Today, a session related to the patient satisfaction questionnaire will take place. “Improving patient safety and quality of care in clinical radiology” (see article on page 5). The focus of this joint session is on exploring the intersection of the ESR Audit & Standards Subcommittee and the ESR Patient Advisory Group regarding our common purpose: considering a patient’s journey through our departments. Many of us as doctors can be asked where we are, that we are patients, that the once familiar territory of our hospitals can suddenly seem overwhelming, insufficient or even uncharted. If this is how it can seem to professionals who find themselves on the other side of the white coat, how much more profound and intimidating must it be for our fellow citizens who have no experience of such technological, sterile and busy environments?

So, this session looks at three tools that are designed to promote a patient-centred, compassionate, comprehensible and personal experience for those patients under our care. These are audit, a driver diagram and the patient satisfaction questionnaire. The third is exactly that, and is imminently powerful and facilitating of implementing change. The second, a driver diagram is used to conceptualize an issue and to determine its system components, thus creating a pathway to achieve the goal of patient-centred care.

Audit measures something against an agreed standard. As radiological healthcare professionals, we tend to think of this as equipment and process-driven. Whilst this is, of course, an important component, audit can and should also be used to measure our interaction with each other and with our patients. By doing this, we can ensure that a patient-centred approach is present in all professionals and in an interprofessional and harmonious institution.

The session will conclude with a panel discussion and an exchange of views with the audience on the key questions. Does your department perform well in patient-centred care?

Also today, the second ESR-PAG session chaired by Dr. Nicola Bedlington together with Prof. Boris Brkljac, chair of the ESR Communications and External Affairs Committee, will be about “Big data – data management, standardisation, access and protection: the way forward in developing personalised/precision medicine”.

This is a follow-up session from ECR 2016, as the ESR collaboration with patient groups on European political topics is one of the key objectives of the ESR-PAG. The session will focus on the current developments in Europe and in the US, as development in imaging strategy is clearly providing new and exciting opportunities in functional or molecular imaging, image processing, for example, and many others.

The terms ‘artificial intelligence’ or ‘deep learning’ are of strong interest in radiological research, because it seems that such image processing could support image interpretation in many cases. These techniques generate a lot of different data, which require more sophisticated work-up than conventional x-ray or CT imaging. Therefore, for research or analysis, multi-site collaboration will very often be necessary. For individual treatment, patients will try to find a second opinion outside their referring centre, seeking experts throughout their country or even on international level.

The EU directive on cross-border healthcare and the new regulation on data protection support such applications. Several countries already have regional or national eHealth strategies, which help to communicate information between different care providers or patients themselves. One internationally accepted way of standardised communication in healthcare is the application of HL7 profiles. Many of these profiles are already recommended for procurement by the European Commission. Building such networks could enable access for patients to experts, or pseudoanonymised/anonymous imaging data could be used in national or international registers for benchmarking quality parameters, e.g. for radiation exposure optimisation.

Some more work has to be organised to build such registers and to have consensus on coding systems to be used in such environments. Actually coding is very homogeneous across Europe today. Improvement in these fields is relevant to reaching interoperability beyond a technical level and to enable integration of data (semantic interoperability).

ESMRMB proves its commitment to education

The 34th Annual Scientific Meeting of the ESMRMB will take place in Barcelona, Spain, from October 19 to 21, 2017.

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MR physicists and other basic or clinical scientists are warmly welcome to seven courses in 2017, with a duration of 2 – 2.5 days. 40% of the total teaching time will be used for repetition and practical demonstrations. The maximum is 50 participants per course.

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