

Thinking of Pathology?

Pathology is the study of disease, or any condition that limits the quality, length or enjoyment of life. From the time a new life is created to the time it ends, pathology is involved. Pathology touches every facet of medicine and is central to all diagnoses, disease monitoring, screening and treatment decisions.

Overview of Pathology

Pathologists are medical doctors with at least 13 years of training. As both a pure and applied science, many major advances have been made in medical practice as a result of research carried out by pathologists and medical scientists – immunisation against infectious diseases, organ transplantation, safe blood transfusion, genetics and forensics.

Pathologists diagnose every detected cancer in the world and oversee the diagnosis and monitoring of all acute and chronic illnesses, such as diabetes, blood disorders and infections. They are often also intimately involved in the management of life threatening conditions and the impacts of intervention or treatment programs with pharmaceuticals, radiation, diet and/or public health measures.

Most pathologists work with a range of medical specialists, including general practitioners and laboratory scientists and the work frequently involves the integration of laboratory and clinical medicine.

Specialty Training

Vocational training in pathology is undertaken through the Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia (RCPA) in one of nine specialty sub-disciplines - Anatomical Pathology, Chemical Pathology, General Pathology Genetic Pathology, Forensic Pathology, Haematology, Immunopathology, Microbiology and Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology.

The RCPA also provides vocational training and Fellowship in Oral and Maxillofacial pathology to dental practitioners, in addition to a Fellowship of the Faculty of Science – which is open to both medical practitioners and senior scientists.

Please note:

The RCPA Training Programmes in Chemical Pathology, Haematology, Immunopathology, and Microbiology are linked to training programmes of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians <http://www.racp.org.nz/>

Doctors choosing to study these clinical pathology sub-disciplines graduate with dual Fellowships in Pathology and Medicine.

RCPA provides a minimum 260 week (five years) pathology training program undertaken in specialty specific, accredited training laboratories in District Health Boards and community laboratories.

Successful completion of a Fellowship in Pathology requires employment and experience in a minimum of two appropriate training laboratories, coupled with passing of three major examinations. The first of these (Basic Pathological Science exam) may be taken before the commencement of training. In their third year of training, trainees usually sit a Part 1 Discipline specialty exam, with Part 2 usually sat in their fifth or final year.

Further information can be found in the RCPA's website: <http://www.rcpa.edu.au/Pathology-Careers>

A day in the life of a [pathologists](#)

It is highly likely that you need to complete placements in multiple DHBs whilst completing vocational training

Personal qualities required to be a Pathologist

- Strong aptitude for, and interest in, the scientific basis of medicine and in laboratory work
- An enquiring mind and an interest in problem solving
- Leadership potential is essential
- Attention to detail
- Clinical experience is essential and candidates should have the ability to mix and match their laboratory and clinical roles seamlessly
- An ability to communicate in a variety of forums, written and spoken, in lay terms, scientific and academic

Specialty Training Programme Information

Medical College

[Royal College of Pathologists of Australia \(RCPA\)](#)

Fellowship/Qualification

Fellowship of the Royal College of Pathologists of Australia (FRCPA)

Initial Registration Details

Details of the training programme:

Entry requirement	Application process & Selection criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Minimum of one years of postgraduate experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Applicants must be employed in an RCPA accredited training laboratory before seeking registration with the College• College is not involved in selecting applicants to its Fellowship training programme. There are guidelines available for employing laboratories to use• Key dates

Duration of vocational training – six years

- At least 1 year of pre-Registrar general medical experience
- 5 years of advanced training as registered trainees with RCPA
- Experience in at least two laboratories

Examination requirements

- A pass is required in the Basic Pathology Science examination in the first year of advance training.
- A pass in the FRCPA Part I examination in a chosen subspecialty is required in the third year of advanced training.
- A pass in the FRCPA Part II examination in a chosen subspecialty is required in the fifth year of advance training.

<http://www.rcpa.edu.au/Pathology-Careers/Becoming-A-Pathologist/Detailed-Information-About-Becoming-a-Pathologist/Exams>

Overseas Trained Specialists and Exam Exemptions

Recognition of Prior Learning

The RCPA has a training time credits programme in place so prior learning of applicants can be recognised. For more information [click here](#)

Transferability of registration to other countries/across training sites

Transfer is possible across Australasia as the RCPA has accredited training laboratories and Registrars in Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia and Saudi Arabia. This is subject to regulatory requirements in regard to medical registration.

Resident Medical Officer (RMO) Information

Demand for vocational Training Posts

This is not currently available

RMO training registrar positions

Northern	Midland	Central	Southern	Total
29	3	7	13	52

*Figures from September 2014 RMO census

The need for this speciality in New Zealand

This section is being further developed. Once it is updated a revised version will be published.

Information on Pathologists

NZ New Fellows

Year	Number
2014	*
2013	*
2012	*
2011	*
2010	*
2009	*

Number of Pathologists registered with the Medical Council

Average Age of SMOs*	Number of IMGs**
*	*

*Source: Medical Council, 24 March 2014

**International Medical Graduate (IMG)

Number of Pathologists by Region (To be advised)

Northern		Midland		Central		Southern		Total	
FTE	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE	Headcount
*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

Regions

Northern:

Northland, Waitemata, Auckland, Counties Manukau DHBs

Midland:

Lakes, Tairāwhiti, Bay of Plenty, Waikato, Taranaki DHBs

Central:

Hawke's Bay, Wanganui, MidCentral, Wairarapa, Capital and Coast, Hutt Valley DHBs

Southern:

Nelson Marlborough, Canterbury, South Canterbury, Southern, West Coast DHBs