



Group purpose

The East of England Radiotherapy Network Consultant Radiographer group is responsible for the support and development of Consultant Radiographer collaborative practice across the region.

In summary, the Consultant Radiographer group is responsible for:

- Providing peer support and critical companionship to established / trainee / newly appointed Consultant Radiographer posts across the network
- Building successful collaborative partnerships to develop and support the advancement of therapeutic radiographer practice across the network
- Working collaboratively to produce ODN documents, policies and procedures, in conjunction with other ODN groups as appropriate.
- Undertaking regional projects with the aims to share and publish outcomes locally, regionally and nationally

Group Members

The group members from the five constituent providers of radiotherapy within the East of England making up the Network are:

- Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (CUHFT)
Kate Burton, Neuro-Oncology
- East Suffolk & North Essex NHS Foundation Trust (ESNEFT)
Rachel Laker (Ipswich site), Breast
Keir Williamson (Colchester site), Breast
- Norfolk & Norwich University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (NNUH)
Kim Whitlock, Breast
Sam Worster, Brachytherapy
Peter Anthony, Prostate
- North West Anglia NHS Foundation Trust (NWAFT)
Helen Gregory, Palliative
Aileen Considine, Prostate

There are currently no members from Mid and South Essex NHS Foundation Trust (MSEFT)



The membership of the Consultant Radiographer group comprises the following:

- Chair – Rachel Laker
- Deputy Chair – Kim Whitlock
- Secretary – On rotational basis to be agreed at each meeting

Highlights to date

- Collaborative presentation at the East of England study day
- Critical companionship
- Synergy article (pending 2025)
- Introduction and support of new members
- Assessment of educational / supportive needs for aspiring Advanced Practitioners in the East of England Radiotherapy Network
- Developed method of assessment for area for research and publication ready for data collection beginning April 2025
- Benchmarking of Consultant Radiographer regional collaboration nationally
- Assessed standardised job descriptions

East of England study day presentation

A review of consultant-level practice across the East of England ODN was completed. This investigated how the region has used the development of consultant therapeutic radiographers within the skill mix of radiotherapy departments, to meet service need. It highlighted the services these roles provide for our patients and across the wider multi-disciplinary team, as well as the positive impact that they are having at a systems wide level.

These investigations highlighted the benefits of a more collaborative approach across the region and the early challenges such collaboration may encounter.

This presentation was the driver for the group formation.

EXPLOITING THE STRENGTH OF SKILL MIX TO MEET SERVICE NEEDS: BUILDING A CONSULTANT RADIOGRAPHER TEAM ACROSS THE REGION

Kim Whitlock,
Consultant Therapeutic Radiographer, NNUH

Kate Burton,
Consultant Therapeutic Radiographer, CUHFT

Rachel Laker,
Consultant Therapeutic Radiographer,
ESNET (Ipswich)

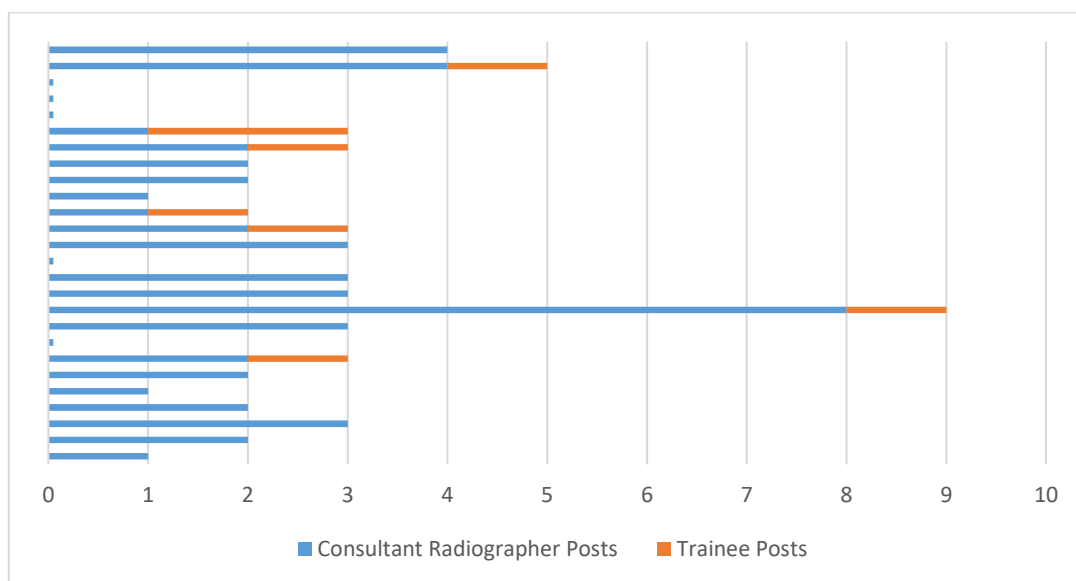
Helen Gregory,
Consultant Therapeutic Radiographer, NWAFT



