questionnaire findings, in order to provide a deeper understanding of the processes involved and allow a separate methodology to either reinforce or reject findings.

Results: Questionnaire response rate was 78%. 81.8% of radiographers who participated agreed that reflection is an essential part of their professional learning. Of the radiographers who responded 96% said they could recall engaging in informal reflection. Fewer could recall recently practicing formal reflection. When asked if they feel their work practice improved after reflecting informally 89.5% of radiographers agreed. Compared to informal reflection, less agreed that engaging in formal structured reflection had improved their work practice (76.4%). Focus group data results suggest that radiographers believe informal reflection is an essential element of their professional learning, and that it has a direct beneficial impact on their patient care. There is a lack of consensus on the practice of formal reflection, with many radiographers citing barriers such as lack of time, training and evidence to support its use.

Conclusion: This study has found that therapy radiographers within the Christie NHS Trust believe engaging in reflective practice directly benefits their personal work and, by inference, improves patient care. Informal reflection is considered more effective and easier to employ. It should therefore be acknowledged by educators and professional bodies as the dominant reflective process.

To encourage the adoption of formal reflective practice, researchers and theorists should work on unifying the paradigm around a more simplistic, focused approach. Further research investigating the impact of an appropriate reflective model within the radiotherapy clinical setting using a robust qualitative study design is recommended.

PO-1020 Occurrence of visual phosphenes during radiation therapy of the head
A. Timmers1, W.J.M. De Kruijf1, T. Rozema1
1Institute Verbeeten, Klinische Fysica & Instrumentatie, Tilburg, The Netherlands

Purpose or Objective: We investigated the occurrence of visual phosphenes during the irradiation of the head. Visual phosphenes may occur because of direct stimulation of the retina by ionising radiation or by the Cerenkov irradiation that is generated in the eyeball. These are 2 different physical processes with their own characteristic visual sensation for the patient. We hypothesise that the direct stimulation of the retina is perceived as flashes of light, whereas the Cerenkov effect is perceived as a coloured light source. Therefore, we asked on the paradigm around a more simplistic, focused approach. Further research investigating the impact of an appropriate reflective model within the radiotherapy clinical setting using a robust qualitative study design is recommended.

Materials and Methods: The inclusion criteria for the study were: treatment on the head, treatment plan with at least 3 fractions, and an informed consent. The patient was asked to complete a survey after each treatment fraction. We specifically ask for the occurrence of flashes of light and/or the occurrence of coloured light. Moreover, we ask for a description of the perception. We distinguish between 6 MV and 10 MV treatment plans. The dose relation has been investigated for a subgroup of 17 patients.

Results: 1) Approximately 60% of the patients with 6 MV plans and about 70% of the patients with 10 MV plans observe light flashes or coloured light at least once during their treatment. Often both light flashes and coloured light are observed at the same fraction. However, it also occurs that only light flashes are observed or only coloured light is observed. 2) If light flashes or coloured light are perceived this occurs in approximately 70% of all treatment fractions for 6 MV beams, approximately 80% of treatment fractions for light flashes in 10 MV beams and approximately 90% of treatment fractions for coloured light in 10 MV beams. 3) The subgroup is too small to establish a dose relationship. However, below an average dose of more than 150 cGy in one retina and more than 100 cGy in one eyeball, the patients in our subgroup perceive both phenomena at every fraction.

Conclusion: We have characterized the occurrence of visual phosphenes in our clinic. A relatively large number of patients perceives these phenomena. A dose relationship cannot be established but seems to exist.