**Reporting Sonographers: Education for the future**

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**Aims**
- Present overview of UK sonographer practice
- Outline standards of education in the UK for reporting sonographers
- Introduce developments in sonographer education

**UK NHS Ultrasound Service**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clinical areas</th>
<th>Who performs the scans</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Screening</td>
<td>• AAA technicians</td>
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<td>• Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm screening programme (AAA)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Fetal Anomaly Screening Programme (FASP)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diagnostic include:</td>
<td>• Sonographers</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Gynaecology</td>
<td>Others</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| • Abdominal               | Others include: Urologists, gynaecologists, fetal medicine, 
| • Superficial structures  |    nurses, midwives, physiotherapists, emergency medicine, clinical scientists |
| • Vascular                |                                             |
| • Cardiac                 |                                             |
| • Obstetrics-high risk (EPAU/3rd trimester)            |

**Sonographer Scope of Practice**

- Consent
- Vet requests
- Perform the examination
- Report the examination
- Discuss the findings with the patient
- Recommend for referral, further imaging or other advice

**Focused courses**
- AAA screening
- 1st trimester screening
- Fertility scanning
- 3rd trimester assessment
- Podiatry - podiatrists
- Emergency U/S - paramedics

**Traditional UK sonographer education**

- Pg Cert (1 yr PT)
  - Physics
  - Professional issues
  - Clinical module
  - Face to face or blended learning most common
- Pg Dip (1½-2 yrs PT, 1 yr FT)
  - Further clinical modules
  - Research skills/methods
  - Develop academic skills
- MSc (2½-5 yrs PT, 2 yrs FT)
  - Dissertation
  - Research project or service development project

Minimum standards of competency need to be met for accreditation
Clinical practice

Student's clinical placement

Simulation

Training centre
- real patient
- simulated cases

Clinical competency assessment must be integrated into the programme, including independent report writing.

Report writing: How are sonographers prepared?

- On-line lectures & workshops
- Case review at university
- Clinical practice
- Assessments

Other countries?

Approaches to ultrasound education

Increasing demand for ultrasound

The RCR (2016) survey:
- 99% departments cannot meet demand
- 2012-2015 - 5% increase in radiologists / 29% increase in CT scans

NHS key stats (2018) 21.8 million diagnostic tests 2017/8
59% increase MRI, 45% CT, 23% U/S

UK developments to meet increasing demands
Advanced and Consultant Practice: Role developments

Consultant Practitioner
- Expert: Strategic involvement in developing service nationally

Advanced Practitioner
- Service development, leadership, education & research

Practitioner
- Level of reporting
  - Under discussion

Assistant Practitioner
- Protocol led

Conclusion

UK sonographers educated to report independently to high level

Increasing workload & aging workforce = developments in education

Issues to be addressed

References

  https://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/CBP-7281
- RCR (2016) Latest workforce census highlights on-going crisis in clinical radiology
  https://www.rcr.ac.uk/posts/latest-workforce-census-highlights-going-going-clinical-clinical-radiology