



ROYAL COLLEGE
of PODIATRY

2025-2030 strategy

Analysis of consultation responses

November 2024

Introduction

- We are pleased to present back to you our analysis of the themes that emerged from this consultation
- The RCPod is sharing this analysis following a presentation to RCPod's Council at its October 2024 meeting
- We are also going to let you know how the responses have shaped an updated version of the strategy and what we are going to do with the ideas generated
- The next slide lets you know about the methodology we used to analyse your comments
- In summary we will outline next steps as we prepare to launch our strategy in 2025 and start our work

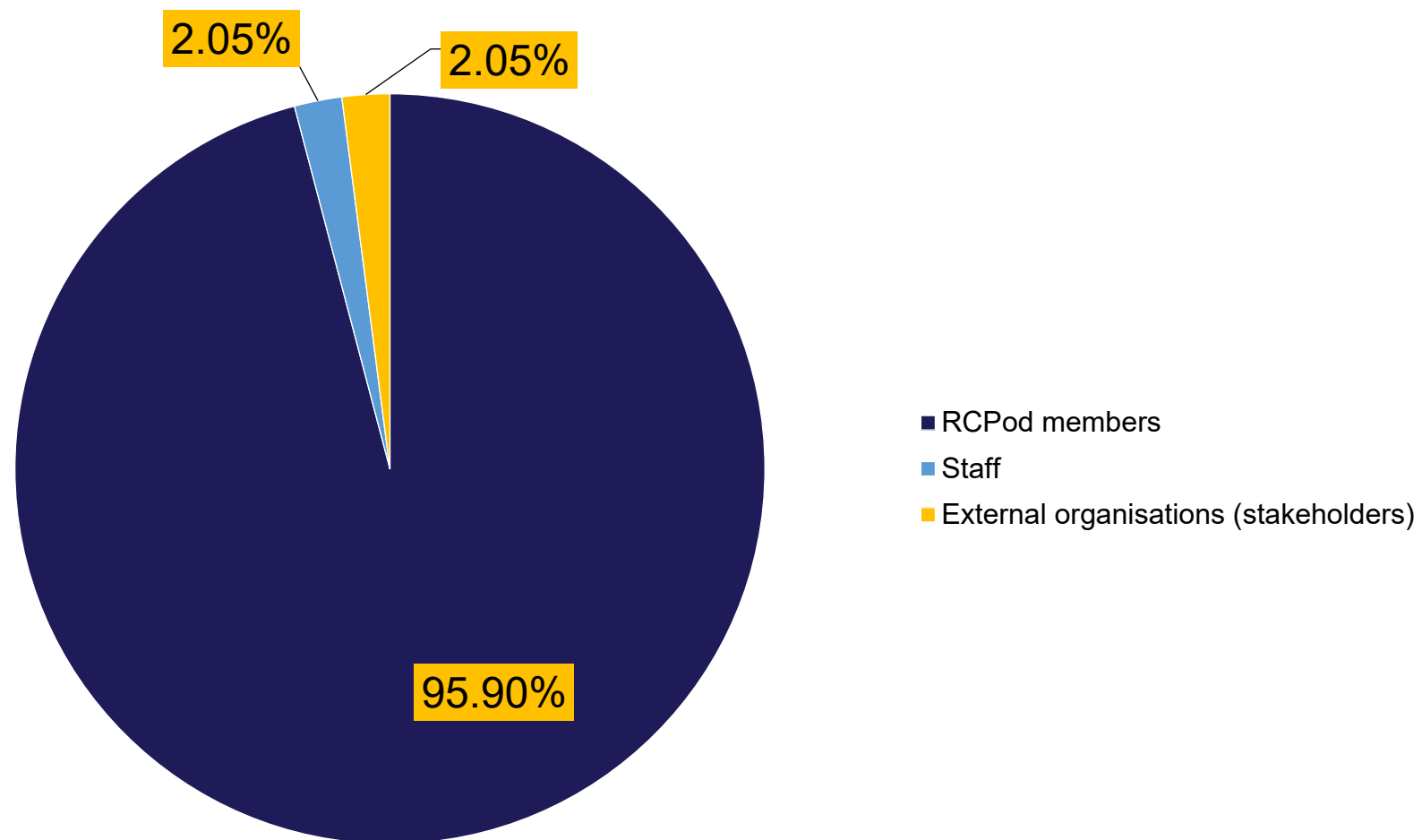
Strategy 2025-2030 consultation

- There were 195 individual responses to the survey
- 187 responses were from RCPod members
- Four responses were from RCPod staff members
- Four responses were from external stakeholder organisations
- Two RCPod Committees/group – Regional Chairs & the Independent Practice Group – sent written responses to the CEO via email*
- The Northern Ireland Branch Chair submitted an individual response submitted via email*
- The most skipped Q was: ‘Do you have any specific ideas for implementing this objective?’ on Objective 5 on sustainability.

