Introduction to clinical audit

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By definition, clinical audit is a systematic examination or review of medical radiological procedures. It seeks to improve the quality and the outcome of patient care through structured review whereby radiological practices, procedures and results are examined against agreed standards for good medical radiological procedures. Modifications of practices are implemented where indicated and new standards applied if necessary.

The EC Directive 97/43/Euratom (MED-directive) introduced the concept of clinical audit for the assessment of medical radiological practices (diagnostic radiology, nuclear medicine and radiotherapy). All Member States are required to implement clinical audits in accordance with national procedures.

The methodology for undertaking a clinical audit will be explained with reference to the recommended audit cycle and the audit spiral. Clinical audit should be a multidisciplinary, multi-professional activity. The audit process should cover the complete clinical pathway in radiological practices and address three main elements: structure, process and outcome. The presentation will also review the level of clinical audit activity undertaken in Europe.

References

1. Clinical Audit in Radiology 100+ Recipes, Editors: Ray Godwin, Gerald de Lacey, Adrian Manhire, Published by: The Royal College of Radiologists.
2. EC Directive 97/43/Euratom (Medical Exposure Directive).