

Frequently Asked Questions

Scottish Radiology Transformation Programme



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1. General

1.1 What is the SRTP?

The Scottish Radiology Transformation Programme (SRTP) is an ambitious programme of work that aims to transform the way that national radiology services are delivered in Scotland. Its aim is to support the delivery of a world class, person-centred, sustainable, radiology service that continually improves the health and wellbeing of the people of Scotland.

1.2 How can I find out more about the work of the SRTP?

The SRTP has a helpful website www.radiology.scot.nhs.uk with information about each of the projects within the programme and who to contact to find out more. There is also a quarterly news bulletin that is published on the website and you can be added to the distribution group for this by contacting nss.s.r.t.p@nhs.scot.

1.3 A National Radiology Information System (RIS) would be very helpful. Are there any plans for this?

A Digital Strategy for Diagnostics is currently being examined by Scottish Government. Health Improvement Scotland (HIS) has been asked to investigate the options and any issues associated with the introduction of a national RIS for Scotland. The HIS report on initial findings and recommendations is expected before the end of 2022..

1.4 How will the SRTP ensure that the introduction of national systems and processes still provides a personal service to patients?

Once for Scotland consistency is a key objective of the Radiology Target Operating Model (TOM). There is a desire to ensure best practice with consistent clinical pathways and processes. A blend of national consistency with local flexibility will be key to ensuring that processes and systems support local patient care.

1.5 The Target Operating Model (TOM) for radiology in Scotland refers to the vision and some high-level principles, but when will we see the detail of how this is to be delivered?

The current work underway in SRTP is aligned to ensure support for the delivery of the overall TOM and, where relevant, specific objectives. However, a new Diagnostic Strategic Network is being formed to oversee strategic direction and plans across Diagnostics, so agreement requires to be reached about ownership of the TOM so that the detail of delivery can be planned and shared with stakeholders. This will likely be in the form of roadmaps showing how stepped transition from the current situation to the desired future state is planned to be achieved.

For more information regarding the formation of the Diagnostic Strategic Network, we can put you in touch with the relevant colleagues in the National Services Division (NSD), who are leading on the formation of the Network. Contact us at nss.s.r.t.p@nhs.scot.



2. Workforce / Advancing Practice

2.1 Can the SRTP influence the number of radiologists and radiographers being trained?

SRTP is developing a Workforce Plan to influence the number of radiologists and radiographers being trained in the future. There are constraints as to how many can be trained each year due to the availability of trainers and placements.

So far, the SRTP has influenced the decision to train an additional 10 radiologists per year. The SRTP also contributed to securing additional funding for advanced practice radiographer training places.

Radiographers taking time from their day jobs to upskill and train for additional responsibilities is also recognised as a challenge. An academy model is being piloted as a potential solution to some of these issues.

2.2 Was there any radiologist involvement in the Advancing Practice Project decision to allow radiographers to begin reporting?

Yes, Radiologists were involved in both Advancing Practice and the Target Operating Model (TOM) workshops. The TOM then went through all the necessary governance routes – Advancing Practice Steering Group (which a Radiologist chairs), Clinical Reference Group (CRG) and Imaging Executive Board (IEB).

2.3 We want to support staff to do other jobs and train, but we need to balance that alongside keeping the service going. Is there funding from SRTP to backfill role development of radiographers and Assistant Practitioners to ensure continuity of services?

The original Scottish Government funding allocation was for training only, but the SRTP managed to get agreement that backfill would also be funded.

2.4 What pay band is an Advanced Practitioner Radiographer (APR) role?

An APR is a Band 7 or above.

2.5 Can the job descriptions and the national frameworks be shared?

Yes, discussions are ongoing as to where best to publish these documents so that they can be accessed and updated beyond the lifespan of the SRTP, but the intention is for them to be published.

2.6 What areas of Assistant Practitioners are being explored as part of Advancing Practice?

In collaboration with the Scottish Clinical Imaging Network (SCIN) and National Education for Scotland (NES), a key driver is to provide Assistant Practitioners with the opportunity to operate at the top of their licence. Current focus areas are extending their scope of practice and developing interested staff in targeted specialist areas through the development and use of work-based modules. A Plain Film Image Appraisal pilot has been completed and a DEXA acquisition pilot is due to start. A service and learning needs analysis has taken place, which will also help focus on further opportunities for development.



