



VMRPET - Grant Recipient Abstracts

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Virtual Reality (VR) coaching for the management of anxious patients undergoing radiation therapy (head and neck cancer)

- Daniel Sapkaroski

Patients undergoing medical imaging examinations (MIE) such as CT, MRI or PET scans have been found to have high levels of emotional distress, anxiety and claustrophobia. In particular, recent findings assessing cancer patients undergoing MIE indicate that 26% present with anxiety, 52% sub-clinical claustrophobia and 27% present with moderate to severe claustrophobia.

The prevalence of anxiety can especially be heightened in treatment of head and neck cancer (HNC) patients having radiation therapy where a tightly fitted thermoplastic mask is made to stabilise patients for their treatment. A quarter of all HNC patients will experience mask anxiety relating to their treatment stating that lack of “experience and expectations” is a major confounding factor (Nixon et al. 2018). Furthermore, fear of mask anxiety has also been found to cause up to 24% of treatment related disruptions (Clover et al, 2011).

How does statutory regulation influence practice? An exploration of the understanding and experiences of radiographers and sonographers in Australia.

- John McInerney

Health professional regulation internationally has changed dramatically in the last two decades. This has evolved as a consequence of damning reports of medical error and professional misconduct in healthcare. These have raised concern in the public eye about the management and regulation of health care professionals (Kohn et al., 2000, Wilson et al., 1995). Sentinel events such as the Harold Shipman case, the Bristol Infirmary in the UK and the Jayant Patel case in Bundaberg have undermined the public’s trust in traditional selfregulatory frameworks (Freckelton, 2010, Hamilton et al., 2014, Short et al., 2012).

Radiation therapy student experiences using a cloud based planning system

- Dr Kellie Knight

Advances in technology and pedagogy have enabled major transitions in radiation therapy (RT) education. These include virtual environments used to facilitate the development of pre-clinical communication/patient care and technical skills.^{1, 2} To date, the only option for authentic treatment planning (TP) education has been through work-integrated learning or on-campus treatment planning labs.

The advent of cloud-based workspaces has revolutionised education, where students can learn anywhere and on any device.³ There has been a growing imperative to reshape pedagogic and curricula practices for TP education in line with developments in the clinical environment.⁴ In 2018 Monash embarked on a novel interdisciplinary, cross institutional project to implement real-time mobile TP education into an online curriculum delivered to students Australia-wide. The introduction of cloud-based RT TP into the curricula assists to facilitate the gaining of RT TP knowledge and the building of TP skills to a geographically dispersed group of students, thus ensuring graduates have equal opportunities to develop TP skills regardless of their location.