



International Workshop on Practical Implementation of
Clinical Audit for Medical Exposure to Ionizing Radiation
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CLINICAL AUDIT

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF CLINIC AUDIT IN EUROPE

MARY COFFEY



Status of implementation of clinical audit in Europe

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Legal Framework

- Clinical audit is regulated in the majority of countries responding and the legal framework for all types of clinical audit is consistent
- 97/43/EURATOM transposed into national legislation requires clinical audit to be carried out
- Has the term clinical audit been fully understood and has clinical audit actually been implemented?



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▪ Legal framework – practices to be audited

Limited detailed information was provided - examples given included:

- Mammography audit was well developed in one country
- In one country only academic teaching centres were audited
- Limited relationship between clinical audit and other types of quality assessment (4 countries)
- Slightly higher relationship with regulatory inspection (8 countries)



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- **Some of the benefits of clinical audit identified by respondents**
 - Radiation protection of patients
 - Conformance of quality management systems
 - Discovery of malpractice
 - Avoidance of accidents and incidents
 - Improved radiation protection
 - Lower doses to patients and staff
 - Increased quality assurance / quality improvement



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- **Has the term clinical audit been fully understood and has clinical audit actually been implemented?**

Frequently what is described as clinical audit is actually regulatory inspection

Regulatory inspection is routine in all three disciplines in most countries

In many of the responses the regulatory body is the body also responsible for clinical audit – it is recommended that this is not optimum and the regulatory body should at most only be involved in assisting the set up of clinical audit



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■ What is clinical audit?

A multidisciplinary, multi professional activity with the aim of identifying areas for future improvement

A review of practices, procedures and results against agreed standards

Aimed at improving

- quality of care
- Effective use of resources
- Furthering professional education and training

It is not research, quality system audit or regulatory activity



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- Other benefits of clinical audit identified by the respondents clearly reflect what clinical audit aims to achieve
- The problems cited give an insight into the difficulties encountered in implementation

Benefits of clinical audit	Problems implementing clinical audit
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased communication and awareness of good practice• High level of staff satisfaction• Team building• Change of attitude in a positive way• Increased staff expertise• Motivation• Encouraging new ideas and ways of thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lack of understanding of what is meant by clinical audit• Lack of motivation for audit by medical personnel who perceive it as a threat or an administrative waste of time• Lack of properly trained personnel• finance



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■ Establishing clinical audit

In most countries agreed standards for clinical audit are either regulated or based on recommendations.

Standards are being developed in several countries

An independent body has been or is being established in a small number of countries



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■ The audit team

Recommendations	Responses
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ It is recommended that an independent team representing the three professional disciplines should be established■ Auditors should be experienced professionals■ Auditors should receive training	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ A team is required in only three countries■ The inclusion of all three professionals is a recommendation in only three countries■ 11 countries define the need for professional experience of auditors■ In 9 countries the competence of auditors is regulated■ Training is regulated in 7 countries■ Independence of auditors regulated in 9 countries



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■ The audit team

Clinical audit should foster an environment which enhances professional relationships and the multidisciplinary approach necessary to optimised patient care.

Lack of manpower resources, education and training and finance were frequently cited as a major problem in implementation of clinical audit



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Practical procedure of clinical audit

	Regulated	Recommendation
Method of clinical audit	6	8
Agreed standards	8	10
Frequency (range from 1-7 years)	9	4
Report	10	4
Follow up	9	6



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■ Practical procedure of clinical audit

Most countries agreed that the practical procedures should be harmonised

In the majority of countries information is requested in advance

There are entrance and exit meetings and interviews with staff

Mainly audits are carried out over 1-2 days



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Criteria for good practice

	Diagnostic Radiology	Nuclear Medicine	Radiotherapy
Checklist	12	10	11
Consistency	5	3	3
Established by auditors	7	7	7
Based on standards	9	7	9
Based on recommendations	7	7	6
Produced in terms of quality indicators	5	4	3



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■ Conclusion

The majority of countries feel that harmonisation of clinical audit is necessary with respect to:

- The programme
- Standards of good practice
- Auditing organisation
- Team composition
- Competence, training and independence of auditors
- Having local or national coordination

5 respondents considered audit in their country to be adequately consistent

Local or national coordination was cited in three countries



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■ Conclusion

There is clearly a willingness to implement clinical audit

The benefits are well understood

Major problems still remain that prevent implementation

- Understanding
- Willingness to participate
- Education and training
- Finance