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ECR 'Challenges for Teleradiology' Session Preview

Teleradiology: Pacesetter for Telemedicine and the Health Infrastructure of Tomorrow Prof. Matthias Matzko

The rapidly changing European healthcare environment faces a lack of financial resources due to increasing innovations in therapy and diagnostic methods with dramatically increasing costs. IT solutions offer the opportunity to create new economical pathways of patient care. But it is a struggle for the European radiology community to meet the challenge of changing old structures and to provide modern diagnostic pathways for the healthcare system of tomorrow. The building of medical expert networks via telemedicine will not solve all problems but lead to a higher availability of expert knowledge in hospitals and increased diagnostic quality in patient care with reduced costs. In my presentation I will introduce teleradiology as pacesetter for the continuous process of cross-linking in healthcare.

Teleradiology and e-Learning Prof. Davide Caramelle

The distribution of radiological images is no longer confined to the hospital, since in many instances regional PACS systems are emerging as the best solution for a rapidly consolidating healthcare sector. This trend will make the term "teleradiology" obsolete, since teleradiology is progressively becoming just another PACS function. Moreover, hospitals that have a PACS system have experienced its ability to improve the quality of teaching, due to the availability of images and clinical data allowing access to pathological examples, facilitating the construction of multimedia teaching files, and preparing physicians to use the resources of elearning. Presently there are many radiological resources available on the Internet. EURORAD, the e-learning initiative of the EAR has made over 1,500 peer-reviewed teaching files available on the web. In my presentation I will discuss how local radiological archives have turned into an active repository of professional knowledge updated and enriched at every encounter with any correctly diagnosed pathology.

Workload and Teleradiological Services

Prof. Lluis Donoso Bach

Across Europe, there is a huge increase in demand for radiology services. However, as our workload increases in tandem with the rising shortage of radiological staff in Europe, we need to examine each element of this workload in order to ensure that it is managed in the most efficient way. In my forthcoming presentation, I will discuss the elements of workload management, to generate a new approach that will take full advantage of this situation.

Teleradiology is not merely a service that produces diagnostic reports. Other elements such as prioritising exams, audit procedures, liaising with colleagues to decide which type of treatment will be necessary, and reviewing imaging procedures to determine report accuracy and overall therapeutic and clinical impact, are equally significant.

The use of teleradiology proposed by my presentation will centre on the holistic management of medical information rather than simple transmission of images from one site to another.

Teleradiology - Bane or Boon?

Dr Paul Dubbins

The UK Government has introduced a raft of policies to address the need to increase imaging investigations in the face of a severe shortage of radiologists. Government coordinated teleradiology has the potential to respond to peaks and troughs in demand, to allow rapid service expansion and to provide improved efficiency. However, potential problems related to the outsourcing of imaging exist such as patient consent, quality assurance, communication, effect on existing workforce and cost not explicitly addressed within the proposals. Although technology can ensure data protection, it does not address patient permission to transmit images abroad.

Uniformity of CPD requirements, appraisal and in the UK revalidation are unresolved and the assessment of language skills is not subject to close scrutiny. The initial work developed by the UK allows us to audit the value of teleradiology and to develop a model for optimising care.

For further details, please visit www.ecr.org

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