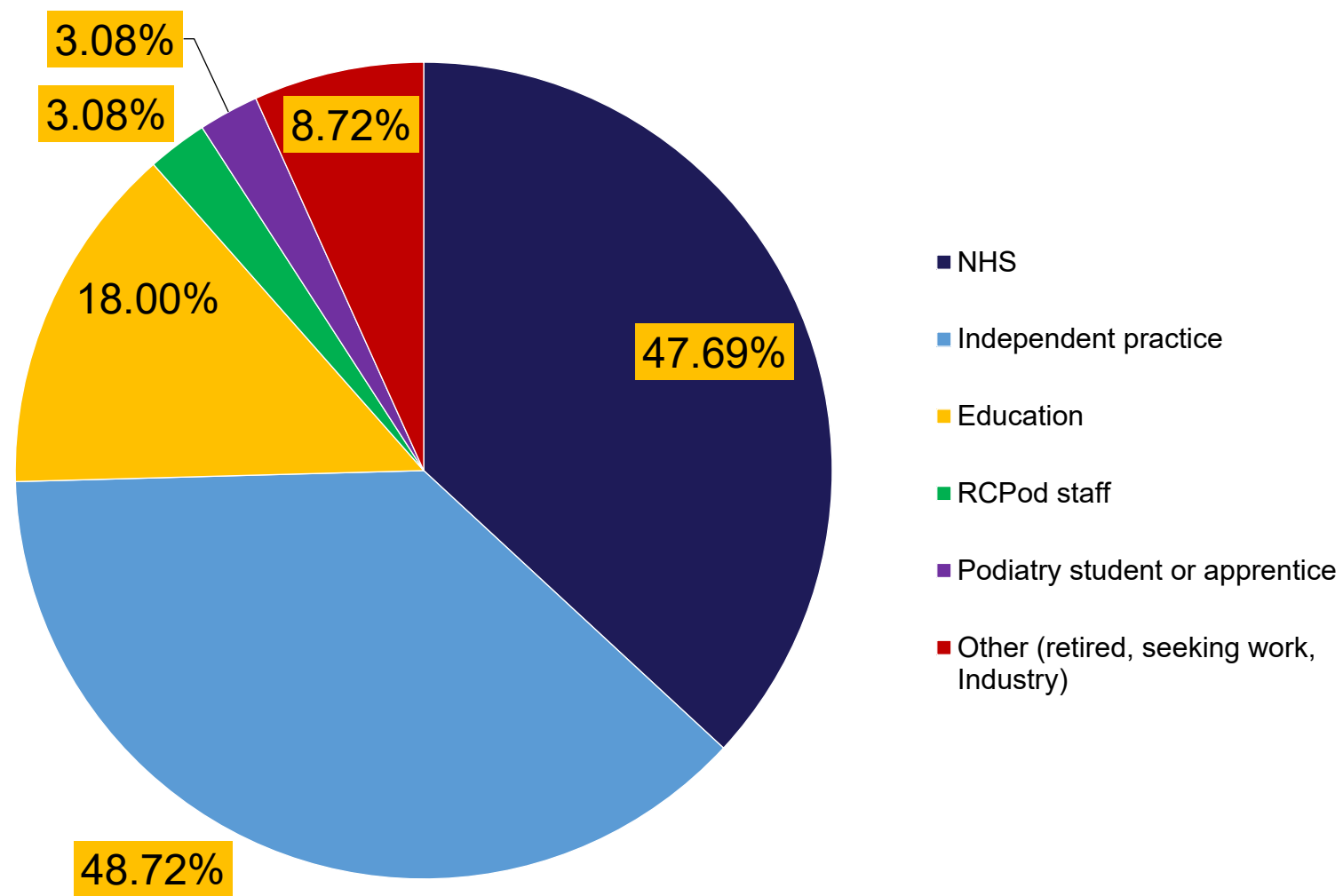
*These informal responses did not follow the question format posed, but we are including them in this analysis.

Who responded to the consultation?

Mostly members



What sector do respondents work in?



Our strategic objectives

Our five strategic objectives

- **Raise the profile** of the podiatry as an aspirational and inspirational career choice to grow the size scope and influence of the profession
- Become the number one **learning brand** for podiatry in the UK
- **Raise awareness** of the role of podiatrists in the prevention and treatment of the foot and lower limb with decision makers, influencers and patients to improve health outcomes
- Ensure that the RCPod is **financially sustainable**, continually developing and offering the best possible service to members

Consultation questions

We asked respondents to provide their views about each strategic objective. We did this by asking five distinct questions:

- What challenges do you foresee in achieving this objective?
- What potential risks could impact the success of this objective?
- What opportunities should we explore to enhance this objective?
- Do you have any specific ideas to help us implement this objective?
- Who should be involved to help make this objective successful? e.g. partners, organisations and interested parties.

Analysis

Introduction

How we did it

- This is a **partial** thematic analysis
- There were over **2,000** written answers across all parts of all questions
- Initial analysis of the entire data set showed thematic saturation (**lots of recurring comments**)
- The responses were **randomised** in Microsoft Excel using the =RAND() formula to generate random responses
- The RCPod sorted the responses, and picked **10%** for each question
- The RCPod coded the responses with easy and simple codes like, for example, 'Improved Online Resources'
- The RCPod then went through and batched up the codes into broader, larger themes which represent the frequent topics, areas and ideas from the consultation responses.

The themes that appear
frequently

1. **Recruitment and Retention Issues** (appears in various forms like "Recruitment Strategy," "Recruitment, Public Awareness," "Workforce Development and Recruitment")
2. **Public Awareness and Marketing** (variations like "Public Awareness and Advocacy," "Public Awareness and Engagement," "Public Awareness and Marketing")
3. **Governance** (includes "Governance and Organisational Efficiency," "Governance and Member Engagement")
4. **Finance** (appears multiple times, e.g., "Financial Concerns," "Financial and Engagement Issues," "Financial Management")
5. **Membership and Engagement** (several variations like "Member Engagement," "Membership and Professional Development," "Membership Flexibility")
6. **Collaboration and Partnerships** (appears in forms like "Collaboration and Best Practices," "Collaboration and Competitive Positioning," "Professional Collaboration and Care Models")
7. **Professional Promotion and Collaboration** (variations include "Professional Promotion and Strategic Partnerships," "Professional Promotion and Challenges")
8. **Education and Training** (various forms such as "Education and Training Quality," "Educational Resources and IT Integration," "Professional Development and Training")

Objective one: Raise the profile of podiatry as an aspirational and inspirational career choice to grow the size scope and influence of the profession

Objective one: Raise the profile of podiatry as a career

What challenges do you foresee with this objective?

