

CoRIPS Research Award 021:
Liverpool investigation of virtual reality in radiotherapy (LIViRR)

An important innovation in Radiotherapy training is the introduction of virtual reality training packages throughout England. In Liverpool the Virtual Environment for Radiotherapy (VERT) allows students to operate a simulated clinical linear accelerator (eg altering treatment parameters, positioning a virtual patient, inspecting the distribution of radiation dose). However, might exposure to the VERT induce unwelcome symptoms in students (“cybersickness”)? We measured a range of visual functions in a group of students before VERT exposure and used a questionnaire (the VRSQ) to record pre- and post-exposure symptom scores on two occasions. In this presentation we will report the visual characteristics of our student group; a number of them cannot benefit from VERT because of pre-existing eye conditions. The VRSQ results suggest that while VERT induces measurable changes, these are neither large nor consistent enough to suggest problematic changes in visual function or the routine occurrence of distressing symptoms.