

BY ANASTASIJA MITOVSKA

# Macedonian Society of Radiology – challenges and achievements

As the only association in the Republic of Macedonia which unites radiologists both from the private and public sector, the Macedonian Society of Radiology over the past two years has stayed true to its mission, which is keeping its members up-to-date with new developments from the progressive field of radiology. The current number of 70 active members of the society have various duties including the acquisition of new methods and sharing experiences of their everyday work routine.

2016 and 2017 were quite dynamic years because of all the society's many activities. In September 2016, the society, under the presidency of Prof. Nadica Mitreska, organised the 6<sup>th</sup> Macedonian Congress of Radiology with participation from around the world. The congress took place in the beautiful city of Ohrid and it hosted experts from the field of radiology from Macedonia, Bulgaria, Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia, Greece, Germany, the UK and Turkey. The congress featured many booths and included a lecture by Prof. Deniz Akata, Chair of ESR's ETAP (European Training Assessment Programme) subcommittee. The subjects were from various areas of interest and the programme did its best to include every field of radiology.

Aside from the congress, the society gives constant support to and regularly participates in the expert meetings of the Macedonian Association of Radiological Technologists. The event that marked the year 2017 was the Symposium for Optimisation of Medical Exposure, organised by the society in cooperation with the Radiation Safety Directorate. This at the same time was a great opportunity to honour the International Day of Radiology since the symposium took place during that time. The symposium was part of an EU project and the main aim of the symposium was to introduce methods for the minimisation of the danger of radiation exposure during radiologists' and other personnel's everyday work as well as better management of patient safety.

The current management team of the society is focusing on various areas of interest, but the most important is improving and modernising radiological approaches in diagnostic and interventional treatments. Prof. Nadica Mitreska, together with the University Clinic of Radiology, also gives support and training to radiological technologists who are specialising in CT and MR diagnostics.

The society organises regular meetings and symposiums for its members to remain up-to-date on the newest developments and achievements in our field. These meetings are usually held 3 to 4 times a year. The latest expert meeting will be held at the end of the year.

The society constantly collaborates with doctors and other medical faculty from diverse hospital and

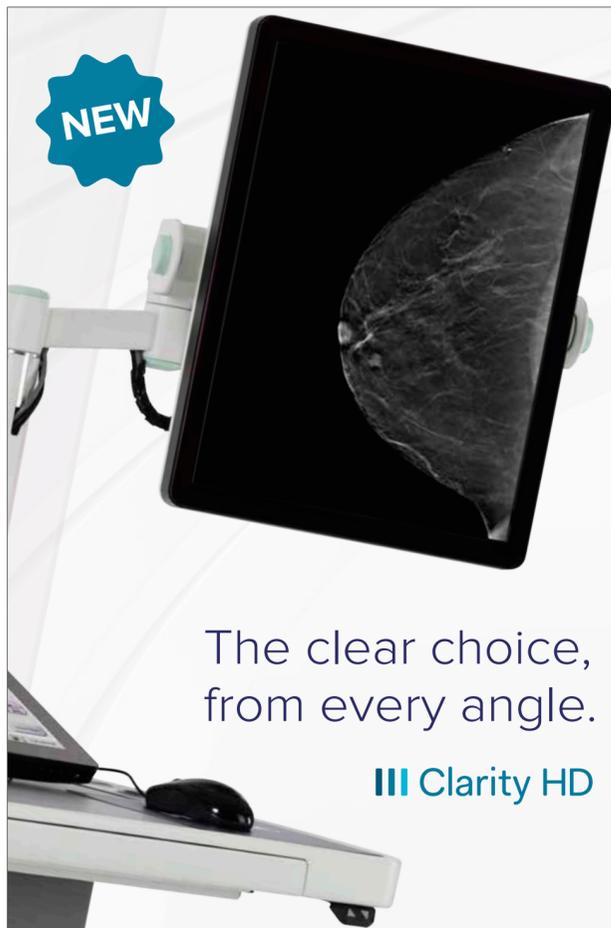
institutions, from both inside and outside of Macedonia. Our meetings are always enriched with the presence of professors and doctors from other fields of medical expertise and the discussions they spark.

However, the Macedonian Society of Radiologists is facing one of the biggest challenges since its formation. Currently, the healthcare system in Macedonia is suffering from a lack of radiologists. We are constantly urging the Ministry of Health to increase the number of specialisations in radiology, and in the last couple of years, we have slowly but surely been achieving positive results. The Ministry started approving more specialisations in our field, and we hope that the positive trend will continue, and that the society very soon will

see a growth in membership.