Theme	Summary of Comments	Examples
Professional Image	The presence of unregistered practitioners affects the profession's ability to appear as a specialist, reducing the public perception of podiatry's expertise.	The unregistered foot health practitioners lower our ability to look like a specialist field.
Communication and Public Perception	Challenges in communicating podiatry's scope, along with outdated public perceptions of the field. Addressing these perceptions is essential for enhancing the profession's image.	The challenge is getting the right message out about what podiatry is and the scope of practice. Breaking the historical public view of chiropodist as cutting toe nails and corns.
Strategy and Action	A lack of focus on research and the absence of concrete actions are recurring issues.	We have had the same problems for the last decade...it doesn't really address the actions that we are going to take to achieve them.
Internal Dynamics	Internal conflict among podiatrists and poor engagement from the RCPod is contributing to low morale and lack of collective action.	Getting pods to work together (despite differing work places) and focus on recruiting to our profession, rather than private practitioners having a go at the NHS.
Finance	Financial challenges impact the profession, particularly in terms of remuneration compared to other health professions. Costing strategies need to be addressed.	Finance, costings, reaching target audiences. Financial remuneration of podiatry vs nursing or physicians
Training and Education	Gaps in training and lack of confidence among students and new practitioners, particularly in basic skills. There is a need for consistent clinical guidelines and better educational support.	Many students rotating through the NHS are not confident in basic skills. Clinical guidelines as a key to standards of practice across the UK.
Professional Scope	A lack of understanding of podiatry's scope of practice, both within and outside the profession, limits the recognition of its full potential and impact.	Lack of understanding in podiatry scope of practice. Lack of understanding in what an HCPC AHP is.
Forward Thinking and Innovation	The profession needs to embrace innovation and modernisation, with forward-thinking practitioners driving new approaches. There is a call for more dynamic and versatile careers within podiatry.	Podiatry needs to look like it is a dynamic and versatile career. We need forward-thinking podiatrists who want to implement their scope of practice.

Objective one: Raise the profile of podiatry as a career



What potential risks could impact the success of this objective?

Theme	Summary of Contents	Examples
Professional Marginalisation	The profession feels sidelined by others, and a lack of attention to podiatry's contributions and priorities creates challenges.	The profession is sidelined by other professions and perceived 'higher' priorities.
Lack of Holistic Approach	Issues such as a lack of integration in strategies or actions contribute to the profession's challenges and limitations in achieving its goals.	There is a lack of a holistic approach in addressing issues within the profession, which contributes to marginalisation.
Limited NHS Career Development	Concerns about salary limitations and the absence of career-enhancing training in the NHS were raised. Some feel that the government should address this issue at a strategic level.	Salary and options in NHS can be limiting. NHS doesn't always offer training that will enhance a career or develop clinical practice for the future.
Regulatory Concerns	Forced membership and associated costs, stress, and lack of support from regulatory bodies like HCPC were raised. The misuse of these bodies by managers is also a source of concern.	Concerns about the forced membership to HCPC, including financial costs and stress.
Competition with Other Professions	Podiatry faces competition from other professions that are better promoted and seen as more attractive to potential recruits.	The profession faces competition from other fields that overlap in practice and are better promoted to the public.
Confusion Due to Foot Health Practitioner Membership	A focus on Foot Health Practitioners (FHP) membership is leading to public confusion about private practice and the profession's identity.	The focus on FHP membership has detracted from promoting private practice, leading to confusion among the public.
Exclusion from Science-Based Courses	The focus on science-based training might exclude potential recruits, limiting the growth of the profession.	The focus on science-based courses could exclude potential members who may not have chosen this route.
Media Representation	There is inadequate representation of podiatry in the media, which affects the public's understanding and awareness of the profession.	The profession suffers from inadequate representation in the media.
Recruitment and Retention Issues	Negative public perceptions of the profession's role in healthcare are making it difficult to attract and retain podiatrists.	The public's negative perception and misunderstanding of the podiatry profession's role in healthcare hinders recruitment and retention efforts.
Misuse of Professional Bodies	Professional bodies like HCPC are being misused by managers, leading to workforce dissatisfaction and poor protection for podiatrists.	Professional bodies like HCPC are misused by managers to control podiatrists.

Objective one: Raise the profile of podiatry as a career



What opportunities should we explore with this objective?

Theme	Summary of Contents	Examples
Workforce Development and Recruitment	Increasing availability of full-time and part-time podiatry roles, particularly offering NHS job opportunities for students after graduation.	More availability of podiatry roles full time and part time. NHS offering student job role opportunities upon completion of final year.
Recruitment Strategy	Apprenticeships should be at the forefront, and universities should focus on recruiting locally rather than offering international placements.	Apprenticeships need to be at the forefront. Universities should cut offerings to hi a (sic) (presumed: China) and India etc and focus on recruiting locally.
Professional Promotion and Collaboration	Suggestion to collaborate with other allied health professions and use high-profile events like the Olympics to highlight the role of podiatry, particularly in sports healthcare.	If other professions are experiencing problems, can we combine forces to promote the roles of all allied health professionals? Can we take advantage of things like the Olympics to highlight the work we do in professional sport?
Public Awareness and Marketing	Lack of understanding about podiatry could be an opportunity for a vibrant marketing and public health campaign focused on promoting active, pain-free lives and backed by evidence-based research.	Not knowing what podiatry means might be to our advantage. Creating a fresh, vibrant marketing and public health campaign about what podiatry is, focused on enabling active, pain-free lives through lower limb healthcare & wellbeing, evidence-backed research.
Recruitment, Public Awareness	Promoting podiatry in schools before GCSE/A-level and engaging members to participate in educating and promoting the profession to students.	Promoting the profession wider at an earlier age within schools - pre-GCSE/A level. Going into schools and selling the profession, telling students what a podiatrist is and can do.
Collaboration and Best Practices	Engaging with private practitioners to understand their successful practices and improve patient care.	Talking to private practitioners to find out what works for their patients and practices.
Public Awareness, Workforce Retention	Need for TV advertising (documentary-style) to raise public awareness about podiatry, and improving NHS pay and incentives to retain podiatrists.	We need to advertise through TV, e.g., documentary. As much as I tell friends and family what I do, they still don't understand how complex and life-changing podiatry is to patients.
Strategy, Marketing, and Partnerships	Stronger link between market analysis and informed action plans, with a clear strategic vision for marketing and creating new partnerships.	Better connection between market analysis and informed action planning; clear strategic vision for novel routes to marketing and creation of new partnerships.
Strategic Planning	The suggestion to lower the ambition of the plan to make sure all points are thoroughly addressed, taking potential disruptions like another pandemic into account.	Lower the ambition a little to ensure that all points can be thoroughly addressed within the stated time frame - e.g., another pandemic would scotch the plan.

