

BY KATHARINA MIEDZINSKA

Experts to look into quality of care in clinical radiology

In recent years, the need for quality assessment and quality assurance in radiology has moved to the forefront. In today's ESR Patient Advisory Group session, experts and representatives of patient organisations will assess the situation and discuss different strategies to improve patient safety and quality of care in clinical radiology.



Nicola Bedlington, Executive Director of the European Patients' Forum, will co-chair today's ESR-PAG session.



Dr. Barry Kelly is Consultant Radiologist at the Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast, UK, and Chair of the ESR Subcommittee on Audit and Standards.

Medical imaging saves lives every day and is indispensable in patient-centred care. During the past two decades, the use of medical imaging to visualise and help diagnose illness and injuries and to guide complex therapeutic interventions has expanded greatly, so that nowadays, patients with a wide spectrum of physical complaints benefit from different imaging procedures.

Radiology is very much seen as a service provider, and as such, its practitioners need to understand quality and delivery of service, including knowledge of customer service and satisfaction, quality assurance and improvement issues.

In this context, radiologists should bear in mind that they do not sell images, but essential diagnostic information and advice, and that by getting involved with the patient and by providing an interpretation of their images wit-

hin the context of the situation, they can have a positive influence on the patient's experience in various ways.

Considering a patient's journey through different medical departments is going to be one of the main focuses of today's ESR-PAG session, which will be chaired by Ms. Nicola Bedlington, Executive Director of the European Patient's Forum, and Dr. Barry Kelly, Consultant Radiologist at the Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast, UK.

"Many of us as doctors suddenly become aware when we are patients, that the once familiar territory of our hospitals can suddenly seem forbidding, stressful, officious or even uncaring," noted Kelly. "If this is how it can seem to professionals who find themselves on the other side of the white coats, how much more profound and intimidating must it be for our fellow citizens, who have no experience

of such technological, sterile and busy environments?"

In particular, three tools, which have been designed to promote a compassionate, comprehensible and personal experience for patients will be discussed, including the patient satisfaction questionnaire; a driver diagram, which is being used to conceptualise an issue and determine its system components, thus creating a pathway to achieving the goal of patient-centred care; and audit, which, according to Kelly, measures something against an agreed standard.

"As radiological healthcare professionals, we tend to think of this as being process-driven. This is an important component, but audit can and should also be used to measure our interaction with each other and with our patients. By doing this, we ensure that a patient-centred approach leads to a safe, professional and harmonious institution," he said.

In this session, Kelly will be joined by Dr. Dominique-Gérard Carrié, from the department of radiology and medical imaging at Polyclinique du Parc, Toulouse, France, who will specifically discuss how to implement a patient satisfaction questionnaire in radiology departments.

"In order to better respond and to optimise our practices, we must try harder to understand the expectations of our patients. It is necessary and not that complicated to implement this kind of questionnaire in all medical imaging departments," he emphasised, adding that, in this context, collaboration with patient organisations might be especially helpful and constructive.

"The questions should be simple, so that they can easily be understood by all patients," noted Carrié.

To get the most from these measures, emphasis must be put on

quantitative assessments, continuity and communication.

"It is important to present the results regularly to the whole team and to draw clear conclusions from the feedback received. It might be difficult to take account of all patients' needs and expectations with a simple questionnaire, but it is a way of letting patients express themselves and improving the patient-physician relationship. Radiologists should not be afraid to evaluate what patients think about their work. Dialogue and communication with our patients will improve our sense of work well done and help us to assure higher quality service," he concluded.

To illuminate the topic from every particular angle, Europa Uomo Ex Officio Board Member Erik Briers, PhD, and Executive Director of the European Federation of Neurological Associations, Ms. Donna Walsh, will discuss patient safety and quality of care from the patient's per-

spective by using examples of good and bad radiology practice from relevant disease areas, and more importantly, by dealing with the issue of information transfer.

ECR delegates will learn that a fair knowledge of an upcoming procedure is an important part of feeling safe for the patient and that an overload of information is equally detrimental to a safe feeling as no information. In their presentations, Briers and Walsh plan to illustrate that implementing the driver diagram in a department is a step-by-step process that can be monitored by patients, and analyse the potential phases of patient involvement, including ways to identify the most relevant patient-reported measures and possibilities to collect and analyse patient-generated evidence.

The session will close with a panel discussion on the central question: "Does your department perform well in patient-centred care?"

ESR Patient Advisory Group Session

Saturday, March 4, 10:30-12:00, Room L 8

ESR-PAG 1 Improving patient safety and quality of care in clinical radiology

» Chairpersons' introduction

N. Bedlington; Vienna/AT
B.E. Kelly; Belfast/UK

» The work of the ESR Audit & Standards Subcommittee in collaboration with ESR-PAG

B.E. Kelly; Belfast/UK

» Patients' perspective

D. Walsh; Dublin/IE
E. Briers; Hasselt/BE

» Example of good practice: implementing a patient satisfaction questionnaire in your radiology department

D.-G. Carrié; Toulouse/FR

» Panel discussion: Does your department perform well in patient-centred care?

This session is part of the EuroSafe Imaging campaign.

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ESOR Courses for EDiR 2017

ESOR is continuing to organise preparatory courses for residents and board-certified radiologists, wishing to take the exams of the European Diploma in Radiology (EDiR). A series of courses is organised at the ESR Learning Centre in Vienna/Austria at the end of the year. It is possible to attend either one course only, or several courses of the series.

Chest Imaging
November 6

Cardiac Imaging
November 7

Breast Imaging
November 8

Neuroradiology
November 9

Head and Neck Radiology
November 10

Musculoskeletal Radiology
November 11

Abdominal Imaging
November 13

Hybrid Imaging
November 14

Paediatric Radiology
November 15

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