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French Society of Radiology (SFR)

Promoting the Profession of Radiology in France

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The French Society of Radiology (SFR), founded in 1909, is a non-profit scientific organisation, actively promoting and safeguarding the highest standards of practice in radiology and the related sciences. It achieves this not only through the promotion of education and research activities in these fields in France, but also through the elaboration and harmonisation of good practices. Current figures reveal that membership levels of the SFR number more than 6,000 professionals in the field of imaging, an increase of 7 per cent over the previous year's level. Overall membership of the SFR has doubled over the past 10 years. The SFR is mainly financed through membership fees, although grants given to young radiologists are financed by the SFR's private-sector partners. The SFR is administered by an Executive Board composed of leading national radiologists from both the private and public sectors, led by Professor Guy Frija, General Secretary of the Board. There are ten employees on the SFR's administrative staff, administered by an Executive Director, Catherine Prop.

Leading Annual Congress

Among the many achievements of the Society in its efforts to promote the profession of the radiologist and related sciences in France, the SFR holds a yearly congress, the Journées Françaises de Radiologie (JFR), which takes place in Paris every October. The JFR congress is one of the largest of its kind in the world, only second in size after the RSNA congress in the U.S. In 2005, attendance levels reached over 15,900 people, including 2,066 visitors coming from abroad (notably from Belgium, Switzerland, Maghreb, Africa, etc.).

The main scientific focuses of the congress are the enhancement of imaging practices, the distribution of clinical guidelines and to present the latest medical and scientific advancements. In addition, best practice in computer science applications, cost-effective diagnoses, management of radiological departments, and radiation protection are also highlighted during the congress.

This congress also provides an ideal platform in which to hold educational sessions and activities which are CME-accredited and which have a high attendance level. The 2005 JFR Congress included 218 hours of CME-accredited educational sessions, more than 450 electronic posters in all subspecialties, with the ultimate mission of promoting innovation and quality in healthcare. The JFR's technical exhibition, also one of the largest in the world, was spread over 15,000 square metres, with 150 exhibiting stands, including an international societies section.

Publishing and Educational Activities

The SFR publishes its own review, 'Le Journal de Radiologie', of which there are twelve issues per year, along with five medical textbook series. The abstracts of featured articles are available free, and in English, on the SFR website. The SFR also publishes educational materials on focused subjects, such as "Breast Imaging", "MRI Imaging" and "Radiation Oncology", and creates a number of multimedia educational supports through CD-roms and the SFR website. For the past two years, more than 1,000 electronic posters as well as taped conferences shown during the JFR congress have also been made available through the SFR website. Currently there are twenty-seven online lectures on the site on the following subjects: 'Sports-related Imaging', 'Prostate Imaging' and 'Breast Imaging'.

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Among its main objectives, the SFR provides radiologists, technicians and other health professionals with CME-accredited educational programmes and materials, whose contents are constantly updated and improved upon. On an international level, the SFR is also deeply involved in providing educational programmes and teaching materials in Frenchspeaking countries with which the SFR has developed a close cooperation over many years (these include the following: Africa, Algeria, Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Morocco, Israel, Lebanon, Lybia, Romania, Syria and Tunisia). Approximately fifteen young radiologists from these countries are invited and sponsored in full by the SFR to attend the JFR congress in Paris, while others are granted a three-month internship in a French Academic Hospital for specific educational purposes.

Since 2001, the SFR has been involved in the IHE (Integrating the Healthcare Enterprise). The IHE improves patient care by harmonising healthcare information exchanges and provides a common standards-based framework for seamlessly passing health information among care providers. One of the results of this cooperation, has been the French government's agreement to include radiological images in the soon-to-be implemented Electronic Health Record system in France.

Finally, the SFR is strongly supporting the establishment and the development of the European Society of Radiology, of which Professor Guy Frija is the current General Secretary.

Best Practices and Procedures

Regarding the development of good practices and standards, the SFR has given priority to the introduction of important components arising from the EU Directive 97/43 Euratom. In order to achieve this, the SFR has published two essential technical guidebooks, one on best practices and the other on procedures. At this time, the SFR is ambitiously aiming to develop and extend these aspects to the whole of crosssectional imaging.

The SFR is also engaged in other majors fields within radiology, such as championing an increase in the installation of MRI and CT scans in France; the promotion of new nomenclature; and the drive to include the use of images in the Electronic Health Record system that the French government plans to put into place during 2007.

The SFR, in association with private and public French radiological unions, along with the College of Academic Radiologists, has contributed to the founding of a professional organisation called the G4. The aims of this cooperation are to harmonise strategies for the protection of radiology and medical imaging in France, as well as to present common positions in negotiations with national institutions and other health organisations.



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