Objective one: Raise the profile of podiatry **as a career**



Do you have any specific ideas to help us to implement this objective?

Theme	Summary of Contents	Examples
Digital Engagement and Resources	There is a need for improved online resources to support the profession and public outreach.	Better online resources.
Professional Governance and Transparency	Lack of transparency and concerns about internal issues being dealt with behind closed doors in the profession.	Not sure what is happening at centre of profession - lot of in private washing of laundry.
Strategic Promotion and Advocacy	Calls for coordinated promotion of podiatry at a parliamentary level, targeting MPs and health commissioners, with consistent messaging from all members.	Parliamentary event. Concerted promotion from all members at every opportunity to promote profession using same copy. Targeting health commissioners and MPs about benefits + scope of the profession and local provision (or lack of).
Recruitment, Education, and Collaboration	Carers need to be informed about access to podiatry degrees. Podiatrists should engage with younger students, and collaboration between the NHS, third sector, and private sectors is needed to educate the public about the podiatry role.	Carers are fully aware of the challenges in accessing podiatric care... they need to be informed about opportunities to access pod degree. All pods need to be entering schools at younger levels, not at careers talks for 6th form. Joint NHS, 3rd sector, and private collaboration to educate on pod role.
Public vs. Private Sector Care	Suggests moving all basic podiatric care to the private sector to focus public services on more specialised care.	Eliminate (sic) (presumed: move) all basic care and basic podiatry into the private sector.
Public Awareness and Advocacy	Suggests the need for public campaigning to raise awareness of podiatry.	Public campaigning.
Public Awareness, Engagement, and Marketing	Suggests adopting the CSP approach to students in marketing to younger students, creating content with MSK sport podiatrists for sports teams, and leveraging social media for annual campaigns to promote the profession.	CSP students marketing and engagement with young students. Can you create content with MSK sport pods for big sports teams? Annual campaigns - you should ask the 20 biggest social pod accounts to lead this and ensure the messages spread wider.

Objective one: Raise the profile of podiatry as a career

Who should be involved to help make this objective successful?

E.g. partners, organisations and interested parties



Theme	Summary of Contents	Examples
Public Awareness and Education	Suggests educating the public about the medical aspects of podiatry and involving young people and institutions (schools, universities, healthcare industries) in promoting accurate content.	The public to educate them about what we learn and know about from a medical point of view. Young people to ensure the content is correct. Schools, colleges, further education, HEI leads, external strategic partnerships, industry, healthcare, and sport.
Professional Promotion and Strategic Partnerships	Proposes partnering with well-known brands and public health champions like parkrun UK to promote podiatry.	Big gun brands eg Nike, Adidas, public health 'lower limb' champions such as Parkrun, Brompton.
Interdisciplinary Collaboration	Physiotherapists, nurses, and others are treating conditions that podiatrists are better qualified for. Educating these colleagues could help expand podiatry's reach and improve collaboration.	Too many times physiotherapists are treating conditions that podiatrists are far better educated and equipped to tackle. This also applies to general nursing and tissue viability nurses. There may be an opportunity to educate these colleagues to increase understanding of our profession.
Professional Collaboration and Care Models	Working as a private podiatrist in a GP surgery has been successful. Recommends researching partnerships with primary care as a potential model.	I work as a private practitioner now within a GP surgery. This works well. Maybe primary care partnership is something to research?
Recruitment and Education	Suggests engaging with schools, colleges, and medical schools to promote podiatry and raise awareness.	Schools/colleges doing A levels. Have a chat with medical schools.

Objective two: Leading centre
for clinical knowledge

Objective two: Leading centre for clinical knowledge

What challenges do you foresee with this objective?



Theme	Summary of Contents	Examples
Research and Funding	Research funding is insufficient, limiting podiatry's ability to grow and innovate.	Poor research funding.
Strategic Planning and Partnerships	Uncertainty about who will coordinate efforts, how they will be funded, and how they will link to higher education institutions.	SAGs should not be relied on to deliver this. Who will coordinate? How will it be funded? How will this link with HEIs?
Professional Promotion and Challenges	The small size of the profession makes it challenging to promote and increase visibility.	Being such a small profession makes promoting what we do very difficult.
International Influence on Practice	Much of podiatry's role is influenced by international practices like foot and skin surgery, orthotics, etc.	So much of our role has come from overseas international practice eg foot surgery, skin surgery, orthotics etc.
Professional Development and Expansion	The profession needs to provide more value in terms of services and opportunities.	It needs to offer more.
Collaboration and Partnerships	Emphasises the importance of building collaborations with other institutions and organisations.	Getting collaborations on board.
Global Recognition and Professional Strategy	Identifies multiple challenges such as research funding, global collaboration, standardisation of guidelines, professional recognition, technological adoption, and communication strategies in order to become internationally recognised.	Achieving the objective of becoming internationally recognised as a leading centre for clinical knowledge in podiatry involves overcoming several challenges... (further details on research funding, collaboration, clinical guidelines, professional recognition, technological integration, communication).
Workforce and Educational Challenges	Lack of skilled people to deliver education programs and the associated costs and time constraints of delivering outside local areas.	Having the skilled people to deliver such education. Delivering away from home / cost and time.

Objective two: Leading centre for clinical knowledge

What potential risks could impact this objective?



Theme	Summary of Contents	Examples
Leadership and Management	Indicates issues with leadership within the profession.	Poor leadership
Public and Healthcare Perception	Concerns about the public and healthcare perception of the profession.	Public/healthcare perception
Recruitment and Education	Concern that places in education or job opportunities are being taken by overseas students rather than UK citizens.	Overseas students taking UK citizens' places
Strategic Focus and Risk Management	Concern that focusing on certain areas might distract from more urgent issues like recruitment and retention.	This strand could divert attention away from the more immediate risks such as recruitment and retention.
Education and Training Quality	Concern about the lack of practicing clinicians in senior roles for training programs, impacting the quality of education for MSK and other areas.	A lack of practicing clinicians in senior roles involved in undergraduate training. For MSK for example, how many ACTs, pod surgeons, etc. are teaching on these programmes

Objective two: Leading centre for clinical knowledge

What opportunities should we explore with this objective?

