

As you know, the South East London Integrated Care System (SEL ICS) is moving to an electronic GP requesting system for imaging scans (ICE) on 5 October 2023.

The implementation of ICE has highlighted that we need to move towards a more robust clinical governance system to ensure we are meeting regulatory and CQC requirements in relation to Non-Medical Referrers (NMRs) requesting imaging scans.

To support this implementation, SEL is developing a SOP which details compliance with IRMER regulations for NMRs in GP practices. The SOP will state that within six months all NMRs and GPs will need to have completed the IRMER training course outlined below (by 5 April 2024). There will be a local audit process to confirm this. This timeframe takes into account the current pressures on primary care and overall patient safety considerations.

IRMER regulations underpinning NMR imaging requests

A NMR must be a registered health care professional. This means that they must be a member of a profession regulated by a body mentioned in section 25(3) of the National Health Service Reform and Health Care Professions Act 2002(a). At present, this excludes physician associates, nursing associates and administrative staff.

NMRs should receive appropriate training prior to being entitled as a referrer and making requests involving ionising radiation. This training must include:

- Principles of radiation protection
- Benefits and risks of the examinations being referred for and an understanding of the dose received from that examination and the ability to identify if there is a safer alternative to the requested exam.
- Ionising Radiation Regulations 2017 and the Ionising Radiation (Medical Exposure) Regulations 2017 IR(ME)R17 Regulations
- Responsibilities of NMR in relation to patient safety and clinical governance
- Overview of local referral pathways, including the use of electronic referral systems where appropriate and the cancellation process
- Availability and use of referral guidelines e.g. iRefer (RCR)
- Introduction to the governing legislation
- Professional and legislative responsibilities.

Changes to IRMER training requirements for NMRs

The Medical Physics Experts at King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust and Guys and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust are offering to provide a TEAMS training session (in order to meet the recommendations set by BIR* (and supported by the Care Quality Commission) on:

- [Wednesday 20th September 12-12:30pm](#)
- [Wednesday 27th of September 12-12:30pm](#)

This training session will replace the requirement to complete the following e-learning for healthcare modules:

- 00-01-02 Introduction to Radiation Protection
- 01-02-05 Risks vs Benefits in Patient Exposure
- 02-01-01 Patient Selection: The Justification of Patient Exposure
- 03-01-01 Ionising Radiations Regulations 2017 (IRR17) and Other Regulations
- 03-01-02 Ionising Radiation (Medical Exposure) Regulations 2017- IR(ME)R 2017

It will be recorded and the video made available on the SEL Training Hub and through SEL ICB primary care newsletters.

These sessions are aimed at registered healthcare professionals (NMRs), but GP practices can include wider colleagues if appropriate.

We will circulate the SEL-wide SOP in due course.

Best wishes,

Patricia Clinch (Head of Radiation Protection/Radiation Protection Adviser at King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust)

David Gallacher (Head of Radiation Safety at Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust)

*Reference: [Position Statement on Non-Medical Referrers - British Institute of Radiology \(bir.org.uk\)](https://www.bir.org.uk/position-statement-on-non-medical-referrers)