



Research and the Radiography profession: A strategy for research 2010 - 2015

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Published: Monday, April 26, 2010

Summary

The Society and College of Radiographers (SCoR) is pleased to present its third Strategy for Research, continuing the work of previous editions. This recognises the important link between research and clinical practice, ensuring an evidence-based culture for the radiographic profession. SCoR has determined strategic drivers and a five year plan for the profession to help managers produce their own departmental strategies for research and to aid those in the profession who wish to be research active but are unsure of the help and support available.

Executive summary

The Society and College of Radiographers (SCoR) is pleased to present its third Strategy for Research, continuing the work of previous editions. This recognises the important link between research and clinical practice, ensuring an evidence-based culture for the radiographic profession.

The previous research strategy noted that the majority of real and perceived barriers to research within radiography fall into the two categories of:

- research capacity and capability
- funding

The Society and College of Radiographers has determined strategic drivers and a five year plan for the profession to help managers produce their own departmental strategies for research and to aid those in the profession who wish to be research active but are unsure of the help and support available.

The Society and College of Radiographers gratefully acknowledges the work of its Research Group and Branwen Hide from the Research Information Network in the preparation of this document.

1.0 Vision

The vision of the Society and College of Radiographers (SCoR) is to foster professional growth and improve the standards of delivery and practice of radiographers by promoting leadership and by

expanding a body of knowledge through education and research.

2.0 Aims

SCoR's aims are:

- to encourage all radiographers to use research evidence as required by the Health Professions Council's proficiency standards¹ [1] and SCoR's Learning and Development Framework² [1]
- to assist those radiographers who wish to undertake research, promoting the use of current best evidence-based practice and investigating knowledge gaps
- to excel in the provision of best patient care by supporting radiographers to appraise evidence and implement best practice.

3.0 Strategic Drivers

The 2005-2010 research strategy³ [1] highlighted that the majority of real and perceived barriers to research fall into two categories:

1. Research capacity and capability

- Lack of defined career pathways
- Staff shortages
- Lack of training in research skills
- Lack of confidence

2. Funding

- Insufficient funding to support a research infrastructure
- Lack of funding opportunities

The Society and College of Radiographers has identified five main drivers to assist managers in producing their own departmental strategies for research and to aid those in the profession who wish to be research active but are unsure of the help and support available.

3.1 To develop a research environment that supports and encourages world class research

The SCoR will support those who wish to develop their research skills and therefore their capability to undertake research by:

- facilitating access to the required information resources
- promoting collaboration between clinical departments and educational centres, thereby affording greater access to information resources for clinical staff and an environment for mentoring
- promoting collaboration with other healthcare staff
- developing a web based resource to support research

- developing a mentoring scheme which supports and supervises those new to research
- developing a forum for the dissemination of information on research trials and projects
- maximising links to education programmes at universities and other related organisations where appropriate
- raising research awareness and promoting a culture of enquiry and critical thinking
- organising annual research events to showcase relevant research being undertaken in the field
- continuing to provide and promote the international peer reviewed journal *Radiography*.

3.2 To provide and develop the best researchers and research leaders

The SCoR will increase research capacity within the profession by:

- supporting and encouraging lifelong learning and training
- supporting research secondment opportunities
- establishing defined career pathways and implementing the national job profiles for AHP Researchers⁴ [1]
- promoting research leads within departments
- providing and encouraging career and professional development
- encouraging the application for Fellowship by Portfolio
- liaising with other organisations to develop new training and development resources as set out in the National Cancer Research
- Initiative (NCRI) report *Rapid Review of Radiotherapy and Associated Radiobiology*⁵ [1].

3.3 To establish clear and defined research priorities within diagnostic and therapeutic radiography

The SCoR will help radiographers and managers to focus on the main areas of research priority which are likely to create the greatest impact in practice and attract funding opportunities. These will:

- be determined by the profession through the SCoR Research Group and be reviewed periodically to ensure they are current
- link with objectives set by national funders
- recognise local and regional priorities and needs.

