

Member - Lay Advisory Group (LAG)

Volunteer opportunity

Name of position: Lay Member

Start date: May 2025

Term: Three years

Time commitment: Three annual meetings plus contributing to College work in between meetings. Lay Members also have the opportunity to represent Lay opinion on other Committees.

Number of vacancies: 4

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

Contact: Mariann Peters, 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. Some examples of how LAG members provide input include reviewing patient information to ensure it is clear and accessible to the general public, getting involved in our exams and guidelines work to help set/maintain standards of care and providing public insight on actual or proposed government policy.

Along with attending LAG meetings, LAG members are often invited to join various other Committees to offer advice and insight on issues which directly affect patients.

Criteria for position

The Lay Advisory Group has a broad representative membership, from having no background in general or eye health to members who have been or are eye patients. Since this group expresses views based on public and patient experience of health and eye care services, it is open to anyone who is passionate about improving patient care in ophthalmology.

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 a Lay Advisory Group member offers a unique opportunity to positively impact ophthalmology patient care by sharing insights from a wide range of personal experiences and perspectives. Members contribute valuable feedback that shapes policies and practices, ensuring they are closely aligned with the needs and concerns of those who rely on eye care services. This role is especially fulfilling for those eager to advocate for and help improve patient care in a meaningful way, making a real difference in the quality of services offered within the field of ophthalmology.

How to apply

To apply for this exciting opportunity, please complete the [volunteer application form](#). Please feel free to email Mariann Peters mariann.peters@rcophth.ac.uk 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.