

Authors: Dr Ruhi Kanani, Dr Amani Chowdhury, Dr Sarah Needleman
 Royal Free Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, London, UK
 Corresponding author: ruhi.kanani2@nhs.net

Background

In 2021 the oncology training curriculum implemented a common stem pathway for first year trainees aiming to ensure adequate exposure to systemic therapy and radiotherapy, prior to progressing in their chosen sub-speciality of medical or clinical oncology (1).

This pathway includes requirements for radiotherapy-related competencies to demonstrate understanding of radiobiology, the underlying physics principles and implementation of radiotherapy.

Aim: We aimed to create a standardised training pack as an educational tool for trainees.

Methods

We identified that no standardised training programme is available and thus recognised an opportunity to create an innovative training workbook to facilitate learning and meet training requirements.

We reviewed the common stem pathway for first year trainees to review the curriculum requirements and highlight key themes to include in the training pack.

Results

A training workbook comprising a mandatory and optional section to encompass all the training needs has been created and distributed to both clinical and medical oncology consultants with a view to providing a nationally accepted training tool.

The training workbook consists of 10 mandatory questions and 5 optional questions for the trainees to work through with the radiographers and clinical oncology consultants. It consists of both theoretical principles and practical components requiring direct observation and practical radiotherapy planning skills.

The workbook is structured in a way to replicate the patient pathway as demonstrated on the right in Table 1.

Following feedback from oncology consultants, we will aim to distribute the tool nationally and obtain trainee feedback.

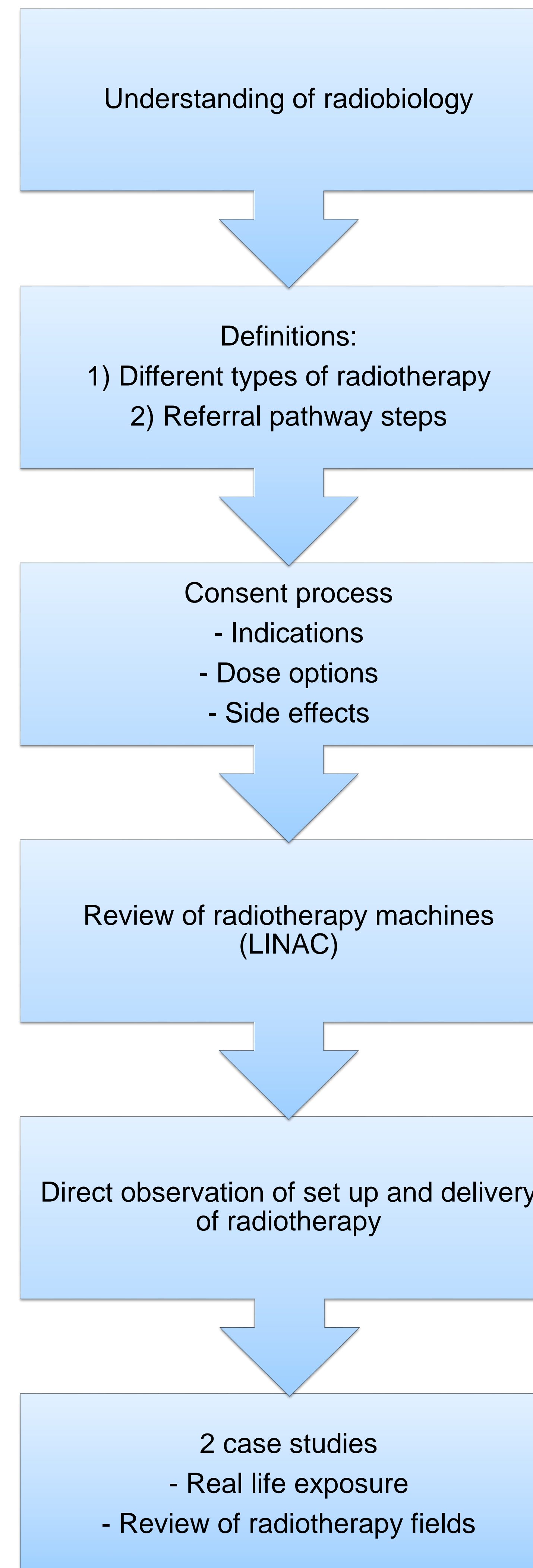


Table 1: Radiotherapy workbook structured in a way to replicate patient pathway and cover curriculum requirements in a practical and clinically relevant manner.

Discussion

This workbook will facilitate a structured approach to radiotherapy education for common stem oncology trainees highlighting key radiobiology principles and also practical, real life exposure to the radiotherapy pathway.

Pilot studies incorporating radiotherapy education as part of specialty training (outside of clinical oncology) have shown that this improves physician understanding, likelihood of referrals and collaboration with clinical oncology colleagues (2).

This in turn will improve patient care as understanding of radiotherapy increases. If successful, this could then be expanded to other specialities working closely with oncology teams.

Key Points

- 1) The implementation of this standardised radiotherapy workbook will be sustainable, providing an innovative accessible educational resource for trainees.
- 2) Improving radiotherapy education in the common stem oncology program will help to improve both collaborative working and patient care (2).

References:

1. Joint Royal Colleges of Physicians Training Board. 2021. Curriculum for Medical Oncology Training. JRCPTB
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<https://www.jrcptb.org.uk/sites/default/files/Medical%20Oncology%20curriculum%2024022020%20FINAL.pdf>

2. Martin, E.J., Nalawade, V.V., Murphy, J.D. and Jones, J.A., 2019. Incorporating palliative radiotherapy education into hospice and palliative medicine fellowship training: A feasibility study. *Ann Palliat Med*, 8, pp.436-441.