Theme	Summary of Contents	Examples
Strategic Development and Networking	Focus on further developing JFAR, establishing international networks, and leveraging members with international backgrounds and contacts to enhance the profession.	Further development of JFAR. Establish international networks. Use existing members who have a well-developed international background and a network of contacts.
Collaboration and Competitive Positioning	Suggests forming partnerships and joint programmes, noting that RCPod might struggle with reputation compared to RCPSG.	Partnership with other sources and joint program. RCPod will struggle to compete with RCPSG from a reputational perspective.
Education and Research Integration	Emphasises the need for higher education institutions to support and lead relevant research and scientific advancements in podiatry.	Locking in higher ed support as educators should be leading relevant and relatable research and rolling out the science.
Research and Strategic Alignment	Identifies a mismatch between the mission on research and the objectives. Recommends embracing members leading significant research and facilitating more research within the profession.	There's a real mismatch between the missions and objectives in the plan. One of the missions is on Research but this is not mentioned in the objectives. We now have members leading multimillion-pound research projects and clinical trials - the College needs to embrace these people and facilitate research within the profession to achieve its objectives.
Professional Development and Training	Suggests running a course to update podiatrists who qualified before the degree system on research methods and how to utilise their skills and experience.	Run a course for those pods who qualified pre-degree to update on how to do research and exploit their experience/skills/stats kept.
Community Involvement and Profile Raising	Advocates for inviting expert co-production and continuing efforts to raise the profile of podiatry, increase engagement, and improve numbers.	Inviting co-production from experts - Continue trying to raise profile, increase engagement and numbers and this opportunity should be more achievable.
Volunteerism and Expertise Utilisation	Suggests engaging senior clinicians to volunteer their time and expertise.	Talk to the senior clinicians within your membership, see who is willing to volunteer time.

Objective two: Leading centre for clinical knowledge

Do you have any specific ideas to help us to implement this objective?



Theme	Summary of Contents	Examples
Research and Professional Development	Emphasises the need for publishing research and encouraging research activities across all levels of the profession.	Publication of research - encouraging research at all levels throughout the profession
Innovation and Incentives	Suggests offering a significant prize to incentivise innovation within the profession.	A large prize for innovation
Collaborative Research and Networking	Proposes setting up forums to facilitate discussions on current research and encourage collaboration.	Forums to discuss current research to enable collaboration
Education and Delivery Methods	Recommends using video recordings as an efficient way for branches to provide educational content.	Video recording would be a simple, quick, and accessible method for branches to deliver a package of education
Organisational Management and Planning	Advocates for improved succession planning to avoid gaps between roles and reduce the burden on existing staff.	Better long-term succession planning. The organisation has long had a process of waiting until someone has left the role to re-evaluate it and then recruit, leaving gaps of months in between roles being filled
Strategic Collaboration and Advocacy	Emphasises the need for strategic collaboration with partner organisations and decision-makers to ensure podiatrists' voices are heard and the profession is considered in healthcare decisions.	Develop and activate strategies for collaborative working with partner organisations and decision-makers
Governance and Organisational Efficiency	Calls for improved governance of committees and advisory groups to ensure better planning, understanding of roles, and timely reviews. Highlights the need for structured deadlines and succession planning.	Review and improve the governance of the committees, SAGs, and advisory groups to ensure more collaborative working and reviews
Education and Professional Development	Suggests making the BSE Honours course more efficient to better support professional development.	Streamline the BSE Honours course that supports his development

Objective two: Leading centre for clinical knowledge

Who should be involved to help make this objective successful?

E.g. partners, organisations and interested parties

Theme	Summary of Contents	Examples
Research and Infrastructure	Suggests focusing on the development and establishment of research centres.	Research centres
International Collaboration	Recommends enhancing collaboration and building stronger connections with professionals or organisations in the United States.	Build more bridges with the States.
Industry Partnerships and Growth	Highlights the need to engage more with the commercial sector.	Commercial sector
Global Networking and Professional Relations	Suggests working with various international and British professional bodies, including the podiatry Board of Australia and New Zealand, and the International Federation of Podiatrists.	Other British professional bodies, Podiatry Board of Australia and New Zealand, Canadian Podiatric Medical Association, International Federation of Podiatrists
Education and Industry Partnerships	Advocates for greater collaboration between Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and private practices to facilitate knowledge transfer, despite challenges due to a weakening network.	Work more with HEIs so there is more of a transfer of knowledge. HEIs need to partner with private practice etc., but difficult to know who - especially with falling branch network.
Membership and Engagement	Indicates a focus on or concern related to membership but lacks specific detail in the comment.	The membership

Objective three: Number one
learning brand

Objective three: Number one learning brand

What challenges do you foresee with this objective?

Theme	Summary of Contents	Examples
Financial Concerns	Comments suggested that it would cost a lot of money to do this well.	Financial
Accreditation and Professional Development	Suggests that members, especially in private practice, cannot afford accredited programmes and that they take up too much time.	Accredited programmes are expensive and time-consuming with little incentive to enrol in these rather than updates, particularly for private practitioners.
Resource Allocation	Highlights that the RCPod may not have the resources to scale-up accredited courses and other forms of education.	Lack of resources to scale accredited courses.
Accreditation Process Issues	The suggestion that course providers do not like the red tape around AQA accreditation.	Course providers being put off by an AQA accreditation programme - a one-size-fits-all process is not appropriate for individual programmes.
Market Competition	Comments indicated that other providers are offering better CPD and education for less money.	Competition from other CPD organisations.
Regulatory Strategy	Recommends connecting with other professional bodies and regulators	Amalgamation with other regulatory bodies.
Awareness and Strategy	There was the suggestion that the RCPod does not understand the challenges that members currently face with CPD provision.	You need to understand the challenges currently faced.
Competition and Value	Comments indicated that other providers are offering better CPD and education for less money.	Other agencies vying for the same position, offering more for less money from the registrants.

