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Update from International Radiology Quality Network:

Feedback Sought for Development of Clinical Standards

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The International Radiology Quality Network (IRQN) is a network of organisations established in 2002 with members from across the globe, including America, Japan, the UK and New Zealand. It aims to promote quality in radiology through collaboration, experience sharing and mutual assistance. Its current activities include:

1. An International Clinical Teleradiology Standards Workgroup;
2. A Performance Metrics and Indicators Project;
3. A Quality Improvement in Practices Programme in collaboration with the JACR; and
4. An Awareness Programme.

Feedback Sought for International Clinical Teleradiology Standards

In 2006, an International Clinical Teleradiology Standards Workgroup was formed to review the published international teleradiology standards and to develop a set of common principles in which more detailed standards could be subsequently developed.

Since that time, the members have revised and refined the drafted 'Top 10 Principles of International Clinical Teleradiology' approved by IRQN members earlier this year. The network recognises that this draft is an evolving document and would be refined over time. These principles are now available at: www.irqn.net. Feedback is welcome, and can be forwarded via: irqn@ranzcr.edu.au.

Performance Metrics and Indicators Project

The Performance Metrics and Indicators Project commenced in 2007 to provide us with a better insight into the performance of different types of facilities across the globe. The TATs for radiology reports over a one-month period were selected as the metrics to be benchmarked. 13 institutions from three continents took part in a trial last year. Based on the trial experience, data collection and methodology are being refined. The network is preparing to launch this project later this year and is aiming at 100 participating facilities worldwide. The TAT data collected is a small subset of the routine statistics generated by the facility's RIS at the end of each month. Therefore, the additional effort for the participating facility is minimal. Participation is voluntary and will be based on RIS vendors' introduction, direct recruitment through members of the Performance Metrics and Indicators Workgroup and newsletters. Each facility can benchmark its performance against other similar facilities and identify areas of improvement.

Each facility's participation will be acknowledged and the data collected will remain confidential. After analysis, each participant will receive a report containing its own de-identified aggregated data for comparison.

To participate, please provide the name of your facility and the contact details for the principle liaison person to Laura Coombs Ph.D. at: lcoombs@acr.org by 31st July 2008.

Quality Improvement in Practice Competition

The network approved the establishment of a Quality Improvement in Practice paper competition in collaboration with the JACR to:

- Increase the awareness of the importance of quality improvement in the workplace;
- Enable radiology practices to learn from others and apply other practices' quality improvement experience to their own practice; and
- Facilitate a cultural change in radiology practices so that quality improvement forms an integral part of day-to-day practice rather than perceived as a burden.

It has assembled a judging panel to review manuscripts and to work with the authors and the Editor-in-Chief, JACR, to edit and improve suitable manuscripts prior to publication.

A certificate of merit will be awarded to each month's winning author(s). At the conclusion of each year, the Panel will select an annual winner who will receive a cash award of 1,000 US dollars sponsored by The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Radiologists.

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