ESR and NDSC launch ESR iGuide

Introducing clinical decision support for imaging referral guidelines in Europe will help doctors choose the best exam for every patient

BY JOHN DAMILAKIS

ESR iGuide is a Clinical Decision Support (CDS) system developed by the European Commission’s (EC) and the National Decision Support Company (NDSC) for distribution in Europe. This product will make imaging referral guidelines available in a user-friendly way, supporting referring physicians in choosing the most appropriate exam for each of their patients. Used as a stand-alone tool or integrated with hospital ordering systems and electronic health records, ESR iGuide not only offers referrers up-to-date and scientifically valid guidance, it also provides an efficient, traceable and reliable way of selecting and ordering imaging exams in daily practice, improving the clinical workflow to the benefit of general practitioners and other specialists, radiologists, hospital managers and patients alike.

Accompanying ESR President Prof. Luis Donoso, “imaging referral guidelines are an essential tool to achieve this, but they are only available in 70 percent of European countries. The recommendations available are often different starkly from country to country even though there is no sound evidence for such divergences. Moreover, as developing and updating guidelines is a complex, arduous process, it is questionable whether these recommendations are and, not least, they are usually only available as a booklet or in PDF format. These and other factors contribute to a significant lack of use of referral images of medical imaging. At a time of budgetary constraints on health systems in many European countries, rising public concern over the risks of radiation exposure, and in the context of new EU legislation requiring member states to ensure guidelines are available to referrers, the ESR yesterday officially presented ESR iGuide as its solution to address these issues. The European Commission of Radiology’s Appropriateness Crite-

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