Objective three: Number one learning brand

What potential risks could impact this objective?



Financial and Engagement Issues	Highlights concerns about the cost, time investment, and difficulty in generating interest for courses.	Cost, time, getting interest
Curriculum and Specialisation	Criticises current courses for focusing mainly on private practice without providing depth for high-specialized roles.	Current courses are just designed for private practice with no real depth to extend scope in high-specialised roles
Engagement and Motivation	Indicates a general lack of interest in the current offerings or approaches.	Lack of interest
Financial Concerns	Points out the issue of insufficient funding for courses or programmes.	Lack of finance
Market Competition	Notes the increasing prevalence of other education providers, potentially impacting the profession.	Other education providers becoming more prevalent

Objective three: Number one learning brand

What opportunities should we explore as part of this objective?

Theme	Summary of Contents	Examples
Educational Improvements	Suggests improving programme sustainability by increasing flexibility, local placements, and collaboration with HEIs and ICBs for better transition and work experience.	Consider how to fill existing programmes to ensure their sustainability. People want more flexibility, placements closer to home, opportunities to earn & learn. Closer working with HEIs/FEs & their ICBs to support both transition into the NHS and work experience during training.
Training Accessibility	Advocates for expanding training opportunities to include all allied podiatry groups.	Open up all training to all podiatry allied groups.
Membership and Professional Development	Proposes a membership model tied to CPD and NHS pay bands, akin to Unison.	Different type of membership linked with CPD, costs linked to banding / pay in NHS as similar to that of Unison.
Education and Research Strategies	Proposes multiple strategies for enhancing podiatric education, including partnerships with universities, digital learning, specialized CPD programs, research initiatives, global outreach, and member engagement.	<p>Collaboration with Leading Universities: Forming strategic partnerships with prestigious universities for joint degree programs, research, and faculty exchanges.</p> <p>Digital Learning and Technology Integration: Utilising digital platforms, virtual simulations, and telehealth technologies for enhanced education.</p> <p>Specialised Continuing Education Programs: Tailoring CPD programs for various career stages.</p> <p>Research and Innovation Initiatives: Investing in research and innovation.</p> <p>Global Outreach and Partnerships: Expanding international collaborations.</p> <p>Member Engagement and Community Building: Enhancing engagement through networks and mentorship.</p>
Professional Practice Focus	Suggests identifying common treatments among practitioners to guide education and resource development.	Actually identify what the majority of practitioners treat.
	Recommends joint hadging of educational materials	

Objective three: Number one learning brand

Do you have any specific ideas to help us to implement this objective?

Theme	Summary of Contents	Examples
Educational Resources and IT Integration	Better use of IT and media solutions to refresh and create a range of accessible, fresh, top notch quality learning products. Bring together clinical and expert providers with communication and IT and social media people.	Better use of IT and media solutions to refresh and create a range of accessible, fresh, top notch quality learning products. Bring together clinical and expert providers with communication and IT and social media people.
Educational Standards	All podiatry schools should use the same formula/protocols.	All podiatry schools should use the same formula/protocols.
Educational Resources and IT Integration	Streamlining the RCPod online learning, so all in one place with a decent search facility, rather than some in CPD, some courses, some Talus.	Streamlining the RCPod online learning, so all in one place with a decent search facility, rather than some in CPD, some courses, some Talus.
HEI Collaboration and Resource Management	Seek links with HEIs as we have space for meetings and could within our organisations to offer what branches need.	Seek links with HEIs as we have space for meetings & could within our organisations to offer what branches need.
Quality of CPD Courses	Move away from low profile amateurish CPD courses.	Move away from low profile amateurish CPD courses.

Objective three: Number one learning brand

Who should be involved to help make this objective successful?

E.g. partners, organisations and interested parties



Theme	Summary of Contents	Examples
Product Certification and Advocacy	Advocates for certification from large product firms and HCPC, with political support for promotion.	"Large product firms like Convatec, J&J, Miltex instruments, Inadine (maker), HCPC to certify Minister of Health to push from Parliament - Wes Streeting."
Stakeholder Engagement and Promotion	Emphasises collaboration with members, educational bodies, users, health providers, and PR agencies.	"members, educational establishments, users and health providers also successful PR agencies"
Partnerships with Industry Leaders	Highlights the importance of partnering with top product manufacturers.	"Best in class product manufacturers"
Educational Collaboration and CPD	Suggests involving university educators in refresher training and research with funding for CPD.	"University educators. They are already there delivering. Perhaps they could provide refresher training and also be given the opportunity, with funding, to be involved in research and deliver back, specifically for CPD of members."
Educational Management	Calls for the appointment of an Education Officer for better management of education and SAGs.	"University, SAGs, you need an Education officer"

Objective four: Raise
awareness

Objective four: Raise awareness

What challenges do you foresee?

Theme	Summary of Contents	Examples
Public Perception and Misconceptions	Highlights the misconception that podiatrists only perform basic foot care.	"People think we just cut toe nails!"
Workforce Challenges and Professional Pathways	Discusses the need for proper patient referrals and concerns about declining professional numbers and the appeal of the FHP route.	"Ensure patients have the ability to see the right person at the right time. Declining professional numbers and people choosing to do the FHP route as it is quicker and can earn a lot of money doing so."
Professional Engagement and Interest	Indicates a general disinterest in the profession.	"Disinterest"
Public Awareness and Media Strategy	Emphasises the need for a significant media campaign to raise awareness of the profession.	"We are unknown profession. We need a costly media campaign"
Professional Identity and Communication	Reiterates the need for a clear vision and communication of the profession's strengths and value.	"As per previous comments, we need a clear vision of who we are, our strengths, and why a patient / other professional would need us"
Contextual Reference	Refers to previously mentioned points for further context.	"Please see my earlier comments, overleaf"

Objective four: Raise awareness

What potential risks could impact this objective?

