the Chair at a meeting of the Lay

Advisory Group, the members present will elect a Vice Chair. The Chair will be a co-opted member of Council.

**Functions of the lay advisory group will include:**

- To meet four times a year to discuss and offer advice to College officers on issues which directly affect patients.
- To review College documents as appropriate.
- To assist in the creation of patient information leaflets produced by the College with a view to making these more useful to the general public.
- To consider the effect of actual or proposed government policy on the delivery of ophthalmic care.

**Role of a Lay Assessor – Communication Skills Station**

You may be invited to attend either the Part 2 FRCOphth Examination in the capacity of a Lay Assessor. Your role at the examination would be as an assessor on the Communication Skills Station. You would be expected to attend an Examiners Training Day to prepare you for your role as Lay Assessor.

**Reporting and Committee Membership**

- The group shall report to Council.
- Members of the group may serve on any committee or sub-committee or group approved by Council.

**Minutes and conduct in meetings**

The content of Lay Advisory Group meetings will be minuted by a member of the College staff and will be placed before the next Council meeting.

To promote free and open debate the discussions in meetings should be regarded as confidential. The minutes of meetings are a matter of record.

**Conflicts of interest**

When the interests of a member conflicts, or appears to conflict, with the interest of the College, this must be declared.

**General**

Membership of the group can be terminated for repeated non-attendance at meetings or for inappropriate behaviour. The decision to exclude members will rest with the Chief Executive after consultation with the Chair of the Lay Advisory Group and the President of the College.

In accordance with College policy, all correspondence and other dealings with professional and other organisations will be prepared within the College by College staff. Where appropriate, copies of correspondences will be sent to the relevant vice-president whose committee covers the matter in question for comment.

No sponsorship may be sought or accepted without prior permission of the Honorary Treasurer. No member may be paid or accept payment in cash or kind for work undertaken on behalf of the group or the College. Expenses to attend group meetings and committee meetings at the College will be met at the usual College rates. Expenses for all other meetings will only be paid with the prior approval of the Honorary Treasurer or the Chief Executive.



As a group set up within the College, under the terms of its Charter, it shall not support any object which would make it a Trade Union, nor shall its objects extend to the regulations of relations between workers and employers or organisation of workers and organisation of employers.