

Tyler, Jacqueline, Waring, Lorelei, Dolan, Ann, Monahan, Michelle, Molumby, Sarah and Bolton, Gareth ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5453-4257> (2024)
The Republic of Ireland sonographer reporting pilot study. In: UK Imaging and Oncology Congress 2024 (UKIO 2024): Vision and values: Putting people first, 10-12 June 2024, Liverpool ACC, UK. (Unpublished)

Downloaded from: <http://insight.cumbria.ac.uk/id/eprint/7591/>

Usage of any items from the University of Cumbria's institutional repository 'Insight' must conform to the following fair usage guidelines.

Any item and its associated metadata held in the University of Cumbria's institutional repository Insight (unless stated otherwise on the metadata record) may be copied, displayed or performed, and stored in line with the JISC fair dealing guidelines (available [here](#)) for educational and not-for-profit activities

provided that

- the authors, title and full bibliographic details of the item are cited clearly when any part of the work is referred to verbally or in the written form
 - a hyperlink/URL to the original Insight record of that item is included in any citations of the work
- the content is not changed in any way
- all files required for usage of the item are kept together with the main item file.

You may not

- sell any part of an item
- refer to any part of an item without citation
- amend any item or contextualise it in a way that will impugn the creator's reputation
- remove or alter the copyright statement on an item.

The full policy can be found [here](#).

Alternatively contact the University of Cumbria Repository Editor by emailing insight@cumbria.ac.uk.

Sonographer Reporting Pilot Study

A report for Health Service Executive



Jacqueline Tyler*, Lorelei Waring, Ann Dolan, Michelle Monahan, Sarah Molumby, Dr Gareth Bolton



University of CUMBRIA

Background

Whilst demand for ultrasound imaging is continually increasing unfortunately the current workforce is not increasing at the same rate. Although ultrasound scanning is undertaken by different health professions throughout Europe it is only in the UK and Norway that speciality radiographers provide a full interpretive report and provide advice on further investigations that may be required (Harrison et al. 2021). Whilst sonographers within the UK have been reporting independently for over 30 years (Gibbs, Edwards and Harrison 2017), sonographers in The Republic of Ireland (ROI) currently provide a provisional report which needs to be verified by a radiologist. This is despite Sonographers in the ROI being educated to the same postgraduate, CASE-accredited standards as their UK counterparts. This pilot study investigates the comparability of sonographer and radiologist reporting throughout ROI.