Theme	Summary of Contents	Examples
Member Engagement and Institutional Connection	Describes membership fatigue and a disconnect between the membership and the College.	"Fatigue and apathy in the membership and out of touch College"
Funding and Institutional Representation	Highlights the need for ICB engagement and representation to secure funding and support workforce growth.	"Unless ICB's engage and understand the value how will funding into the profession increase and with that workforce growth both in numbers and career opportunities. Podiatry is not well represented currently at higher levels within ICBs"
Impact Measurement and Public Campaigns	Suggests a focus on demonstrating impact, defining target audiences, and potentially increasing the frequency of Foot Health Week.	"Evidence of impact/benefit of the role in terms of financial savings, quality indicators. Who is our target audience for the focus of Foot Health Week? Does it need to change each year? Suggest that it needs to be more frequent?"
Professional Identity and Branding	Points out the issue of the profession's unclear identity.	"Lack of clear identity"
Professional Recognition and Interdisciplinary Relations	Mentions that other healthcare professionals do not recognise podiatry skills.	"Other HCP not recognising our skills"
Public and Professional Awareness	Notes that there is a lack of understanding about the depth of medical knowledge within podiatry.	"People have no idea of our in-depth medical knowledge and that has been right through my 40 years in Chiropody"

Objective four: Raise awareness

What opportunities should we explore?

Theme	Summary of Contents	Examples
Service Expansion and Prevention	Suggests establishing a stand-alone diabetes foot screening service integrated with diabetic retinopathy screening, emphasising prevention.	"We need to run a diabetes foot screening service including MSK/footscan alongside diabetic retinopathy screening. This needs to be a stand-alone service with its own funding steered by podiatry. We are missing a huge opportunity to move the intervention upstream and reduce risk factors."
Service Expansion and Prevention	References a trial that produced significant data for a potential screening service, which was not implemented due to staff shortages.	"I did a randomised trial of 50 diabetic patients with no previous foot problems within my NHS role prior to retirement. The information and outcomes that this pilot generated was extensive. The idea was that it would be used to put forward a business plan for a screening service as detailed above."
Public Perception and Awareness	Advocates for public education about the medical expertise of podiatrists.	"Training the public in some way to realise we have knowledge and in a medical, not cosmetic career."
Patient Education and Engagement	Emphasises patient responsibility for their health and education.	"Ensure patients are ultimately responsible for their own health and education."
Data Management	Highlights the need for data collection in private practice.	"Data collection in private practice."
Professional Collaboration	Calls for increased interdisciplinary collaboration and learning within podiatry.	"Interdisciplinary teams. Podiatry needs to stop being an ego and open up to MDT involvement and interdisciplinary learning too."
Digital Marketing and Advocacy	Suggests using patrons and social media for broader promotion of the profession, including videos from leading podiatrists.	"Asking our patron to promote the profession, getting social media involved more (not just amongst podiatrists), having leading podiatrists provide promotional videos which can be shared."

Objective four: Raise awareness

Do you have any specific ideas?

Theme	Summary of Contents	Examples
Public Awareness and Promotion	Suggests using advertising and leaflets in health centres and hospitals to increase awareness.	"Advertising/ leaflets in health centres and hospitals"
Digital Marketing and Advocacy	Advocates for a stronger social media and media presence for podiatry.	"Increased social media and media presence"
Organisational Development	Calls for greater diversity within the board and membership of podiatry organisations.	"Increased diversity of the board and membership"
Career Development and Awareness	Emphasises the need to inform podiatrists about diverse career opportunities within the NHS beyond traditional roles.	"Increased information of the range of opportunities open to podiatrists in the NHS and not just remaining solely in podiatry for ever!"
Strategic Development and System Integration	Advocates for a comprehensive approach involving national strategy, regional support, system leadership, and continuous learning to improve podiatry's role and visibility.	"Needs a whole system approach with: National communicating & translating strategy and policy; Regional benchmarking, enabling support & assurance to systems (inc education/HEI, commissioners, branches and service providers); System leadership, to advocate and raise awareness to CMO, CNO, CAHPO & quality boards. Place/provider collaboratives to agree quality metrics and QI approaches (that includes delivery & service users). Individuals to have continuous learning mindset, respect, recognition and inclusion."

Objective four: Raise awareness

Who should be involved to help?

Theme	Summary of Contents	Examples
Engagement and Education	Highlights the importance of engaging both private practitioners and students in the development of podiatry.	"Private practice, students"
Contextual Reference	Refers to previous feedback for context.	"See previous comments"
Strategic Partnerships	Suggests increasing engagement with the Department of Health to support podiatry initiatives.	"Engage with Dept of Health"
Collaboration and Networking	Lists key stakeholders and partners essential for advancing podiatry, including social media experts, marketing teams, HEIs, independent practices, NHS, and industry allies.	"Social media experts, marketing, communications team, members, HEIs, independent practice, NHS, industry allies"
Organisational Involvement	Emphasises the role of RCPod staff and members in the development and promotion of podiatry.	"RCPod staff and members"

Objective five: Sustainability

Objective five: Sustainability

What challenges do you foresee?

Theme	Summary of Contents	Examples
Financial Management	Suggests maintaining membership numbers and reducing expenditures.	"U need to keep membership numbers up. Look at cutting expenditures."
Contextual Reference	Refers to previous feedback for context.	"Please see my earlier comments, overleaf"
Membership and Engagement	Highlights issues with declining membership and lack of engagement.	"Falling membership and apathy"
Organisational Structure	Advises against overstaffing with clerical roles and encourages active involvement of podiatrists.	"Do not make the RCPod top heavy with clerical staff. Get Podiatrists involved actively"
Insurance and Membership	Notes that practitioners join RCPod primarily for insurance and suggests exploring alternative insurance options.	"Alternative insurers who insure risk. Ultimately practitioners mostly join the RCPod for insurance."
Membership and Engagement	Repeats concern about decreasing membership numbers.	"Dwindling membership"

Objective five: Sustainability

What potential risks could impact this objective?

