Clinical Audit

Conducting clinical audit ensures the delivery of an effective and efficient service by identifying good practice and highlighting areas for improvement. Practitioners can use clinical audit as a means to ensure their practice remains evidence based and in the best interest of the patient.

Clinical audit is the systematic review and evaluation of current practice against research based standards with a view to improving clinical care (HSE, 2013). https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/qid/other-quality-improvement-programmes/auditsupport/clinicalauditdocuments.html

Council Directive 2013/59/Euratom definition “clinical audit” means a systematic examination or review of medical radiological procedures which seeks to improve the quality and outcome of patient care through structured review, whereby medical radiological practices, procedures and results are examined against agreed standards for good medical radiological procedures, with modification of practices, where appropriate, and the application of new standards if necessary;

The Medical Practitioner Act (2007) Section 7 requires all registered medical practitioners to participate in clinical audit and recommends that a minimum of one hour per month is allocated to audit activity.

The National Radiation Safety Committee and the Faculty of Radiologists undertook broad consultation on Clinical Audit requirements and have come together to produce the guideline document, Clinical Audit outlining the requirements in Ireland for Clinical Audit in Radiological practice. It can be used as a step by step guide to the implementation of structures and processes for an effective audit cycle.

Guidelines for Audit:

A clinical audit should look at the work of all healthcare professionals involved with ionising radiation and all elements of their work that affect the radiation doses received by patients. Currently the Medical and Dental Councils are responsible for providing written protocols on radiology practice.

The EU has issued guidelines to assist countries in meeting their clinical audit requirements –

The European Commission Guidelines on Clinical Audit for Medical Radiological Practices, 2009

In addition, the International Atomic Energy Agency, of which Ireland is a member, has issued a toolkit for clinical audit in diagnostic radiology;

A similar toolkit has been produced for Radiotherapy;


Medical Council has issued criteria for clinical audit as required in the Irish legislation, these guidelines are available here.

**Dental Practice: Guideline Documents for Audit**

The Dental Council has produced criteria for clinical audit.

The Audit Subcommittee of the Dental Radiation Safety Committee of the HSE (Dublin North East and Dublin Mid Leinster) produced the document "An Introduction to Audit Compliance with SI 478 (2002)" in Dentistry for use by dentists in the HSE and it is available here.

The Irish Dental Association has a Clinical Audit manual available to members of that association as a download from their website: [http://dentist.ie/Requirements for Clinical Audit in Radiology in Ireland, 2011](http://dentist.ie/Requirements for Clinical Audit in Radiology in Ireland, 2011)

**Links to previous Audits**

National Audit of Medical Radiological and Radiotherapy Practices (2012)

Audit of the Dosimetry Calibration of Prostate Intensity modulated Radiation Therapy.pdf (size 52.5 KB)

National Baseline Audit Radiology and Nuclear Medicine 2008

National Baseline Audit for Radiotherapy 2008

Review of Dental Compliance 2010