

MINUTES OF THE RADIOTHERAPY ADVISORY GROUP (RAG) HELD ON TUESDAY 2nd JUNE 2015, AT THE OFFICES OF THE SOCIETY OF RADIOGRAPHERS, 207 PROVIDENCE SQUARE, LONDON SE1 2EW

PRESENT:

Louise Boyle {LB}
Geri Briggs {GB}
John Burton {JB}
Kate Burton {KB}
Angela Francis {AF}
Karen Smith {KS} {President}
Sheila Hassan {SH} {Chair}
Kate love {KL}
Rebecca Lynn {RL}
Julie Massey {JM}
Libby Mills {LM}
Ryan Yeo {RY}
Paula Horne {PH}

IN ATTENDANCE:

Sarah James {SJ}
Spencer Goodman {SG}

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and round table introductions were made.
- 1.2 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Charlotte Beardmore, Nikola Hawkins, Denyse Hodgson, Russ Hart, Gaile Smyth and Anne Laurie.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 19th NOVEMBER 2014

- 2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 19th November 2014, were approved as a true and accurate record.
- 2.2 Matters arising from meeting held on 19th November 2014 and not covered elsewhere.

There were no matters arising.

3. RT BOARD – most recent meeting

3.1 An overview was given by the Chair.

SH updated the group about the issues facing brachytherapy service delivery. These include: difficulties in recruiting to consultant posts, lack of training, increasing demand, as well as pressures arising from national guidance. This recommends having two designated specialists per centre and delivering MR as part of planning and first delivery of the first treatment.

Publications in progress include: RT access document, managing patient with cardiac devices and IMRT delivery guidance, these are all in the latter stages of publication and due imminently. There have been delays with the In-vivo dosimetry guidance document.

The Board has recently recruited a lay member, Linda Samuels, who is also SCoR lay representative.

There are plans for an annual RT conference to be organised by NHS Supply Chain, this will be on similar format and venue as the successful 2014 event. Planning is underway with input from all three professional bodies and suggestions for topics are welcomed. One suggested topic includes a balanced overview of the process of procurement in RT services.

SH updated the group that the collection of the RT Data will be transferring to PHE from April 2016. There is to be an Information and Strategy Group established, the membership is currently being identified and the SCoR have been asked to provide a name as a representative from the Board SH will send a request of interest to RAG members after meeting SH has recently written to Mike Peake to request that the RTSM representation is open and transparent. A brief overview of the groups' constitution and Terms of Reference were discussed.

ACTION: SH

4. NHS England – Radiotherapy CRG Update

4.1 SG gave an update.

SG attended the last meeting as observer and reported on the discussion and debate around the recent news surround a private provider introducing Proton machines into Wales and the need for a comment surrounding treatment of paediatrics and the necessary infrastructure required. On a related but separate note Protons for Ocular Melanoma were discussed as there are clearly some anomalies of referral patterns across the referring centres in the UK. What is unclear is whether patients from the south of England are offered protons and refuse treatment or are not being offered proton treatment. For further investigation.

SABR:

The bids from interested centres have been received and a decision announcement is expected soon identifying the successful centres.

Pricing and coding:

There was debate around the need for an aligned and cohesive approach to this by centres as commissioners are reviewing comparative data across Trusts. Equipment replacement monies are included and there are potential examples of this being diverted to acute services by Trusts. Work to identify this for the Cancer Taskforce is in process.

Workforce and 7 day working:

There was a debate surrounding the necessary workforce required and linking to the Cancer Taskforce. This linked to the update of radiotherapy equipment and a framework for providers.

The date of the next meeting is still to be confirmed.

5. REPORT FROM UK RADIOTHERAPY MANAGERS MEETING

- 5.1 AF reported regarding discussions at the recent RTSM in April. The following were raised as concerns: Therapeutic radiographers being removed from the Migration Advisory Committee Occupational Shortage List. SJ informed the group that the SCoR had provided relevant and robust data to make a case to remain on the list but this was insufficient given the current vacancy levels.

The RT managers expressed concerns regarding the role of therapeutic radiographers in the delivery of IORT and a possible need for national guidance. SH offered to take this to the next RT Board meeting and report back, as any guidance will need to be multi-professional.

