

Title: Barriers to research utilisation amongst diagnostic radiographers in the UK.

Abstract

Introduction: Lack of research uptake and utilisation compared to other Allied Health Professions prompted the publications of four consecutive research strategies by the Society and College of Radiographers in attempts to bridge the gap.

Aims: The aim of this study was to find out perceived barriers to research utilisation amongst diagnostic radiographers in the UK.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional survey was conducted in 2016. A random sample was used to select 1,080 radiographers who were sent a link to the web-based questionnaire.

Results: The response rate was 72.8%. Most radiographers were Band 6 (n=296, 47.0%) holders. The commonly identified perceived barriers to research utilisation included lack of time for research-related activities, how to develop research questions, find relevant literature and lack of authority to change practice. It was found that 142(50.7%) of BSc and 26(44.0%) of MSc had difficulty in finding relevant literature. Interestingly, 20(40%) of the Band 8 radiographers perceived themselves to lack the authority to change practice. In the area of practice category, sonographers (n=35, 57.4%) were more likely to perceive themselves to lack authority in changing their practice. Whilst attitude was positive research utilisation, 198(31.4%) held the view that research was not in their scope of practice. A further 127(20.2%) felt radiologists and physicists should review research that were relevant to their practice. It emerged that highest educational qualification was associated with a higher probability of knowledge of research skills and attitude to research utilisation.

Conclusions: The study concludes that dissemination mechanisms to facilitate research utilisation are lacking. Radiology service managers and the Society and College of Radiographers have key roles to play in research utilisation in terms of time allocation and training in research skills.