



Ultrasound Advisory Group (UAG) Work plan 2018 - 2019

CONTEXT:

- Sonographers play a vital role in the patient pathway providing diagnostic ultrasound services across a wide range of clinical practice. This includes general medical ultrasound, obstetrics, gynaecology, vascular, musculo-skeletal, cardiac and paediatrics. Obstetric applications include the two scans that form part of a national screening programme for fetal anomaly. Sonographers are also responsible for the examination report which may include onward referral and further imaging or treatment recommendations. Sonographers undertake ultrasound examinations using contrast agents and ‘interventional’ examinations including biopsy and joint injections. Sonographers play a pivotal role in the integration of clinical practice, audit, education, and research findings. Many sonographers work in education or management, often maintaining a clinical workload as well. There are also many independent sonographers who are self-employed or who have formed their own companies to deliver NHS or private services.
- Sonographers can be from very varied professional backgrounds and many are Associate Professional members of the SCoR, along with Ordinary members from a traditional radiography background. There is no statutory registration available as a sonographer, achieving this is a SCoR objective. Ultrasound services in the UK are complex and often fragmented. They are delivered by a wide range of professional groups of which radiographer-sonographers are the largest. It is therefore important that the UAG is representative of this complexity. Further information can be found in the 2015 Centre for Workforce Intelligence report. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/review-of-the-sonography-workforce-supply>
- Sonographers are able to initiate clinical service developments and deliver improved patient outcomes through the implementation of findings from clinical research, clinical audit, clinical governance and clinical risk assessment.
- Sonographers are actively involved in advancing research and education for service development, and are able to work across professional boundaries.
- Sonographers may work as advanced practitioners and consultants across the four core domains. Many are formally recognised in these roles having achieved SCoR accreditation at the relevant level.

The Ultrasound Advisory Group was formed in early 2007 from the previous and informal Ultrasound Clinical Effectiveness Group. The UAG currently has 13 members from the wide ultrasound community including representatives specialising in vascular ultrasound and echocardiography. Group members are selected so as to provide advice on a wide range of ultrasound applications and also to provide a four country perspective. The UAG proceeds with the intention that sonographers should be supported and offered development so as to be able to maximise their individual and collective potential in delivering the best care for patients, service users, family/carers and staff. The UAG provides advice to UK Council but is not a policy making group.

The UAG is important in promoting the role of SCoR as the appropriate professional body and trade union for sonographers. It will support the work of the organisation in promoting accredited advanced practitioner and consultant practice with particular attention to the four core domains. The work of the UAG will provide support to and assist sonographers in providing evidence of impact of their role in respect to patient care and outcomes.



ULTRASOUND ADVISORY GROUP REMIT (FROM TERMS OF REFERENCE):

The remit of the UAG is to provide the Society and College of Radiographers with advice regarding the various ultrasound applications and the strategic direction for the profession. The UAG will offer appropriate support to deliver service improvements within the intra and inter-professional environment of ultrasound practice.

- To promote SCoR's policies, strategies and publications within the context of ultrasound to the benefit of patients, practitioners and services.
- To promote membership of the SCoR by ultrasound practitioners enabling practitioners and services to benefit from the SCoR's established leadership in medical imaging, radiation therapy and oncology.
- To provide information to support SCoR policy and strategy development.
- To develop and maintain strong links with relevant ultrasound societies or bodies with legitimate interests in the practice of ultrasound.
- To respond and comment on documents as requested by the organisation and its officers.
- To debate policy and evaluate its impact on the profession making representation as necessary.

TARGETS FOR 2018:

- Review UAG membership. All UAG members will have been or will be appointed for a four year term following application. Vacancies on the UAG will be advertised in Synergy News. The SCoR may also specifically request representation from certain specialities not represented on the UAG and where there are no suitable applicants.
Three UAG members are due to end their term at the meeting on June 6th. It is also the time to consider terms and roles of current specialist members of the group.
Completion date: End of June 6th 2018 meeting
- Elect a Vice-chair. This is in the Terms of Reference but there has not been one elected previously.
Completion date: End of June 6th 2018 meeting
- To advise UK Council on a wide range of issues relating to ultrasound. These may include career development, career pathways, best clinical practice, relations with other interested parties, working conditions and avoidance of work related musculo-skeletal disorders. These are given as examples only, there is a very wide range of issues relating to ultrasound that will fall within the remit of the UAG.
Completion date: On-going
- To provide support and advice to the SCoR's Professional Officer for ultrasound. This may include working on the development of SCoR documents or attendance at external meetings. Members of the group already attend meetings of the Fetal Anomaly Screening Programme (FASP) Ultrasound and Laboratory group and the Twins and Multiple Births Association (TAMBA) working group.
Completion date: On-going
Fetal Anomaly Screening Programme Ultrasound and Lab: Jacque Torrington
TAMBA: Alexandra Drought



TARGETS FOR 2018 *cont.*

- Members may if they wish and when there is a vacancy apply to become a Review Panel assessor for the Public Voluntary Register of Sonographers.
Completion date: When a vacancy arises.
- UAG members contribute to the annual updating of the SCoR/BMUS Guidelines for Professional Ultrasound Practice.
Completion date: November 25th 2018 (Commences 1st September 2018)
- To monitor ultrasound related documents in the SCoR's document library and advise when updating needed. To advise also on content and to review drafts.
 - The following documents are due for review/new edition during 2018:
<https://www.sor.org/learning/document-library/independent-practitioners-standards-and-guidance>
Completion date: End April 2018
 - Other documents relating to ultrasound may need minor additions or corrections (e.g. dropped web links) during 2018.
Completion date: On-going
- To review publications and proposals from external organisations. These include NICE, HEE, BMUS, RCOG and FASP. The list is for example only, there are many other organisations whose documents we may review.
Completion date: On-going

ACHIEVING THE TARGETS:

- The Chair with support from the professional officer for the group will prepare an annual report for SCoR Council.
- To confirm achievement of targets, the group will monitor the progress of on-going work to ensure it remains within time frames and produce a work plan log for each meeting.
- Accountability of the group is to UK council via the Chair.

ANTICIPATED COSTS:

Approximate costs for the work of the group are:

- 12 to 13 UAG members x 2 meetings a year. Travel costs.
- Supporting member attendance at events.
- Additional work /small group meetings on an 'as required' basis.

In addition funding may be required to produce promotional materials and publications.



BENEFITS:

- Increasing the profile and contribution of the Society and College of Radiographers in terms of ultrasound practice across the profession and across the broader healthcare environment.
- Enabling sonographers to engage with and benefit from the career progression framework and accreditation of practice.
- Ensuring that services and practitioners benefit from the SCoR's expertise in clinical and education matters.
- Ensuring that UK council benefits from the UAG's expertise in ultrasound related clinical and education matters.
- Provides a source of potential applicants for the Review Panel of the Public Voluntary Register of Sonographers.

RELATED LINKS AND DOCUMENTS:

<https://www.sor.org/practice/ultrasound/ultrasound-advisory-group>

Information on current members, TORs, previous minutes