Theme	Summary of Contents	Examples
Public Engagement and Value Proposition	Highlights low public engagement and perceived value of offerings.	"Lack of engagement, lack of uptake from general public. Cost outweigh what is offered"
Financial Concerns	Concerns about increasing fees leading to potential loss of membership but maintaining insurance cover.	"Not sure, maybe if the fees increase too much people may stop registration but then you lose insurance cover"
Competitive Landscape	Indicates new members prefer to join competing organisations.	"New members would rather join the opposition"
Membership engagement	Concerns with overly focussing on independent practice at the cost of the NHS.	"RCOP is trying to please private and NHS podiatrists. As an NHS podiatrists you get this wrong. It feels NHS podiatry is second to private providers. Supporting both very different services has meant the NHS voice has been lost.
Financial Concerns	Notes resistance to paying increased membership fees.	"People being reluctant to pay higher fees"
Financial and Membership Challenges	Suggests that the cost-of-living crisis will lead to increased membership departures.	"Ongoing cost of living crisis will mean more people leave RCPod"
Membership Demographics	Indicates that aging membership is contributing to a decline in overall numbers.	"Increased age of members leading to decline in numbers"

Objective five: Sustainability

What opportunities should we explore as part of this objective?

Theme	Summary of Contents	Examples
Educational Training and Collaboration	Suggests formalising training for undergraduates beyond placements, with NHS departments' involvement.	"Offer training to undergraduate students to supplement courses. However, this should be done more formally than just placements. NHS depts should provide"
Funding and Sponsorship	Proposes a lower sponsorship tier for smaller enterprises supporting the field.	"Creating a third lower tier sponsorship level for smaller enterprises that are supporting podiatry"
Financial Review	Suggests evaluating the cost-effectiveness of PASCOM.	"Review the cost/benefit of PASCOM"
Digital Presence	Highlights the need to improve website accessibility and update content.	"Accessibility, improve your website it's difficult to navigate, content often out of date"
Membership Strategy	Recommends engaging members to redesign membership tiers and reduce costs to boost rejoining rates.	"Ask the membership. Redesign membership tiers, reduce cost to encourage people to rejoin"
Professional	Suggests improving IT skills, leadership training, shadowing opportunities, and learning from other professional bodies.	"IT skills. Leadership training. Shadowing RCPod members. Visits to HQ. Copying other professional bodies. What works for them?"

Objective five: Sustainability

Do you have any specific ideas?

Theme	Summary of Contents	Examples
Organisational Improvement	Calls for better governance, improved communication, a user-friendly website, and hosting an open day at HQ.	"Good governance and improvement of communication in all directions. A website that is easy to use. Open day at HQ."
Membership and Financial Structure	Suggests adjusting fees based on NHS banding and clinical skills.	"As above plus different rates for NHS linked to banding and clinical skills in relation to clinical practice."
Governance and Member Engagement	Recommends halting unconsulted spending and increasing member involvement in committees with remote options.	"Stop spending money without consultation. Involve more members in running college committees, using Zoom where possible"
Membership Flexibility	Proposes allowing members to select their branch and transfer training allocations accordingly.	"Allow members to choose their branch and move their allocation for training etc. to a branch that engages and welcomes them."
Member Engagement	Recommends consulting members to identify their most valued services.	"Ask membership what services are most important to them"

Objective five: Sustainability

Who should be involved to help?

Theme	Summary of Contents	Examples
Governance	Calls for improved leadership and accountability throughout the organisation.	"Chairman on down"
Public Engagement	Emphasises that health is a universal concern, relevant to everyone.	"The whole of the population, as we are all stakeholders in our own, our family's and friends' health whether we are health care professionals or not."
Governance	Mentions the need for oversight officials to ensure proper governance.	"Oversight officials"
Governance	Stresses the need for a governance framework with audit and scrutiny for sustainability.	"This is the responsibility of all. Employers and the RCPod should provide a good governance framework that involves audit and scrutiny of practice to ensure methods are working and sustainable."
Leadership	Questions if leaders like NHS Trust CEOs and university academics are consulted in decision-making.	"The current leaders of the profession. There are a number of NHS Trust CEOs, University Academics who are at the top of the management tree. Do we ever consult with them?"

Further comments

Do you have any further comment?

Theme	Summary of Contents	Examples
Training and Development	Concerns about the feasibility of training 80% of podiatrists as apprentices due to workforce limitations and quality issues.	"Unrealistic for 80% to be trained as apprenticeships. There just isn't the workforce to support this and training standards will drop. Private practices are unable to offer the breadth of practice required."
Governance and Strategy	Criticises the misalignment between strategic objectives and mission, highlighting a lack of focus on research and inadequate audit systems.	"The strategic objectives don't align with the Missions. E.g 'Researching and developing evidence based treatments....' is totally ignored in the rest of the plan. I think this was the first time 'research' was mentioned. As a relatively small progression we have a great opportunity to strategically answer prioritised questions. We also need a meaningful audit system - PASCOM isn't fit for purpose. Look at National Early Inflammatory Arthritis Audit for an example of what can be done."
Healthcare System	Suggests restructuring financial control within the NHS to better support podiatry services as quality physician extenders.	"NHS is going to tank with or without government spending. The Government has to take financial control out of physician hands and give it to regions or to Trusts independent of GP Surgery so Podiatry could be considered quality physician extenders."
Professional Integrity	Opposes FHP training and development due to competitive disadvantages and lack of support from regulatory bodies.	"Please stop selling out our profession. Do not support FHP training and development. In independent practice we are on a daily basis being undercut and losing business to people who deliberately mislead as to what their title and skill set is. When we report this we get no support from the HCPC or RCPod. Our profession is becoming a laughing stock."
Professional Development	Appreciates the RCPod's efforts but expresses frustration with slow progress and lack of recognition for the profession's depth.	"No. I think the RCPod does a good job and always has done in the 40 years I have been a member. The only thing I wish about my career is that people don't see me as just a nail cutter and realize what we had to learn. I look forward to proposed developments in the next few years, which will support and encourage my staff. The profession has moved on well in the last 50 years of my career, but sometimes at excruciatingly slow pace. Some of the attitudes to podiatry amongst the public and other health professionals are still the same as they were then. Well done for trying in a difficult world. Thank you for the opportunity to respond."



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Thank you for your time and
participation.

If you have further questions, please
email feedback@rcpod.org.uk