

## Volume 7 - Issue 5, 2007 - MIR Congress Review

### Review of Recently-Held 'Management in Radiology' (MIR) Congress, Oxford, UK

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*Chairman*

**Dr Nicola Strickland, with Prof. Georg Bongartz**

#### Reinforcing the Message of Management in Medical Imaging

Organised and chaired by Dr Nicola Strickland, consultant radiologist at London's Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust, this year's annual Management in Radiology (MIR) congress, a professional meeting aimed at leaders, managers and administrators of imaging departments worldwide, was held from 10 - 13 October in Oxford, UK. The congress attracted 137 professionals from 29 countries. With 64 invited lectures and proffered papers, and 52 international lecturers, the event, held for the 10th year, was welcomed by participants and this year had a particularly innovative

programme.

#### Sessions Shed Light on Management in the UK

The congress addressed critical managerial challenges encountered in the daily work of running the medical imaging department, with a particular focus on issues facing the congress host country, the United Kingdom. The opening session was dedicated to highlighting imaging management issues in the UK as a direct result of feedback received from MIR's congress last year held in Budapest, Hungary, where requests were made for delegates to be informed about the MIR host country's imaging issues.

During this first session on Wednesday afternoon, Dr. John Somers spoke amusingly but sincerely about the difficulties in managing "difficult" Trusts in the UK government's national "Connecting for Health" (CfH) PACS programme, such as resistance to change. He provided a true recent example of mismanagement and overspend experienced during one particular PACS implementation across two hospitals, which he described as a 'bloody' merger. Many joking references were made in particular to the orthopaedic surgeons involved in the transition, who resisted the change most strongly through complaints and indefatigable requests for unnecessarily expensive additions. His advice, on how to manage these sorts of expectations, was clearly based on personal experience and was well received.

This was followed by a presentation by Dr Nicholas Hollings on managing the problems created when implementing PACS in a geographically dispersed and economically challenged region (Cornwall in South West

England), including maintaining connectivity, and how solutions such as voice recognition technology and digital dictation can overcome this.

#### ESR Request Coding Session

At the specific request of the ESR Professional Organisations Committee (POC), Dr. Strickland included in this year's MIR programme, a special session dedicated to imaging study coding issues and how greater standardisation can be achieved through a set of national codes. It explored the management process necessary to update those codes and guidelines for implementation. "A new system is an enabler for change", explained speaker Dr Rhidian Bramley, who discussed the benefits of common code sets such as simplified deployment of systems and the improved interoperability of systems with more consistent data collection. The ensuing post-session discussion provoked much comment and debate. "Payment by results will bring accountability", said Dr. Strickland, "We need to ensure that all work performed will draw funds from the National Health System in the UK, and in order to achieve this we need to identify how much each item of work is actually costing, and to use radiological procedure coding to make sure that the same imaging procedures are identified and paid for uniformly across the UK, and hopefully across Europe". It was also noted that in the US, there are highly trained coding specialists who are dedicated to the task of coding, but the question of who in European hospitals will be responsible for this, remains.

#### 10 Commandments for Managing an Imaging Department

One of the most compelling and entertaining sessions held during the course of the congress, the ten commandments for managing an imaging

department, kicked off with sound advice from Prof. Philip Gishen who at one point, broke into song to express his disdain of the eternal refrain of radiologists everywhere 'we're short of staff ', before proceeding to debate whether or not the field of medical imaging actually suffers a shortage of trained staff. Having worked hard to achieve no waiting lists and no delays in reporting in his department, Prof. Gishen was ideally placed to provide some key pointers for participants, such as the need to work smarter, so that the government does not continue to farm out routine radiological work, thus risking the future of radiology as a specialty.

Prof. Guy Frija also contributed to this session with advice on leadership, defining key strategic goals and targets and dealing with problems in radiology reporting. Another leading speaker, Prof. Henrik Thomsen, urged "visibility, openness and engagement" as the keys to leading a successful department. All speakers were in agreement that people management was one of the top factors in contributing to this success. The results of this session will be summarised in a future edition of IMAGING Management.

#### **Future Congresses and Workshops**

MIR organises a congress each year and a winter course at a variety of European locations. The next winter course on "Applying Industry Leadership Concepts to Healthcare" will be held from 10 – 12 January, 2008 in Bad Gastein, Austria, and the next congress will take place in Athens, Greece, in October 2008.

The workshop programme in particular, will explore key concepts required to enhance a manager's ability to work effectively within an organisation. It will further explore concepts such as emotional intelligence, why high performance teams are critical for success and the top keys to successful communication.

The MIR Congress presentations and pictures are available at: [www.imagingmanagement.org](http://www.imagingmanagement.org).

To register for the upcoming workshop please visit: [www.mir-online.org](http://www.mir-online.org).

*The following edition of IMAGING Management includes a cover story highlighting in more detail the leading presentations from the congress.*

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