The RCR and the future of Radiology networks

Dr Mark Alexander  
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The Archipelago:

Over diagnosis and Overtreatment

OR

Under diagnosis and Under treatment
The problem:

- UK 48 trained radiologists per million
- 78 in Germany, 107 in Sweden and 113 in France
- Year-on-year average increase in activity in England has been 10.3% for CT and 12% for MRI
- Greater complexity requiring greater expertise.
The situation:

- Hospitals employing Radiologists with departments on fixed funding providing all local radiology services
- In sourcing or outsourcing for capacity issues
- ‘Post code lottery’ for modalities – interventional, paediatric, Stroke imaging (26 fold variation), PET-CT (14 fold variation) etc.
- Access to expertise restricted – leading to over diagnosis and under diagnosis.
Q and Q

- Insufficient **Quantity** of radiology to meet demand targets and deliver the comprehensive, timely service that the UK needs.

- Inadequate **Quality**: Delivering the required quality of expert reporting locally is a problem.
The situation:

- Currently delays in reporting 4-6 weeks
- Radiologist burn out due to increased out of hours reporting
- Reduced clinician-radiologist knowledge sharing and learning
- Lack of radiology access in primary care increasing secondary attendance.
NHS Radiology benchmarking project

- 65% outsource reporting – 887k reports last year
- MRI median waiting time is 6 weeks with 10 organisations taking longer than 6 weeks to scan patients
- Slight decline in staffing levels despite increased activity
- Radiology vacancy rate 15%.
RCR Position Paper:

Radiology in the UK – the case for a new service model
Consultation with:

• Regional Chairs and CR Boards
• Bruce Keogh, Erika Denton, Celia Ingham-Clark, Mike Durkin, CQC Chair and CEO, Monitor (Chair and CEO) Foundation Trust Network – Dame Gill Morgan, Sir David Dalton and Johnny Marshall, NHS Confederation
• NHS England - Simon Stevens, Sean Duffy David Flory, CEO, NHS TDA
• All Trust CEOs and MDs
• All CCG chairs/CEOs
• AHSN chairs.
Consultation with:

- Dept. of Health: Jeremy Hunt, Norman Lamb, Dr Dan Poulter, Jane Ellison, Earl Howe, George Freeman, Una O’ Brien
- Political parties (Conservatives and Lib Dems in health covered by current ministerial team) inc. David Cameron, Nick Clegg, Andy Burnham and Kevin Lee, Lord Hunt
- Other England agencies: NHSLA - Chair and CEO
- Think thanks: King’s Fund, Nuffield Trust, Health Foundation
- All Medical Royal Colleges and Faculties, NHS Employers, SCoR, IPEM, AxREM, BMA, Macmillan, CRUK
- Professor Muir Gray.
RCR model – Networks of expertise

- Population *not* institution based
- Collaborate to form networks of expertise serving a population of several million
- Grouping of 150-200 radiologists
- Financial, technological, organisational and cultural barriers

Discussion with Prof. Keith Willetts
Director for acute episodes of care, NHS England

Competition issues will be resolved if patient benefit demonstrated.
Full support for network concept.
Planning to overcome organisational and contracting barriers as part of strategy.
Next steps…..

• Learn from the Oxford network, West Midlands Paediatrics, South Yorkshire Collaborative and other innovators

• Work through Heads of service and Commissioners

• Negotiation and collaboration with NHS England

• Mobilise the Fellowship and our partners.