

AHP Workforce Reform Programme: outcomes and next steps from the Radiography funded programme

The Society of Radiographers (SoR) was commissioned and awarded funds to undertake a programme of work as part of the AHP Workforce Reform Programme, Health Education England (now NHS Workforce Training and Education). The programme, comprising nine workstreams, each with its own strategic aims started on 1 June 2022 and completed 31 March 2023. The goals of the programme were to:

- Increase the workforce pipeline
- Maximise the contributions of the AHPs
- Support career progression
- Support retention of the skilled workforce

A specific programme was developed for radiography, which was monitored and completed with oversight from a Society of Radiographers steering group, with input from Health Education England (**workstream 1**).

The SoR would like to thank the profession for their engagement in the work, and the experts who led each workstream.



Workstream number	Workstream title
AHP 1	Financial accountability for the programme
AHP 2	Modernisation and reform of education and training in line with NHS Long-term Plan
AHP 3	Innovation in pre-registration practice placement
AHP 4	Retention and Support for students and the Newly Qualified Workforce and Early Careers
AHP 5	Return to Practice
AHP 6	International Recruitment
AHP 7	Apprenticeships (TRAD only)
AHP 8a AHP 8b	Radiography Support Worker Development Radiography support worker in the clinical department
AHP 9	Profession specific to support ongoing professional development

The WRAP acronym (Workforce Radiography Reform Programme) was applied to workstreams 3,4,7,8b and 9b, and an executive summary report of the outputs from these workstreams is included below.



AHS WRAP
Executive Summary.pdf

Links to more detailed work outputs are included throughout this document. In addition to the outputs, are recommendations for further work from several of the workstreams. For ease, we have summarised these recommendations, and listed priorities as next steps as they will inform the work plan for the professional body. The SoR is keen to ensure this work builds on the existing published evidence base, has a co-ordinated approach to ensure resources are utilised effectively and that outputs are maximised to support the profession across the UK.

[The NHS Long term workforce plan](#) acknowledges the requirement for a significant growth in the radiography workforce. Workforce transformation, through enhanced, advanced and consultant practice is a priority. This outline plan has been developed by the SoR, with input from NHS colleagues, as there is significant work across the systems in relation to Radiography, being led externally by other stakeholders.

WRAP Workstreams Summary (workstreams 2 – 9):

Workstream	Outcomes	Next Steps
<p>Workstream 2: The Education and Career Framework</p>	<p>The priority within this workstream was to publish an updated radiography career progression framework. This work was in progress at the start of the programme, and the guidance has now been successfully completed.</p> <p>The College of Radiographers Education and Career Framework for the Radiography Workforce SoR (ECF) was published in 2022. During 2023 the focus has been to highlight the framework and incorporate the ECF principles into job descriptions and job plans, both through socialisation with key stakeholders and cases studies showing members roles from across the framework.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow up on the outcomes of the implementation framework being led by Holly Spencer, NHS England WTE fellow. This may include the development of additional resources to further embed and assist implementation of the ECF in practice. • Promoting how the ECF can be used to plan career development from pre-registration level; it will therefore be included in SoR student resources.

Workstream	Outcomes	Next Steps
<p>Workstream 3:</p> <p>WRAP driving innovation in pre-registration practice-based learning</p>  <p>AHS WRAP Workstream 3 repor</p>	<p>This workstream considered the topics listed below, and recommendations from the work can be found in the detailed report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The principles of standardised assessment. • Utilisation of placement capacity. • Development of a computed tomography (CT) e-passport. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be a partner, alongside other Allied Health Professions (AHP) professional bodies, in the development of AHP national practice placement guidance being led by the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP) and the Royal College of Occupational Therapists (RCOT). • To further research into simulation, standardised assessment, and placement capacity. This work will be undertaken with a view to informing professional body guidance on these pressing areas of clinical education. • Consideration of a CT e-passport; these recommendations will be considered by the SoR CT Advisory Group.
<p>Workstream 4:</p> <p>WRAP support for students and newly qualified radiographers and retention of these groups</p>  <p>AHS WRAP Workstream 4 repor</p>	<p>This workstream was focused on how to support retention of students and new professionals. The recommendations from the work can be found in this detailed report :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploring opportunities to improve recruitment to therapeutic radiography. • Review of how practice educators are employed, deployed, developed, and supported. • Understand the impact of online learning on student retention. • Further study into confidence and anxiety of students. • Evaluation of preceptorship model. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide early interventions with schools and colleges to promote radiography as a career choice. • To promote and encourage an increase in availability of level 7 practice education programmes, aligned to the College of Radiographers (CoR) Education Career Framework and to promote the importance of CoR approval of these programmes. • To develop a community of practice and a pastoral support toolkit for practice educators. • To promote radiography education roles as a career choice. • Education and employment Health Education England (hee.nhs.uk) • To continue our work on radiography preceptorship guidance.

