The ESR published a concept paper on value-based radiology on August 30, 2017. Prepared by the Professional Issues and Economics in Radiology (PIER) Sessions, the paper was presented at the 2018 European Congress of Radiology (ECR) in Vienna, Austria, in conjunction with the EuroSafe Imaging Stars network.

The European Society of Radiology’s clinical audit tool

Audit simply means comparing an element of clinical practice against an agreed standard. In radiological practice this might mean what we do, how we do it, what equipment we use, or how we interact with our patients, our colleagues and our environment. Therefore, the question we answer by conducting audit is: are we safe?

The ESR has both professional and educational responsibilities. In accordance with its principles, the ESR promotes the audit initiative 'EuroSafe Imaging Call for Action'. The ESR Audit and Standards Subcommittee and EuroSafe Imaging Subcommittees have been promoting the audit initiative across Europe, which also supports the implementation of articles 12 and 13 of the EU radiation protection directive.

Audit uses specific methodology in which a given performance is compared with a predefined standard. If the standard is not achieved, the reason for this is explored, change is implemented and a re-audit is carried out to ensure improvement. This methodology is often described as the audit cycle.

The European Commission published Guidelines for Clinical Audit in 2006, and these were summarised in a statement from the ESR in 2009. These guidelines and the statement would be suitable for the conduct of internal clinical audit. Although these guidelines for clinical audit may be implemented across Europe, it is anticipated that national or departmental standards and audit procedures will continue to exist as a systematic and continuing activity with a significant annual output of departmental audit data. Internal clinical audit should be in conjunction with external clinical audit which may be implemented by national legislation whereby existing audit bodies or auditors visit departments every few years. The ESR aims to develop a tool based on existing national variations within the new legal framework. International collaboration will help departments to comply with legislation, to monitor their own practice and to be well prepared for any external audit.

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