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The Royal College of Radiologist

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The Royal College of Radiologists (RCR) is an independent professional body for radiologists and is separate from the National Health System.

Objectives and Activities

The RCR was incorporated by Royal Charter in 1975. Under its Charter, its main objectives are the advancement of the science and practice of radiology and oncology, the furtherance of public education and the promotion and study of research.

To pursue these objectives the college undertakes the following activities in both radiology and oncology:

- setting professional standards of practice;
- setting a curriculum to ensure the high educational standards necessary for safe and responsible practice;
- approving UK departments that provide specialist training in clinical radiology and clinical oncology;
- assessment of eligibility for General Medical Council specialist registration;
- setting the syllabus and conducting the examinations necessary to become a Fellow of the College (FRCR);
- encouraging members to keep up to date in advances in their speciality by running programmes of continuing medical education (CME);
- awarding prizes and scholarships, and funding travelling professorships and lectureships;
- initiating and co-ordinating research;
- strongly supporting academic oncology and academic radiology;
- promoting clinical audit amongst members;
- offering advice and guidance to patients, members and other doctors on all aspects of the College's work;
- liaising with government, other medical Royal Colleges, Associations and Institutes; and
- publishing scientific journals, reports and guidelines.

The RCR has created a forward plan to deal with the expected technical innovations and the further demands that will be placed on clinical radiology and clinical oncology in the future. The plan is available at <http://www.rcr.ac.uk> under 'About the RCR'.

History

The RCR can trace its roots back to the Roentgen Society, founded in 1897, and then through the British Association of Radiologists (1934), the Society of Radiotherapists of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (1935) and the Faculty of Radiologists (1939).

By a Royal Charter granted in 1953 a "body politic and corporate" was constituted by the name of the Faculty of Radiologists. In 1975, the Faculty of Radiologists was granted a Supplemental Charter which changed its name to the Royal College of Radiologists.

Membership

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The Royal College of Radiologists (RCR) has approximately 6,600 members and Fellows worldwide representing the disciplines of clinical oncology and clinical radiology. All members and Fellows of the College are registered medical or dental practitioners. Most Fellows of the Royal College of Radiologists are employed by NHS hospitals.

Training

Qualified medical practitioners that are registered with the General Medical Council may train as specialists. They must complete a further two years of acceptable clinical experience then follow a minimum of five years' specialist training. The RCR gives detailed guidelines for the curriculum in its documents Structured Training in Clinical Oncology and Structured Training in Clinical Radiology.

Trainees must enroll with the RCR at the commencement of their training. After a minimum of three years, they may take an exam to obtain fellowship of the RCR. After five years, trainees that are Fellows of the RCR can obtain a certificate of Completion of Specialist Training (CCST) to be registered as a specialist.

Initiatives

The Radiology Integrated Training

Initiative is a collaboration between the RCR, the Department of Health and the NHS to develop a new approach to training radiologists, which can provide increased numbers of radiologists without putting additional strain on current training resources.

The project objective is to deliver a new approach for training radiologists:

- in order to increase numbers of high quality trained radiologists;
- then to evaluate whether this approach is acceptable to trainers and the service, effectively uses new technologies and delivers value for money; and
- to assess its potential/applicability for other staff groups.

The RCR has created the Virtual Hospital Departments of the RCR at www.goingfora.com. This is an interactive web-site that allow users to experience attending a radiology or oncology department in a virtual environment. The different rooms reflect hospital departments in real life and aim to address some of the fears that are associated with a visit to the hospital.

The RCR also has a Patients' Liaison Group (PLG) for Clinical Oncology and Clinical Radiology. These groups produce a number of patient information leaflets available via the college's website www.rcr.ac.uk.

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