

UK Radiologist Workforce Shortages Taking Toll Says Census



In terms of radiologist workforce, NHS hospitals have a marked shortfall of 33%, highlighting the health system's huge pressure in providing the necessary imaging and interventional services during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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To cover radiology staffing shortages, NHS hospitals spent £193 million on outsourcing, overtime and locums last year, according to the Royal College of Radiologists' annual radiology workforce report.

The RCR's "[Clinical Radiology UK Workforce Census Report 2019](#)" also found that scan outsourcing that year increased by 32% – Scotland alone saw outsourcing leap by a hefty 73%.

Data for the report was gathered before the escalation of coronavirus management. As noted by Professor Mark Callaway, the report's lead author, the current pandemic has brought increased demand for the NHS, overwhelming the available resources.

"Despite significant pressures, radiologists, like all NHS clinicians, are continuing to work tirelessly to meet the challenge of providing imaging and interventional services during these extraordinary times," said Professor Callaway, the RCR's Medical Director of Professional Practice for Clinical Radiology.

Other key findings of the RCR's annual report include:

- UK's radiologist staffing shortfall could reach 43% without more new trainees and better staff retention and recruitment
- Demand for complex MRI and CT scans is growing at three times the speed of radiologist workforce
- In 2020, with nearly 200 doctors qualifying as radiology consultants, this [won't be enough to fill even half of ongoing vacancies](#).
- About half (46%) of trusts and health boards don't have staff or transfer arrangements needed for safe 24/7 interventional radiology services – ie, patients are missing out on life-saving surgical technique

Professor Callaway has urged UK politicians and health leaders to address the issue of how these staffing shortages limit patient care and pose a threat to patient safety. "Now is a time for solidarity across the health service," the professor said.

Source: [Royal College of Radiologists](#)

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