- 2.7 How will banding work for extended scope for assistant practitioners?**
 NES is working with Scottish Government to explore band 2 through to band 5. However, as with all roles, it is important to look at the whole career progression for assistant practitioners.
- 2.8 Is MR safety training something that the SRTP will be looking into?**
 MR safety training is not something that the SRTP is looking at.
- 2.9 Ultrasound academy – can we have some more detail, how does this fit in with current training?**
 The Ultrasound Academy is about centralising the practical elements of the ultrasound training. The academic training will remain with Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU). The intention of the academy is to improve training capacity and the speed of training, whilst easing the burden on the territorial NHS Boards. Initially this will be at NHS Golden Jubilee, but a future spoke model will also be considered with regions.
- 2.10 Where are the sonographers being recruited to provide for the training academy?**
 There has been interest from sonographers who have recently retired, or are looking to retire in the future, as well as those who want to work on a part time basis to become part of the ultrasound training academy.
- 2.11 Is there a national shortage of staff to fill posts?**
 There is a national shortage at least for radiologists and radiographers. The work being undertaken in relation to workforce planning should evidence this. Consideration of ways that workforce challenges can be addressed are part of Advancing Practice and other discussions.
- 2.12 Is it the intention that training academy activities will expand from sonographer to include radiographers/ radiologists?**
 This is certainly something that is being considered. There is also the possibility of the introduction of an apprenticeship type scheme for radiographer training.

3. Scottish National Radiology Reporting Service (SNRRS)

- 3.1 What does the SNRRS advise re the mechanism of feedback for the occasional discrepancies picked up e.g. through cancer MDT meetings?**
 Any discrepancies picked up by an MDT should be sent to the SNRRS team snrrs@gjnh.scot.nhs.uk . The SNRRS reporter will be contacted with the details and asked to review and feedback any reflections and action taken.
- 3.2 Individual Reporting Radiographers have dedicated a lot of time in recent years to progress their recruitment to the SNRRS bank. Are issues around the AfC contract still a problem preventing recruitment of reporting radiographers to the bank?**
 There have been many challenges and complexities around contracts and reimbursement due to AfC. Work is underway as a priority to recruit radiographers to the SNRRS bank in line with AfC. The project team is currently working with NHS



Golden Jubilee recruitment and the SNRRS team to recruit Reporting Radiographers. If successful, this will become part of the SNRRS bank.

3.4 What is the current status of sub-specialty groups?

The SRTP SNRRS Other Opportunities Project is beginning to scope the requirements for sub-specialty groups and how they should function. If you would like to be involved, please contact nss.s.r.t.p@nhs.scot.

There are currently some specialist worklists within the SNRRS bank, e.g. paediatrics and neuro.

3.5 Does the SNRRS do vetting of requests, or is it purely a reporting service?

No, the SNRRS does not perform any vetting of requests. This is done at a local NHS Board level.

4. Artificial Intelligence

4.1 What has the SRTP AI Project been focussing on?

The SRTP AI project has had four main objectives:

- Maintain an **AI Register** for Radiology of known pilots and tests of change.
- Produce an **AI Playbook** for Radiology in Scotland, detailing the intentions and high level considerations **to evaluating and deploying** Imaging AI solutions across Scotland.
- Development of an **AI Deployment Toolkit** containing relevant checklists, frameworks and templates required to evaluate and deploy AI solutions.
- Continue to explore **Pilots and Clinical Trials** that are aligned with Radiology needs.

The AI Register is complete and the Pilots and Clinical Trials are ongoing. The AI Playbook is progressing well, stimulating good discussions about what should be included and the links to the wider AI environment in NHSScotland, and the Deployment Toolkit is almost complete as a first draft for Boards to use and provide feedback.

4.2 Is AI use in Imaging being looked at in isolation?

Absolutely not, the project team is aligned with Digital Health and Care and the emerging AI Hub to ensure that the project supports the intentions and guidance for AI use across the NHS in Scotland. We have representation from the relevant stakeholder groups, including Digital, AI and Radiology, involved in the Steering Group for the project, and we also work closely with the Centre for Sustainable Delivery to ensure that our AI work is aligned with the Accelerated National Innovation Adoption (ANIA) pathway as required.



5. National Data

5.1 Are the national data submissions for NRIIP automated or provided manually?

NHS Western Isles is currently the only NHS Board that provides NRIIP data in an automated way. There are various different ways in which Boards submit data, depending on their RIS system. These all, to some extent, involve manual data extraction as full automation is not currently practical. The ideal would be a National RIS with automated data transfer.

5.2 Clinical Decision Software – are there any plans to further implement this?

CDS was being considered as part of SRTP, however, consistent order comms systems are required to enable CDS nationally.