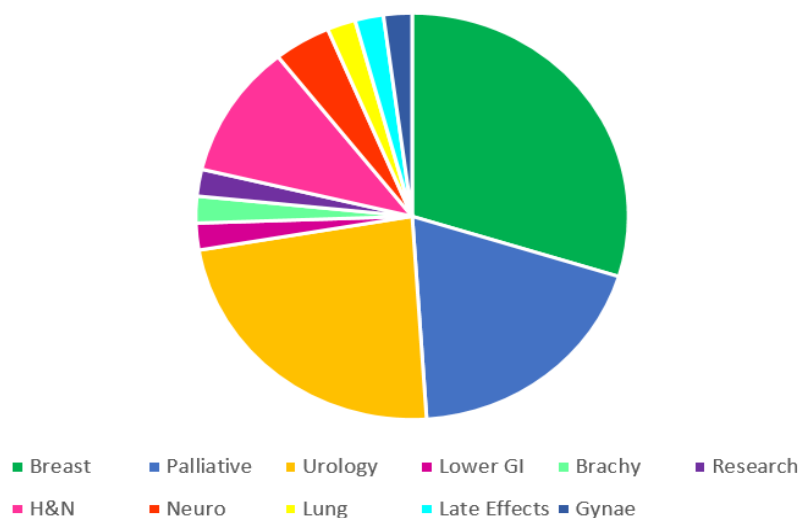
National benchmarking of Consultant Radiographer regional collaboration

Benchmarking questionnaires were distributed nationally to each radiotherapy centre, via the radiotherapy network. This was to investigate the Consultant Radiographer workforce and if other regions had similar collaborative groups.

Workforce – Most centres ranged between 1- 3 Consultant/Trainee Radiographers in post (with 1 centre having a significantly higher number). Funding was cited as the main barrier to roles.



Breast, Urology and Palliative being the main areas covered by Consultant/Trainee Radiographers



The benchmarking study highlighted that our Regional Consultant Radiographer group was unique and there was no other such collaboration nationally.

Synergy article

Following on from the benchmarking study the group approached the SOR regarding possible publication of an article regarding the group and the benefits of regional collaboration. There was great support for the promotion of this way of working. An interview has been completed and a draft article is awaited. This can be highlighted in future reports once published.

Aims for 2025

In addition to continued items

- Move towards a draft publication of the Impact Study with data collection and discussion of the results analysis
- Continue to assess the validity of educational support for aspiring Advanced Practitioners
- Continue to assess and develop shared regional documentation as need requires (e.g. competencies, business cases, SOP)
- Continue to support new and established posts within the region
- Promote the impact of advanced / consultant roles regionally to encourage new role development
- Promote the group nationally and provide support for other regions
- Support extension of role development across the region e.g. cross-site interviews, new job description review

Funding requirements to support group for 2025

At the end of the 2024 series of meetings, members agreed that the group was of value to continue, and quarterly meetings were appropriate and achievable. The most suitable day for the majority of the group was agreed and future dates were suggested.

Funding requirements to continue the group;

Venue hire (Active Business Centre, Bury St Edmunds)	= £160 + vat per meeting
Welcome refreshments	= £17.50 + vat per meeting
Total for 4 meetings per series	= £710.00 + vat

Challenges and barriers

Workforce and clinical workload challenges were highlighted as the main barriers preventing or reducing engagement with the group