CoRIPS Research Award 070

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Awarded £2295.29

Under the spotlight: exploring the role of the consultant therapy radiographer through the perspectives of medical and healthcare practitioners - a qualitative inquiry

Lay Summary

Over the past four years, changes in the therapeutic radiography workforce have permitted the development of a consultant practitioner role in clinical practice. Clinical duties that were once performed by the clinical oncologist are now being shared in some trusts by consultant therapy radiographers who are deemed as experts in their scope of practice. For this PhD research, the aim is to explore the development of such a role. In addition to understand what it means to be a consultant radiographer, the purpose of labelling someone with the title “consultant” and whether the role is recognised and accepted by the medical counterparts. Likewise, the research additionally aims to consider the aspirations of consultant radiographers and whether they all strive to be equal to their medical colleagues; yet also address whether such a role will provide strengthened relationships among interdisciplinary teams or actually encroach into their territories.

Description of the project:
Principle Aim of the study

The research project will explore the role of the consultant therapy radiographer, from the perspectives of the medical and healthcare practitioners

Core Issues to address

- Define the title “Consultant” and discuss the professional identity attached to this term.
- Explore the evolution of the non-medical consultant practitioner and consider why it has been created.
- Identify whether medical and healthcare practitioners appreciate the notion of consultant practice.
- Acknowledge if medical and healthcare practitioners perceive the role of the consultant therapy radiographer to be fundamental and crucial within radiotherapy services
- Ascertain if “blurring” of role boundaries actually exists amongst the consultant therapy radiographer and medical and healthcare practitioners.
- Investigate whether “medical dominance” is prevalent in a healthcare setting and acts as a barrier towards role development and expansion for allied health professionals.

Intended Outcomes

The outcomes of the research will hopefully provide useful information or guidance for departments interested in establishing and implementing a Consultant Practitioner role. Likewise, the results will benefit any training and development needs or assist in creating a development framework if departments are to pursue a Consultant Practitioner role. In addition, the results will be useful for the professional body by providing useful evidence through the viewpoints and hence may inform further development and understanding of the role.

Review of Literature

The NHS has been experiencing significant changes in order to improve the services offered to patients, (DOH, Cancer Reform Strategy 2007). For instance, in therapeutic radiography and oncology service provisions there has been a drive for improving the “patient’s experience of care”
References:


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