



Agenda Item 5d

ISRRT Position Statement:

The Clinical Patient Care Assessment Skills of Therapeutic Radiographers

The ISRRT considers the clinical assessment of radiation therapy patients within the scope of practice of therapeutic radiographers subject to their demonstration of appropriate educational preparation and clinical competence.

Therapeutic radiographers have the knowledge, skills and ability to:

- Assess patients.
- Identify treatment-related toxicities.
- Determine and perform interventions to manage treatment-related toxicities.
- Triage and refer patients to the appropriate health care professional(s) for interventions which are outside the radiographer's expertise.

Background:

The clinical oncology, patient care, radiobiology and radiation physics components of the therapeutic radiographer's educational program provides these radiographers with an extensive knowledge base to assess treatment-related toxicities. Therapeutic radiographers are equipped with the skills and competencies to provide interventions, including cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), vital signs, skin care counseling, oral care (mucositis, xerostomia) counseling, dietary counseling, oxygen administration, suctioning, and psychosocial support. In addition, these radiographers are competent to triage patients to refer to support services such as social work, dietary,

nursing, emergency rooms and other physicians including psychiatrists.

In many countries radiographers are recognized through legislation with the skills and competencies to assess patients. For example in Ontario, Canada, the *Medical Radiation Technology Act* defines the scope of practice for medical radiation technology as: "The practice of medical radiation technology is the use of ionizing radiation, electromagnetism and other prescribed forms of energy for the purposes of diagnostic and therapeutic procedures, the evaluation of images and data relating to the procedures and the assessment of an individual before, during and after the procedures."⁽²⁾

Patients receiving radiation therapy are evaluated at regular intervals during the treatment by a radiation oncologist (physician) for medical or treatment-related issues. The ISRRT supports that therapeutic radiographers have the skills and competencies to perform patient assessments and reviews. Studies have demonstrated an enhanced patient experience with radiographer-led reviews.⁽⁴⁻¹⁰⁾ There are evidenced-based guidelines and tools available for therapeutic radiographers to assess patients and to provide and/or refer for the appropriate intervention.⁽¹¹⁾

References

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Note:

Links to external websites may change without notice.