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The Republic of Ireland sonographer reporting pilot study

Jackie Tyler, Lorelei Waring and Gareth C. Bolton

Institute of Health, University of Cumbria, UK

UK Imaging and Oncology Congress, Liverpool ACC, 10th to 12th June 2024.

Abstract

Background: In the Republic of Ireland (ROI) speciality radiographers (sonographers) undertake ultrasound examinations however, outside of obstetrics they are limited to providing a provisional report which a radiologist will verify. Sonographers in ROI are usually educated to the same standard as their independently reporting UK counterparts having attended CASE-accredited post-graduate courses. This report investigates the comparability of sonographer and radiologist reporting throughout ROI.

Methodology: The report follows a clinical audit methodology. To ensure full population representation CEOs from all hospitals in the ROI were contacted to take part. Participants were all sonographers, covering 6 of the 7 hospital groups of ROI. Each sent data from 400 randomly chosen non-obstetric examinations over 6 months, provisionally sonographer reported then reviewed by the supporting radiologist. The radiologist allocated an agreement score to the report based on the Riley et al (2010) grading system.

Results: 6037 ultrasound examinations were included in the audit. Over 99% of the reports fell into the acceptable range of Grades 1 and 2. 0.35% (21) of reports were classified as Grade 3. Only 2 reports within the Grade 3 classification were changed to upgrade the classification of pathology seen. No reports were classified as Grade 4.

Conclusion: This large, multicentre audit demonstrates the accuracy of sonographer reporting in the ROI with an acceptable agreement score of over 99%. Sonographers in ROI can report as accurately as their UK counterparts who report

independently. With the increasing demand for non-obstetric ultrasound, the existing workforce needs to be utilised efficiently.

References

Riley SJ, Groves CJ, Chandramohan M. (2010) 'Musculoskeletal Ultrasound: Audit of Sonographer Reporting', *Ultrasound*. 2010;18(1), pp.36-40.