Workstream	Outcomes	Next Steps
<p>Workstreams 5 and 6:</p> <p>International recruitment (IR) and return to practice (RtP)</p>	<p>This workstream focused upon the development of resources to support radiography international recruitment/ international recruits and 'return to practice' radiographers:</p> <p>The following work was completed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For both IR and RtP the SoR web pages were refreshed with a more interactive interface and recent examples of good practice, new case studies and a news section: International Recruitment SoR Returning to practice SoR Support for managers has been enhanced with links to SoR and external resources and additional information links. The new resources available will soon include new eLfH modules and updated managers guidance. The SoR have also provided professional guidance and advice to national and regional leads. An offer of individual assistance for returnees is directly accessible from the web page. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To influence government programmes focused on IR to drive for best practice in the IR process and for those being recruited to the UK To work with service leaders to further support international recruitment. To promote best practice and learn from international recruits. To continue to promote and support Radiography RtP.
<p>Workstreams 7 and 8:</p> <p>WRAP apprenticeships and support workforce</p>  <p>AHS WRAP Workstream 7 and 8</p>	<p>This workstream was about increasing engagement with apprenticeships and providing guidance to support growth in the radiography support workforce.</p> <p>Outputs: SoR guidance document completed - <i>The Radiography Support and Assistant workforce: Regulatory compliance, Governance arrangements, Supervision and delegation</i> (at the publication stage).</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce a guide for managers about apprenticeships and associated funding models. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitating access into support workforce roles in imaging and radiotherapy. Strengthening and defining the radiography career escalator. Support and promote education and training opportunities at post-graduate level. The development of profession-specific preceptorship resources and guidance. Promote CPD opportunities and resources for the support workforce. Continue to promote and support profession specific support workforce education programmes.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with higher education institutions (HEIs) to ensure ongoing development of the support workforce. • Establish an expert group to determine the role of assistant practitioners in radiotherapy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote level 6 Therapeutic Radiography apprenticeships to increase domestic supply – noting the NHS Long term workforce plan ambition, that the workforce numbers should increase by 80% by 2031/32 through the apprenticeship route. • Promote level 6 Diagnostic radiography apprenticeships to increase domestic supply – noting the NHS Long term workforce plan ambition, that the workforce numbers should increase by 20 to 25% by 2031/32 through the apprenticeship route. • Scoping the opportunity for the development of a level 7 apprenticeship standard for sonographers.
<p>Workstream 9:</p> <p>Ongoing professional development</p>	<p>The programme of work focused on the requirements to support ongoing professional development and the development of the following guidance:</p> <p>Publication of The Royal College of Radiologists (2023) Standards for the education, training and preceptorship of reporting practitioners in adult chest X-ray. London</p> <p>Recommendations from report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore additional ways of facilitating the 4 core pillars of practice. • Leadership training for all radiographers, but especially those aspiring to advanced and consultant practice. • A guide for managers about enhanced practice and the employment of reporting radiographers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of leadership training, including evaluating the impact of putting the SoR leadership mentoring scheme into practice. • A second cohort of the SoR leadership mentoring scheme. • Draft profession-specific guidance on developing advanced and consultant roles which support practitioners and service leaders to incorporate the 4 pillars into practice. • To review and update the SoR 'Scope of Practice' guidance.