ACTION SH

There was discussion about concerns regarding variation in roles and responsibilities across differing centres, in particular discussion about Advanced and Consultant level practice. The variation of roles, bandings, titles, and possible implications to transferability across centres. AF reported that she is co-ordinating a small working group of RTSM to collate and present an overview of the issues and will report back with findings to SCoR.

ACTION: AF

Other topics raised included the lively debate in response to Louise Coleman's presentation on SCoR accreditation, variability of RT Coding across centres and pressure on clinical placements now that the CfWi announcement of this years' workforce commissioning levels for radiography has been raised.

6. NCC-C REPORT

- 6.1 SL not in attendance, SJ to request an update from SL after the meeting.

ACTION: SJ & VA

7. SCoR UPDATES

- 7.1 SJ and SG gave updates on the following;

SJ welcomed SG to his first meeting since taking up his appointment as full time professional officer in Radiotherapy in December 2014.

SG gave an overview of the PCUK/SCoR project currently underway to explore and understand the role of the specialist therapeutic radiographer workforce in treating and caring for patients with prostate cancer'. Data gathering has finished now that the workshops have been held and online survey closed. A one day event is planned for 24th June 2015 in Birmingham, invitations have been sent out to all RTSM, one free place is available to every UK RT centre.

SG updated the group with progression of the development of the proton e-learning tool.

SJ and SG gave a brief presentation of the RT 2014 Census data. This led into discussion about workforce pressures which include pending staff retirements from both RT services and education providers, the role of Assistant Practitioners and variation in use of professional titles.

SJ asked for comments on the Principles of Safe Staffing Guidance for Radiography Leaders, as circulated with the agenda. This led to discussions about the existing therapeutic radiography staffing guidance documents and that review is required. SCoR would like to establish a sub-group to take this forward and SJ will post via Synapse for members to register their interest. It was agreed that the current SCoR Benchmark Figure Guidance (2005) is out of date, there was a request for something 'numerical' to replace it, with a view that without this RTSMs would be at a disadvantage compared to their professional colleagues: IPEM and RCR. SJ responded that the current SCoR stance on this is demonstrated within the recently published principles of safe staffing guidance; however this matter will need to be fully explored by the RAG sub group. LB also mentioned Podiatrists professional body staffing guidance which specifies student to lecturer ratios, which is helpful for education providers.

ACTION: SJ

SJ updated the group regarding joint working initiatives with UKONS, which includes planning an evening education event for Sept 2015 in London. The group were reminded that UKONS is free to join and all AHPs (including radiographers) are welcome to join. SH raised concerns that UKONS were setting up a radiotherapy nursing board that the name was too close to the Radiotherapy Board and may cause confusion SJ to feed this back.

ACTION: SJ

8. NCRI/CT RAD WORKSTREAM UPDATE

- 8.1 SJ confirmed there were no updates available from NCRI/CT RAD website specifically about the RT workstreams and confirmed the 2015 NCRI Conference is to be held 1-4 November in Liverpool.

9. NRAI UPDATE

- 9.1 PH gave an update although was unable to attend the last meeting. Diana Tait is now the Chair. There are plans to conduct another survey on the public awareness of radiotherapy. The questionnaire design is underway.

10. REPORT FROM RCR CLINICAL AUDIT COMMITTEE

- 10.1 KL reported on the recent meeting held on 15th May 2015. A number of audits have recently been published. Future audits include: Bladder (Mid 2016), Brachytherapy (reaudit) and breast (2018). RCR welcome ideas for future audits. KL requested that RTSMs encourage radiographers to submit abstracts as lead author to the forthcoming RCR audit conference.

ACTION: ALL

11. CHAIR SUMMARY

- 11.1 The Chair thanked the group for the discussion today.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 12.1 JB reported on progress with planning for Monklands Radiotherapy centre which is Beatson satellite. The centre is currently recruiting for radiographer staffing.
- 12.2 KL reported on the SRS /T Expert Reference Group, of which she is a member. The recent consultation proposing a small number of service providers has been challenged as it is recognised that the growth area for this modality will be patients with brain metastasis.

13. DATE OF 2015/2016 MEETINGS

- 13.1 The dates of meetings for 2015/2016 were agreed as:
- Wednesday 18th November 2015
 - Wednesday 27th April 2016
 - Wednesday 21st September 2016