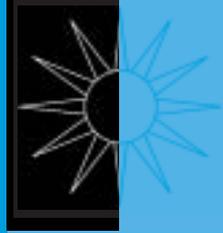


THE COLLEGE OF
RADIOGRAPHERS



RADIOGRAPHY

Clinical Supervision:

A position statement

THE SOCIETY OF
RADIOGRAPHERS





R A D I O G R A P H Y

Clinical Supervision: A position statement

College of Radiographers' Responsible Officer:
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Introduction

The purpose of this policy paper is to outline for the profession the concept of clinical supervision as part of professional development and life-long learning. Other publications will offer more detail on the subject and give guidance about implementation.

Context

As patient and public expectation of care increases it is necessary to ensure that all members of the radiography team are equipped to meet the modernisation and quality agendas of the National Health Service (NHS). Guidance issued by the Department of Health (DoH), combined with the wide-ranging governance agendas, emphasise the importance of integrating clinical and cost effectiveness with on-going staff development.

What is clinical supervision?

'Clinical supervision is a term used to describe a formal process of professional support and learning which enables individual practitioners to develop knowledge and competence, assume responsibility for their own practice and enhance consumer protection and the safety of care in complex clinical situations. It is central to the process of learning and to the expansion of the scope of practice and should be seen as a means of encouraging self-assessment and analytical and reflective skills.'

NHS Management Executive, (1993)

The concept of 'clinical supervision' is a defined process, already operating in a variety of clinical spheres, that establishes the nature of professional relationships, the management of clinical situations and the process of consultation. Hence, it clarifies the role of practitioners in working with colleagues for the benefit of improved patient and client care. Additionally, it is key to helping to identify how individuals use their personal skills and abilities to contribute to their own development and that of the Service. In particular for radiographers, it will assist in the development of reflective skills, facilitating closer links between theory and practise and enabling the individual to achieve a deeper understanding of what it means to be an accountable professional.

Clinical supervision should not be confused with the professional activity of *supervision* employed in the training of students and the supervision of staff as part of the managerial process, for example in verifying the work of assistants.

Clinical supervision is much broader and is an all-embracing term that covers participation in a support mechanism irrespective of the stage of career development. In practise this means that it is equally applicable to the student radiographer as it is to the consultant radiographer. However, on the continuum from novice to expert, in each distinct stage of an individual's career development clinical supervision should be the underpinning support mechanism enabling that radiographer to develop the skills required for progression.

Relationship of clinical supervision to management role

Clinical supervision relates to a support mechanism for individual practitioners and is not a managerial control system. It is equally applicable to all grades and types of staff working within the service. Clinical supervision cannot, however, be divorced from either departmental or organisational management. Good management and clear lines of responsibility and authority combined with adequate resources are necessary to aid, facilitate and support the implementation of clinical supervision on a sustainable basis.

Society and College of Radiographers (SCoR) Policy

Over the last two years SCoR has been developing policies and guidance to assist members in developing their radiography practice. The *Statements for Professional Conduct* (2002) provide the ethical framework within which radiographers must practise and as such are the standards against which members will be judged. Clinical supervision is a useful tool to facilitate life-long learning and to enable members of the profession to evidence their learning and practice effectiveness, and to demonstrate that their practice accords with the *Statements for Professional Conduct*.

The SCoR intends the profession to adopt and implement the broader concept of clinical supervision in association with the new career structure. However, the SCoR continues to recognise use of the established terms 'supervision' and 'direct clinical supervision' as relating to important but different individual professional activities undertaken at a number of levels in training students and staff, and in delivering the service.

The SCoR believes that to progress clinical supervision it must be embedded into all radiographers' practice irrespective of setting. Accordingly the SCoR is:

- developing a clinical supervision framework for radiography
- expecting institutions offering radiography education to develop courses that embed clinical supervision into the undergraduate curriculum, and to offer developmental opportunities for qualified practitioners to develop clinical supervision skills
- expecting clinical professional leads to introduce clinical supervision into every day practice.

Conclusion

The SCoR believes clinical supervision is an important development necessary to support effective clinical practice at all levels. It is expected that clinical supervision be introduced as a developmental process and as a component of professional development arrangements within departments as soon as possible.

Individuals or departments seeking support for the introduction of clinical supervision, should contact the professional and education team of the SCoR on 0207 740 7224.







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