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Data Management



Prof. Dr. Iain W McCall

Honorary Board Member; Editor-in-Chief from 2004 - 2012

*****@***btinternet.com

Dear readers,

In the daily life of the leader of a medical imaging department, we are called on to wear many different hats: that of problem-solver, manager, scientist, clinical expert, and often, IT specialist. As is well known, radiology is a discipline that is steeped in fast-paced, highly effective, though often challenging new technology, which is speeding developments in patient care, but demanding much from the leader of clinical IT and those responsible for running the department.

With that in mind, our cover story in this edition has been inspired by not only the increasing dominance of cloud computing as a potential solution of serious challenges for cost-effective data storage and management, but also coverage of the European Society of Radiology's recent publication of a white paper on the use of lossy compression as one way in which data can potentially be managed without needlessly diverting finances from the primary goal of patient diagnosis and care.

Trends in data management will always be challenging to keep abreast of, given the explosion in areas like 3D imaging, hybrid imaging and complex studies that aid us in better caring for patients, but which are so advanced that the management system for that data sometimes arrives after the technology itself. I would urge those of you who are engaged in such matters to draw the attention of industry and vendors for the ever growing need for integrated, smart and cost-effective data management solutions. Without pressure from their clients, we risk losing out on the opportunity to set up new technology in a smart way that is adapted to our needs.

Our big focus in the features section this issue is on patient safety. We can all agree that this is a fundamental duty of any physician: to carry out the exams paramount for excellent diagnosis in such a way as the least possible impact is made on the patient. The first of these, authored by Carpeggiani et al, addresses a lack of awareness amongst cardiologists on basic radiation safety for patients. As she states, "Cardiologists prescribe and/or directly perform >50 percent of all imaging examinations, accounting for about two thirds of the total effective dose to patients". With this in mind, her team successfully demonstrated how a brief training course can have a positive impact on the approach with which cardiologists carry out necessary imaging exams. Secondly, we bring you a very interesting paper by Esposito et al, which examines the pros and cons of more widely introducing contrast-enhanced ultrasound in the paediatric population. As well as highlighting the particular challenges in doing so, he and his team provide a compelling argument on why more needs to be done to promote this type of exam in certain cases.

We are delighted to continue our ongoing editorial collaboration with the CIRSE organisation throughout 2012, which continues to provide our readers with focused updates on relevant advances and developments from the world of interventional radiology. This edition we feature a paper by Dr. McLean and Dr. Thomas on the economic aspects of interventional radiology, and focuses on the value of IR as an investment.

I welcome your correspondence on any of the topics covered in this issue by contacting me at: editorial@imagingmanagement.org

Sincerely,

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