3.4 To bring benefit to society by ensuring research is put into practice

The SCoR will support radiographers to appraise evidence and implement best practice by:

- developing and providing examples of good practice
- ensuring radiographers and managers who are SoR members have access to the latest SCoR publications
- ensuring public and patient involvement in research priorities through engagement with the Public Patient Liaison Group (PPLG) established at the SCoR
- evidencing that research has an impact on service delivery
- encouraging interdisciplinary projects
- encouraging and supporting publication of high quality research articles in *Radiography*, the profession's peer reviewed journal.

3.5 To provide a web based resource for all radiographers

To help facilitate all the above and ensure ease of access, the SCoR will provide a web-based resource, which will include details of:

- research training courses
- funding and research opportunities

- how and where to apply for research funding
- where to access information, with the promotion of library services
- data management and handling
- examples of good practise
- how and where to publish
- relevant conferences and meetings
- latest research publications and findings
- database of PhD and Professional Doctorate projects.

4.0 Five-Year Strategic Plan 2010 - 2015

From the aims, a five-year plan with targets has been formulated to strengthen knowledge and improve research capacity and capability.

4.1 All radiographers to be involved in some level of research activity, ranging from being research users in the context of their practice or participants in research teams, to facilitators and leaders of research studies.

4.2 Encourage all radiographers to liaise with their local Research and Development Support Units which can facilitate free research training sessions and provide support for research activity. These will assist radiographers to appreciate and use substantiated evidence in their work, and help them in research they may undertake.

4.3 Encourage all clinical and university departments to develop and implement their own 5-year strategies for research in line with their organisation's research and development plans.

4.4 Encourage clinical and university departments to collaborate in meeting local, regional and national research plans and priorities.

4.5 Promote the adoption in radiography of the established national researcher job profiles for Allied Health Professionals (Generic Therapy)⁴ [1].

4.6 Have a research representative on each SoR regional council and national committee by June 2011, to confirm effective communication and sharing of information from the SCoR to regions/countries and vice versa.

4.7 Provide members with a comprehensive web- based resource of research advice and sources of training and funding. This will be a continually updated resource which will be reviewed every six months by the SCoR Professional Officer for Research to ensure relevance and accuracy.

4.8 Collaborate with industry partners to provide dedicated radiographer research funding awards to support radiographers undertaking research activity. *The College of Radiographers Industry Partnership Scheme* (CoRIPS) Research Awards will be re-launched in June 2010 with improvements to the application process and the introduction of two categories of award: novice researcher and experienced researcher.

4.9 Promote increased publication and dissemination of radiographers' research.

4.10 By June 2012, members will be able to apply for a CoR Award of Fellowship by Portfolio. This will assist those seeking joint research posts and higher levels of funding.

4.11 Promotion of, and support for, research hubs, networks and special interest groups via the SoR website.

4.12 The SCoR will undertake a comprehensive biennial survey of the profession to quantify research activity, measure progress towards the profession's current research plan and determine

the hindering factors.

4.13 Radiography will be represented in submissions by universities to the Research Excellence Framework in 2012/2013.

4.14 The SCoR will actively encourage promotion of research papers and posters at national, international and SCoR conferences and events and will present prizes for best proffered papers and posters at SCoR events.

4.15 Actively promote representation of radiography on national, European and international multidisciplinary consultations and panels thereby raising the contributions of the profession to best evidence-based healthcare.

4.16 Provide support for new researchers, writers and presenters, particularly through the web-based resource.

4.17 The *Radiography* journal will continue to meet the requirements of the profession in disseminating its research.

5.0 Conclusion

5.1 The development of a strong research culture is a necessity for the continued development of the radiographic profession.

5.2 This strategy and the five-year plan will increase research capacity and capability in the profession and will assist in securing funding for research.

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[1] <https://www.sor.org/learning/document-library/research-and-radiography-profession-strategy-research/references>