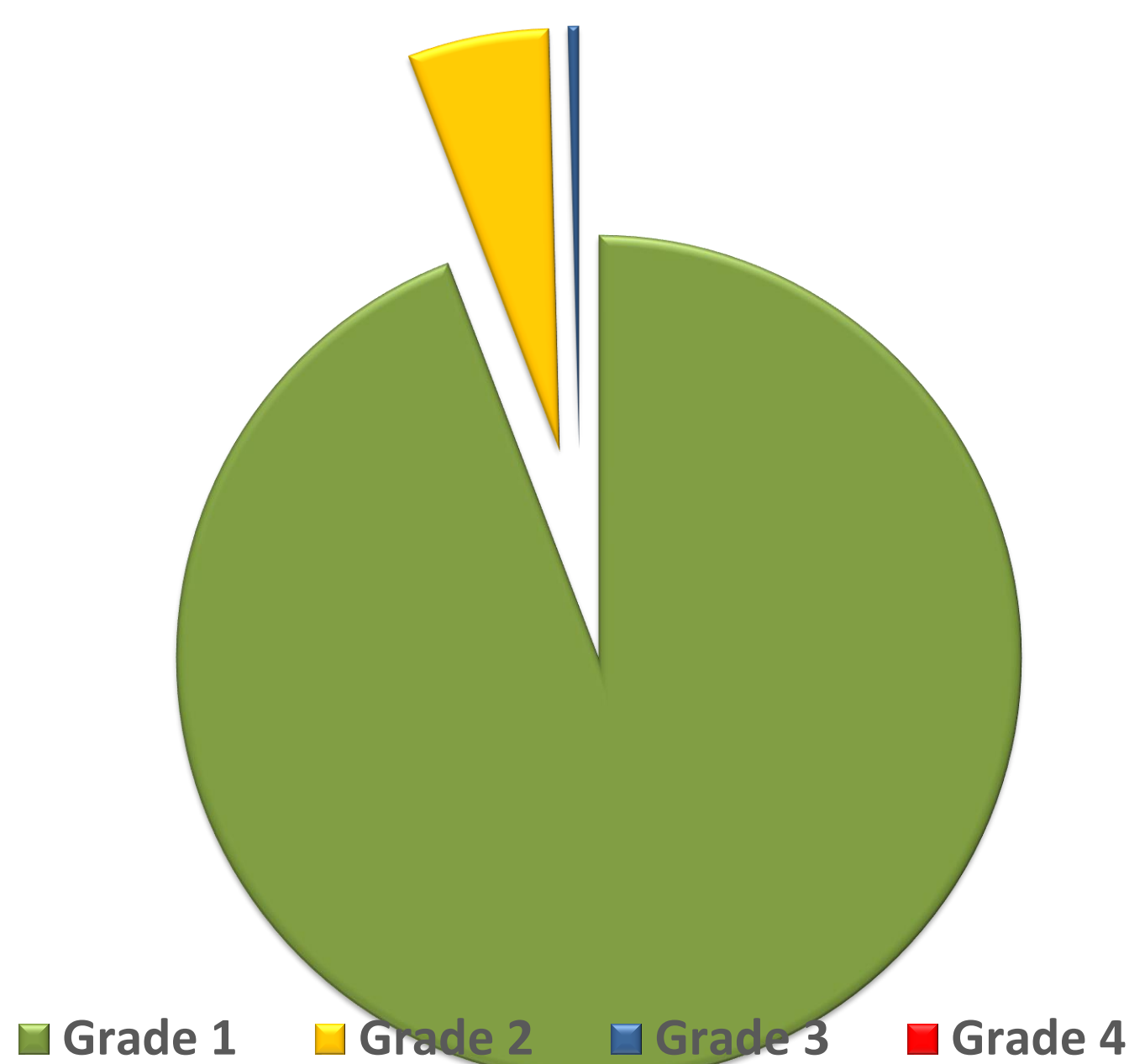
Method

This pilot study followed a Clinical Audit methodology. Participants were included from 6 of the 7 hospital groups within ROI. At each participant site, a radiologist reviewed the sonographer's reports and images and assigned an agreement score based on the Riley et al. (2010) grading system. The participants each sent 400 examinations over a 6-month period, including scans from all areas of non-obstetric ultrasound (NOUS).

Agreement Score	Description of the agreement score
Grade 1	Agree completely with the sonographer's report
Grade 2	Minor discrepancy unlikely to alter patient care
Grade 3	Potentially significant discrepancy
Grade 4	Definite, significant discrepancy likely to have adverse consequences for patient

Results and Discussion

Agreement grades across all participants



A total of 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) reports were classified as Grade 3 "Potentially significant discrepancy". In most Grade 3 cases the radiologist agreed with the findings but disagreed with the recommended clinical follow-up or the chosen imaging modality. Many of the Grade 3 examples submitted related to the reporting and coding of Thyroid nodules. Only 2 reports within the Grade 3 classification were changed to upgrade the classification of pathology seen. 0 reports were classified as Grade 4 "Definite, significant discrepancy likely to have adverse consequences for the patient". There are some cross-auditor differences in interpretation of the term "Potentially significant discrepancy" leading to discrepancies between sites in what is labelled Grade 2 and Grade 3.

Conclusion

Sonographers in ROI can report as accurately as their independently reporting UK counterparts and with the increasing demand for non-obstetric ultrasound, the existing workforce needs to be utilised efficiently. Recommendations for future practice include:

- Setting standards for advanced clinical practice in sonography based on the HSCP Advanced Practice Framework (2023).
- Develop a continuous audit cycle. All sonographers who undertake independent reporting should undergo regular audit.
- Structured and explicit support mechanisms should be put in place to ensure reporting sonographers are provided with adequate and clear guidance on the scope and limitations of their reporting roles.
- Clear protocols and guidelines for all ultrasound examinations should be developed which include clear referral pathways.

Refs

Gibbs, V., Edwards, H. and Harrison, G. (2017) 'INDEPENDENT REPORTING SONOGRAPHERS', *Imaging & Therapy Practice*, pp. 25-29.
 Harrison, G., Kraus, B., Martins Dos Santos, R., Noij-Rijkes, S. and Pedersen, M.R.V. (2021) 'The role of radiographers in ultrasound: A survey of the national societies within the European Federation of Radiographer Societies (EFRS)'
 Health Service Executive, (2023) *Health and Social care professionals (HSCP) Advanced Practice Framework*. HSE.
 Riley, S.J., Groves, C.J. and Chandramohan, M. (2010) 'Musculoskeletal Ultrasound: Audit of Sonographer Reporting', *Ultrasound (Leeds, England)*, 18(1), pp. 36-40

* Jacqueline.tyler@cumbria.ac.uk



VISION AND VALUES:
PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

10-12 JUNE 2024
ACC LIVERPOOL