We are also trying to introduce radiology to the wider medical public as one of the most progressive fields of medicine and present its challenges and its progress through various channels of communication. One of the channels which we have found to be the most effective are the newsletters issued by the Doctors' Chamber of the Republic of Macedonia and the Macedonian Doctors Association. Through the articles published in these newsletters, we are trying to get the radiology closer to young doctors and interest them more in this field.

Anastasija Mitovska is an economist working in a bank and acts voluntarily as Secretary of the Macedonian Society of Radiology.



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**Find out more during ECR on booth x2-211**

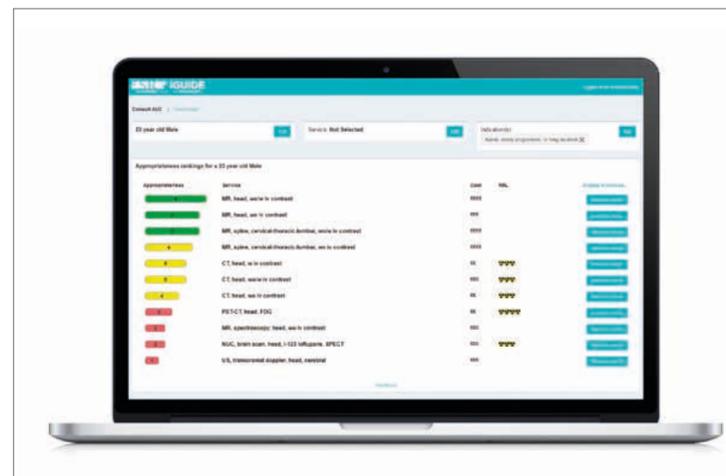
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1. Data on file and from public sources, 2017.  
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BY FLORIAN DEMUTH

# ESR launches new ESR iGuide clinical decision support portal at ECR 2018

When the ESR started a European initiative on guidelines and clinical decision support (CDS) more than five years ago, its main aim was clear: making evidence-based guidelines easily accessible to referring physicians. The launch of a publicly accessible web portal is a major milestone in the pursuit of this aim.



Understanding that the challenge in Europe is not the availability of guidelines, but keeping them up to date and easily accessible, the ESR has advocated the use of CDS technology to embed guidelines within the electronic clinical workflow at the point of patient care. The new ESR iGuide web portal is a complementary tool to the integrated ESR iGuide CDS system and widens access to the ESR's guidelines for appropriate imaging, based on the American College of Radiology Appropriateness Criteria.

**ESR iGuide web portal**  
The web portal is developed by National Decision Support Company (NDSC), the ESR's exclusive licensing partner. A stand-alone version of the ESR iGuide CDS system, the portal offers users two workflow options to consult the ESR's guidance on appropriate imaging. Each session starts with entering the patient's age and gender. In indication-driven mode, users then select one or more structured reason(s) for exam from a list of more than 1,800 clinical indications and scenarios. ESR iGuide processes these parameters and provides a list of relevant imaging tests rated by appropriateness and including a relative radiation level. In modality-driven mode, users start with the imaging examination they want to request, and then select the clinical indication(s) that match their patient's symptoms. The decision support feedback then displays the appropriateness score for the selected exam and other alternatives to consider.

Access to the ESR iGuide portal is completely free of charge for all individual users until September 30, 2018. Thereafter, it will continue to be a free service for all ESR radiologist members, with a €7 monthly subscription option for all other individuals. The portal is also designed to help ESR members, referring physicians, healthcare organisations and countries comply with European and international radiation protection standards. For this purpose, the ESR and NDSC offer organisational portal access and country-wide licenses. The latter are of particular relevance for national health authorities in the context of the implementation of the Basic Safety Standards Directive (2013/59/Euratom) in the EU, which mandates that member states must ensure imaging referral guidelines are available to referrers. For institutional users, the portal can be made available with a fully translated user interface and guidelines in the local language, and to better support the portal's use in clinical practice. Additional functionality, such as basic session data or PDF exports of decision support session information, can also be configured. For permanent free access, ESR members can register for portal access with the ESR MyUserArea. Other individuals are encouraged to sign up at [myESR.org/esriguide](http://myESR.org/esriguide) or [esriguide.org](http://esriguide.org) to receive free access until September 30, 2018. For users who wish to continue to access this service, NDSC offers a monthly subscription of €7 starting October 1, 2018.

