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previously identified, for example significant weight loss and gain, changes in spine curvature and the impact of hair loss.

Since the new technique is more consistent with conventional techniques, radiographers are more satisfied with the technique.

**Conclusion:** We have successfully implemented a novel technique for CNS treatment which utilises advanced technology.

\*(Analysis of setup is pending due to the very recent implementation of this technique)

#### Numerical References

No references - Discussion of implementation of a new technique in the department. Full analysis is still ongoing.

### IMPROVING RETENTION IN RADIOTHERAPY. DELIVERING AN INTERVENTION TO ENABLE CLINICAL SUPERVISORS TO SUPPORT AND NURTURE STUDENTS TO ACHIEVE THEIR FULL POTENTIAL

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#### Submission Category:

Non-Student

#### Abstract:

**Keywords:** Therapeutic Radiography; Attrition; Well-being; Reflection; Supervision

**Introduction:** Dissatisfaction with clinical placement is rated the most frequent reason for leaving radiotherapy programmes<sup>1</sup> and healthcare programmes generally<sup>2</sup>. As reported in the “Mind the Gap” project<sup>3</sup> different generations of students and staff have different expectations and needs. Furthermore, evidence has shown when students feel part of the team, they learn more effectively and have a positive experience<sup>4</sup>. A collaboration between UWE and CUoL, supported by the Office for Students Strategic Interventions in Health Education Disciplines Challenge Fund, investigated how enhancing clinical supervisors awareness of students needs through training, could provide an innovative approach to reduce attrition.

**Method and Materials:** The ethics approved project is delivered in two phases. 1) Engagement phase: Clinical supervisors for UWE and CUoL participated in a facilitated online student support discussion forum. Student feedback was gained via an online placement experience survey. This data informed the educational intervention design (study day and online resources). 2) Implementation phase: The study day has run in London and the Southwest of England and evaluated through participant feedback and student feedback on placement experience. The study day will run again in autumn 2019.

**Results:** Feedback from clinical supervisors highlighted a desire to support students on placement but indicated a need for guidance on student well-being. Feedback from students indicated their placement experience varied widely and related to specific interactions with different staff members<sup>5</sup>. The study day and resources were designed around a central well-being theme and has received positive feedback.

**Conclusion and Discussion:** The positive support for the intervention affirms its need. It provided delegates with reflection time, supervisory skill development and is supported by online resources. Further study days and feedback will provide additional impact data and may indicate its contribution to retention.

#### Numerical References

1 - SCoR (2014) Analysis of student and recently qualified radiographers survey 2014. <https://www.sor.org/learning/document-library/analysis-student-and-recently-qualified-radiographers-survey-2014> 2 - Hamshire, C., Willgoss, T.G. & Wibberley, C. (2012) “The placement was probably the tipping point” – The narratives of recently discontinued students, *Nurse Education in Practice*, 12:182-186 3 - Jones, K., Warren, A. & Davies, A. (2015) Mind the Gap: Exploring the needs of early career nurses and midwives in the workplace. *Health Education West Midlands*. 4 - Houghton, C. (2013) ‘Newcomer adaptation’: a lens through which to understand how nursing students fit in with the real world of practice, *Journal of Clinical Nursing*, 23:2367–2375 5 - Armstrong-James, L., Khine, R., Thorne, R., Tuckey, M., & Bennett, C. (2019). Radiotherapy students’ perceptions of support provided by clinical supervisors. *Journal of Radiotherapy in Practice*, 1-5.

### INSPIRING THE NEXT GENERATION OF THERAPEUTIC RADIOGRAPHERS - OUR STORY

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**Keywords:** Work experience, students, radiotherapy

**Introduction:** By 2030 there will be over 7 million jobs that require Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) skills<sup>1</sup>. There are 14 AHP roles available in the NHS, of which, there are 3217 Therapeutic Radiographer jobs in the UK<sup>2</sup>. The SCoR identified a 33% decrease in students studying Radiotherapy at university in 2018<sup>3</sup>. Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) reported a 27% decrease in applicants to healthcare programmes in 2014-2018<sup>4</sup>.

Work experience has been an important tool utilised by students to experience a professional work environment and understand their chosen career choice<sup>4</sup>. A recent study by UCAS found that two thirds of employers look for graduates who have some relevant work experience<sup>4</sup>; this includes apprenticeships<sup>5</sup>.

We developed a structured work experience programme to help increase the profile of Radiotherapy for STEM students from local schools, and to address recruitment issues we are experiencing.

**Methods and Materials:** Initially, staff focus groups were held to understand barriers and limitations to having work experience students within our department.

A pilot work experience program was designed including the following elements:

1. 4 days showcasing all aspects of radiotherapy
2. Limited patient contact
3. Supervised LINAC time

Our Learning and Development team chose year 10 STEM students who applied to their school for healthcare based work experiences.

Feedback sessions with the students enabled us to understand their experiences so that we could adapt our approach for future cohorts.

**Results:** The pilot group found that the duration of the experience was too long and could have included more patient contact.

For the next cohorts, we shortened the experience to two days in radiotherapy and two days in the diagnostic department. This allowed for more patient contact and showcased key aspects of both professions.

93% of 14 students enjoyed every aspect of the work experience programme. In particular, they enjoyed seeing the different roles available within radiotherapy, seeing the LINACs and having patient contact.

**Conclusion and Discussion:** Feedback from the students, patients and staff suggest that this work experience was successful and may help to address recruitment and retention across the profession.

#### Numerical References

(1) Science Museum Group. Why is STEM Important for Society? Available from: <https://transformingpractice.sciencemuseum.org.uk/why-is-stem-important-for-society/> [Accessed 17th July 2019]. (2) The Society and College of Radiographers. Census of the Radiotherapy Radiographic Workforce in the UK, 2015. Available from: [https://www.sor.org/sites/default/files/document-versions/census\\_of\\_the\\_radiotherapy\\_radiographic\\_workforce\\_in\\_the\\_uk\\_2015\\_final\\_2.pdf](https://www.sor.org/sites/default/files/document-versions/census_of_the_radiotherapy_radiographic_workforce_in_the_uk_2015_final_2.pdf) [Accessed 17th July 2019]. (3) The Society and College of Radiographers. Improving Retention of the Radiotherapy Workforce – The Role of Practice Placements in Student Attrition from Pre-Registration Programmes in England: Full Report. Available from: <https://www.sor.org/learning/document-library/improving-retention-radiotherapy-workforce-role-practice-placements-student-attrition-pre-8> [Accessed 17th July 2019]. (4) UCAS. Is Work Experience Important? Available from: <https://www.ucas.com/connect/blogs/work-experience-important> [Accessed 17th July 2019]. (5) Health Education England. Allied Health Professions. At the forefront of improving care – a year in review 2017/2018. Available from: <https://www.hee.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/documents/AHP%20National%20Report%202017-18.pdf> [Accessed 17th July 2019].