

Radiotherapy Board

Response to national consultation on the Non-Surgical Oncology Advanced Practice Curriculum Framework

The Radiotherapy Board¹ commends production of a Non-Surgical Oncology Advanced Practice Curriculum Framework.

One of the Board's key priorities is highlighting workforce requirements to ensure a trained, skilled and flexible, multi-disciplinary radiotherapy workforce. The current chronic staffing shortages across all three radiotherapy professions, combined with rising patient demand and rapid changes in radiotherapy systems and techniques, make this an exceptionally challenging time for cancer services. Production of the Advanced Practice Curriculum Framework is therefore both welcome and timely.

The Radiotherapy Board suggests there is an urgent need for the *whole* radiotherapy workforce to adapt and evolve in order to better support the ongoing delivery of safe, high-quality radiotherapy services for cancer patients in the UK. Advanced practitioners are an important part of this and the proposed Advanced Practice Curriculum Framework will be a key tool to support these roles.

The Radiotherapy Board supports the use of capabilities in practice as an appropriate way of structuring the educational development of those training for advanced practice roles as this will help to standardise expectations for those in such posts. The development of advanced practice positions also offers opportunities for career progression and role development, which in turn has the potential for a positive impact on staff retention - currently a major concern across all professions in healthcare, including radiotherapy.

As stated in the Framework, advanced practitioners will not only deliver patient-centred care and manage complex non-surgical oncology care needs, but will also provide leadership within the radiotherapy team and support the training and supervision of other health professionals. This will help build a stronger and more resilient local workforce. The Radiotherapy Board feels it is essential that advanced practice roles also include opportunities to develop skills in research leadership, through (for example) participation in initiatives such as the National Institute for Health and Care Research's Associate Principal Investigator scheme².

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¹ The [Radiotherapy Board](#) was established in 2013 by The Royal College of Radiologists, the Society and College of Radiographers and the Institute of Physics and Engineering in Medicine to provide guidance, oversight and support for the continuing development of high-quality radiotherapy services for patients in the UK. It has representation from across the four UK nations and from other organisations closely involved in radiotherapy services.

² <https://www.nihr.ac.uk/health-and-care-professionals/career-development/associate-principal-investigator-scheme.htm>