**Integrated decision support**  
The ESR strongly advocates the adoption of clinical decision sup-

port systems for imaging referral guidelines as the best way to embed referral guidelines in the clinical workflow, increase adherence to guidelines, utilise imaging more appropriately and reduce unnecessary radiation exposure. Although the new portal offers a user-friendly solution if an integration into an electronic referral workflow is not an option, healthcare organisations are advised to fully implement integrated decision support. This is not only the most effective way of improving imaging referrals, it also provides full analytics capabilities to analyse referral patterns, improve performance, and optimise the utilisation of diagnostic imaging services.

ESR iGuide was launched at ECR 2015, and, since 2016, NDSC's European office has implemented ESR iGuide as part of pilot projects across Europe and the Middle East, to analyse the impact of CDS by comparing imaging referrals with and without decision support feedback. The first pilot projects concluded in 2017 with encouraging results. In Croatia, ESR iGuide was implemented at four hospitals across five locations as part of a pilot programme sponsored by the Croatian Ministry of Health. The go-live period consisted of two months' use of the system without appropriateness feedback, followed by two months with active decision support alerts. During the pilot phase, the percentage of appropriate requests improved by up to four percent, while the number of inappropriate referrals was reduced by up to three percent. Since the

end of the pilot phase, the rate of appropriate referrals has further improved through the use of ESR iGuide, with one hospital reporting over 88 percent of referrals as appropriate, 15 percent higher compared to the pilot phase. In Sweden, an ESR iGuide implementation was evaluated by comparing referrals that followed the CDS workflow to referrals without decision support. Results showed that the rate of inappropriate referrals when using ESR iGuide was around one percent, while 10 percent of non-CDS referrals were deemed inappropriate according to the ESR's guidelines.

**ESR iGuide at ECR 2018**  
Join us at the ESR iGuide booth in the EuroSafe Imaging Lounge (1<sup>st</sup> level ACV) for a demonstration of the ESR iGuide CDS system and

the new web portal. ESR and NDSC staff will be available to explain the workflow options, advanced decision support alerts, and analytics capabilities of ESR iGuide, and discuss implementation options. The ECR 2018 EuroSafe Imaging Poster Exhibition includes two posters related to ESR iGuide, detailing the completed ESR iGuide pilot projects and the work of the ESR Imaging Referral Guidelines Working Group. Go to the ECR Online and EPOS Lounge (1<sup>st</sup> floor ACV) to check out these and other EuroSafe Imaging posters. The EuroSafe Imaging Poster Exhibition includes submissions from Europe and across the world about the quality and safety initiatives of the ESR, European and international organisations, medical societies, patient organisations, radiologists, researchers and industry partners.

Don't miss today's sessions on CDS in the brand new Coffee & Talk format while you're at ECR. And join us for the **portal launch at the ESR iGuide Booth** today at 11:30 in the EuroSafe Imaging Lounge on the 1<sup>st</sup> level!

**Coffee & Talk Sessions**  
**Thursday, March 1, 10:30–11:30, Coffee & Talk C3 The right test the first time: clinical decision support systems**

- » Chairperson's introduction  
B. Brkljačić; Zagreb/HR
- » Reducing variance and improving diagnoses  
L. Donoso; Barcelona/ES
- » ESR iGuide pilot in Jönköping County in Sweden  
H. Stahlbrandt; Eksjö/SE
- » 'Trumpcare': where does CDS stand in the USA  
J.A. Brink; Boston, MA/US
- » Open forum discussion

**Thursday, March 1, 16:00–17:00, Coffee & Talk C11 Clinical decision support: challenges to overcome**

Moderators: D. Husseiny Salama; Cairo/EG  
M.R. Perez; Geneva/CH

- » Introduction  
G. Frija; Paris/FR
- » Structured strategies to combat the CDS challenges in Egypt  
D. Husseiny Salama; Cairo/EG
- » Challenges and solutions from NDSC  
M. Wassink; Vienna/AT
- » Open forum discussion  
L. Donoso; Barcelona/ES  
B. Mansouri; Algiers/DZ  
D. Husseiny Salama; Cairo/EG  
M.R. Perez; Geneva/CH  
G. Frija; Paris/FR  
M. Wassink; Vienna/AT

*These sessions are part of the EuroSafe Imaging campaign.*